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SEAFFER JUANNE M
78 GEORGETOWN 4452

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PAGE 21

GEORGE 24452 281255Z

ACTION: PARA 15

INFO OCT-21 ISO-22 SCS-26 CA-01 FA-25 CIAI-20 CODE-20
INR-14 NSAF-03 PA-02 ICA-20 SP-42 SS-15 VSC-25
DRC-21 /083 W

271255Z DEC 78
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5566
UNCLAS GEORGETOWN 4452
CORRECTED COPY TEXT (PARA 4 LINE 9)

F.O. 12265: NA
PAGES: 0419. (LOWERY, JOSEPH DR.)
SUBJ: VISIT BY SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
LEADERS TO GUYANA.
REF: STATE 315288

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/WR	DATE
RDS <input type="checkbox"/> or YDS <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. DATE	
TS AUTH.	REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS	<input type="checkbox"/>
DECLASSIFIED <input type="checkbox"/> RELEASABLE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RELEASE DENIED	<input type="checkbox"/>
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS	

1. DR. JOSEPH LOWERY, PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, ACCOMPANIED BY REVERENDS SMITH AND GIBSON, ARRIVED IN GUYANA JUST AFTER MIDNIGHT DECEMBER 19. EMBASSY HAD ARRANGED TO HAVE THEM MET BY A POLITICAL OFFICER WHO ESCORTED THEM TO THEIR HOTEL. ARRANGEMENTS HAD ALSO BEEN MADE WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO EXPEDITE THEIR ENTRY THROUGH CUSTOMS AND IMMIGRATION.

2. AMBASSADOR, DCM, AND PAO MET WITH THE THREE CLERGYMEN AT 10:15 A.M. DEC. 20 TO DISCUSS THEIR SCHEDULE AND TO PROVIDE BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON JONESTOWN. AMBASSADOR THEN ARRANGED WITH THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO HAVE THE GROUP RECEIVED BY MINISTER OF INFORMATION SHIRLEY FIELD-PIDLEY. LATER, ON DECEMBER 20, THEY SPOKE WITH POLICE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER ROBERTS, SOME OF THE JONESTOWN SURVIVORS, AND MADE CONTACT WITH THE GUYANA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (THIS

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PAGE 22 GEORGE 24452 281255Z
APPOINTMENT WAS SET UP BY THE PAO).

3. THE GROUP HAD HOPED TO TRAVEL TO JONESTOWN ON DECEMBER 21 AND SPACE WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THEM ON THE U.S. ARMY HELICOPTERS STILL IN COUNTRY. HOWEVER, DUE TO A TROPICAL STORM THIS FLIGHT WAS FORCED TO TURN BACK AND RETURN TO GEORGETOWN. GROUP SPENT THE REST OF THE DAY TALKING TO THE FOREIGN PRESS CORPS AND OTHERS KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT PEOPLES TEMPLE AND JONESTOWN.

4. ON THE MORNING OF DECEMBER 22 REVEREND LOWERY AND HIS TWO COMPANIONS FLEW BY CHARTERED AIRCRAFT TO PORT KAITUMA ACCOMPANIED BY CONSUL HARTY CASE. (THE USA HELICOPTERS TERMINATED THEIR MISSION IN GUYANA AND WERE BEING DISMANTLED AND RETURNED TO SOUTHCOM DECEMBER 22.) GROUP WAS MET AT PORT KAITUMA AIRPORT BY ASSISTANT DISTRICT OFFICER'S LAND ROVER AND PROCEEDED TO JONESTOWN, GETTING BADLY STUCK ONLY ONCE. AT JONESTOWN GROUP MET JONESTOWN CONSERVATOR EMERSON SIMON. CONSUL CASE REPORTS THAT VISITORS WERE ABLE TO SEE AS MUCH

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AS THEY VISITED OF JONESTOWN.
5. ON DECEMBER 23 DR. LOWERY AND ASSOCIATES CALLED ON
PRIME MINISTER BURVEAN, WHOM THEY FOUND "CORDIAL AND IMPRESSIVE,"
AND DEPARTED GEORGETOWN FOR NEW YORK VIA
PA-227 WITH ASSISTANCE FROM EMBOFF AND MFA DEPUTY CHIEF OF
PROTOCOL.

6. DR. LOWERY GAVE AN INTERVIEW BROADCAST OVER STATE-
OWNED RADIO, AND HE AND ASSOCIATES RECEIVED
PROMINENT COVERAGE IN THE DAILY PRESS. DR. LOWERY
IS QUOTED IN THE DECEMBER 22 GOVERNMENT-OWNED "CHRONICLE" AS
STATING THAT SCLC PROBE INTO THE JONESTOWN AFFAIRS IS NOT A
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION BUT MORE "OF A PASTORAL KING OF THING" TO

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PAGE 23 GEORGE 74452 291055Z

EXAMINE "WY WOULD SO MANY AMERICANS WANT TO LEAVE THE
"LAND OF THE BRAVE AND FREE" (SIC) AND GO TO LIVE
IN THE JUNGLE? BOTH THE CHURCH AND THE NATION WOULD NOW HAVE TO
DEAL WITH THESE QUESTIONS." ON DECEMBER 23, FOLLOWING THE GROUP'S
VISIT TO JONESTOWN, THE "CHRONICLE" REPORTED THAT THE THREE SCLC
LEADERS "ARE TREMENDOUSLY IMPRESSED WITHE THE EXPERIMENT THAT WAS
JONESTOWN." DR. LOWERY DESCRIBED JONESTOWN AS A "RUGH BANK IN THE
WILDERNESS IN WHICH PEOPLE DEPOSITED DREAMS AND WITNESSED
ONLY NIGHTMARES.... I JUST CANNOT HELP BUT ADMIRE HOW THEY CUT OUT
AN EXTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENT OUT OF THE JUNGLE AND DEVELOPED
IT INTO JONESTOWN. WHERE IT WENT WRONG IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE GREAT
TRAGEDIES OF OUR TIME." IN CONCLUSION, DR. LOWERY IS REPORTED TO
HAVE
EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE GUYANESE GOVERNMENT WOULD SOME DAY BE
ABLE
TO USE THE FACILITIES AT JONESTOWN WHICH WOULD AGAIN BECOME "A
LIVING COMMUNITY. I HOPE THIS WILL BE DONE SO THAT THOSE WHO
DIED WOULD NOT HAVE DIED IN VAIN."

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