

CHAPTER NINE

TIM STOEN, 1977

The king said, 'Bring me a sword.' So a sword was brought before the king. And the king said, 'Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other.' Then the woman whose son was alive said to the king, because her heart yearned for her son, 'Oh, my lord, give her the living child and by no means slay it.' But the other said, 'It shall be neither mine nor yours; divide it.' Then the king answered and said, 'Give the living child to the first woman, and by no means slay it; she is its mother.' And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him, to render justice.

-- I Kings 3: 16-28

The fight between Jim Jones and disillusioned ex-member Tim Stoen was not over custody of a child, although that was the ostensible reason for the dispute. It was, instead, a power struggle between two men and two ideologies.

Tim Stoen had been a trusted leader in Peoples Temple. An ardent supporter, as well as legal advisor to the church, he left the Temple, joined his wife in a custody suit against Jim Jones, and organized other ex-members and relatives of Temple followers. Using John Victor, the child, Tim galvanized the anger and apprehension of the Concerned Relatives organization against Peoples Temple. Jim Jones, also using John Victor, focused church members' animosity and suspicion against critics, especially relatives.

According to Carolyn, Tim joined Peoples Temple in 1969. He became acquainted with Jim when he was Director of the Legal Services Foundation in Ukiah. Jim was on the board of trustees. Shortly after Tim joined the church, by his own account, he asked Jim if he should accept an appointment as Assistant District Attorney for Mendocino County. He took the position in 1970 and held it for six years, until the District Attorney for San Francisco asked him to work on a vote fraud investigation in San Francisco.

It's been charged that Tim's investigation of the 1975 city elections covered up Peoples Temple's involvement in them. Although fifty people were eventually indicted in the case, none belonged to Peoples Temple. The District Attorney's office routinely destroyed voting records for that election in 1978.

In February 1977, Tim abruptly resigned from his position as Assistant District Attorney for San Francisco and moved to Guyana. There he tried to get admittance to the Guyana bar. At some point, he severed his ties with the Temple, but it's not clear when. According to a U.S. Embassy official, Tim left Guyana, and presumably the church, in March. He was still involved in church matters, however, when he convened a legal con-

ference for Temple staff in late April. Members of the legal staff flew from California to Georgetown to discuss legal problems, like potential court-ordered conservatorships declared against hostile Temple members. (Conservatorship, the legal process by which adult children can be declared incompetent, is frequently used by parents of children in "cults" to regain control over rebellious offspring.) Marceline Jones said Tim left Guyana in June. This corresponds to his own claim that he formally severed ties June 12, 1977.

He departed Guyana in secrecy and vanished for several months until he surfaced in England. Temple members, who didn't know Tim had defected, worried that he'd been kidnapped or assassinated during his disappearance. The next they heard of him was in an August 23, 1977 news article. He had announced his intention to sue New West Magazine and The Mendocino Grapevine, a newspaper published in Ukiah, for personal libel. Even after a California court awarded Grace Stoen custody of John Victor, Temple members still believed Tim remained loyal.

But on October 6, a delegation of members met Tim outside San Francisco Superior Court and tried to prevent him from joining his wife inside. The last the group heard from him personally was by letter, dated November 17, 1977, asking Jim to return John Victor by Friday noon, November 25. The very next day, November 18, 1977, the California Superior Court granted physical custody of John Victor to Tim's estranged wife, Grace. The court also awarded joint legal custody to both of them, and ordered Jim Jones to give up John Victor immediately.

Tim's son hadn't interested the lawyer before, according to the Temple. He'd married Grace Grech in January 1970. Twelve years her senior, and already a Temple member, he persuaded the nineteen-year-old to join the church. A year and a half later, on January 25, 1972, Grace gave birth to John Victor Stoen at Santa Rosa Hospital. Two weeks afterwards, Tim signed an affidavit stating that Jim Jones was John's father:

I, Timothy Oliver Stoen, hereby acknowledge that in April 1971, I entreated my beloved pastor, James W. Jones, to sire a child by my wife, Grace Lucy (Grech) Stoen, who had previously, at my insistence, reluctantly but graciously consented thereto. James W. Jones agreed to do so, reluctantly, after I explained that I very much wished to raise a child, but was unable, after extensive attempts, to sire one myself. My reason for

requesting James W. Jones to do this is that I wanted my child to be fathered, if not by me, by the most compassionate, honest and courageous human being the world contains.

The child, John Victor Stoen, was born January 25, 1972. I am privileged beyond words to have the responsibility for caring for him, and I undertake this task humbly with the steadfast hope that said child will become a devoted follower of Jesus Christ and be instrumental in bringing God's kingdom here on earth, as has been his wonderful natural father.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct (February 6, 1972).

Like most of the confessions signed by Peoples Temple members, the affidavit probably was contrived to prove Tim's loyalty to Jim Jones. Tim said that, "Jim asked it as a proof of faith." Grace added, "There was no suggestion that they [the confessions] were truthful."

Even if the affidavit were false, however, it's still possible that Jim was, in fact, John Victor's father. Many remarked on John Victor's likeness to Jim, saying the child was "the spittin' image" of him. But, as Temple lawyer Charles Garry remembers, John Victor also looked like his mother, Grace.

Jim asserted to San Francisco Examiner reporter Tim Reiterman in February 1978 that: "I am the father... I challenge him [Tim Stoen] to take all the blood tests -- all the sophisticated blood tests available -- and compare them to the child and myself. I challenge him to take a polygraph and truth serum."

Reiterman asked Jim why he hadn't made a legal claim to John Victor. Jim replied that he'd followed the advice of his lawyer.

I could have done so earlier, but I did not want to cause embarrassment for a little child. I had assurances from them, their full word, witnessed publicly and privately (that is, from Mr. and Mrs. Stoen) that they would allow my wife and I to continue to rear my child as we have for several years, who looks exactly like a replica of my childhood pictures.

Jim had no need to make a legal claim until Grace

tried to get her son back. When John Victor was 2 1/2, and again when he was 3 1/2, Grace signed over legal guardianship of John to several Peoples Temple members. When Grace left the church permanently on July 4, 1976, she left both her husband and son behind. According to Jim, Grace left John with the church because she didn't want to disrupt his life. "Grace felt the highest act of love for John-John was to leave him there in an environment to which he was accustomed until she got established and got her mind together as to the future."

Church members felt Grace never really cared for her son. Her abandonment of him, they reasoned, proved it. Even Tim wrote a note to Gene Chaikin afterwards saying, "I don't think Grace cares that much for John that she would risk seizing him and incurring the group's added wrath... I have no objection to him going [to Guyana]," he added, "if that's what the group wants. I just don't look forward to John not being in Jim's presence as a model."

Carolyn frequently took care of John Victor. According to one memo, she had to treat his severe diaper rash, because Grace neglected him. Additionally, Grace signed power of attorney, guardianship and even the right of adoption over to Carolyn. Her consent, signed December 5, 1974 in Ukiah, was never witnessed and probably wasn't legal. At that early date, Grace already agreed "to my husband being awarded the custody of said child in divorce proceedings with it understood I shall have reasonable rights of visitation."

Jim felt kinship with John Victor even before Grace left. Her departure merely simplified things. Jim believed that John Victor was the future leader of Peoples Temple, his reincarnation in the flesh. Neither Stephan Jones, nor Jim-Jon (Kimo) Prokes, his two undisputed biological sons and likeliest heirs, held the honor or esteem bestowed upon John Victor. When Grace fled the church, she took some money from John Victor's savings account. Jim berated her:

It's money for his development, you know, the development of a leader. He belongs to the world. He don't belong to any of us. He belongs to the world. You can see it more and more every day... John isn't a dependent type of personality. That's what leaders are made of. He doesn't depend upon you or his daddy. He isn't dependent upon anybody. He's got a lot of strength.

John Victor got special treatment. He was more equal than his roommate Kimo in Jonestown. His bed was in Jim's cabin with Jim's closest family: Carolyn, Annie, and Maria Katsaris. Whether this was out of regard for John Victor, fear that he would be kidnapped, or spite directed at Tim Stoen, we don't know.

In late August 1977, when the Jonestown community received the news that the California Superior Court had awarded Grace Stoen preliminary custody of John Victor, it still didn't know Tim had defected. An undated, unsigned memo to Charles Garry from someone in Peoples Temple noted that:

The Guyanese have told JJ [Jim Jones] that if Tim could only make a showing in Guyana, that Grace would have no rights whatsoever because Tim, being a resident, would have control over the situation. They think that it is important for Tim to show up to settle the matter. Jim was asking if there was any possible way of getting to Tim on this matter... Tim would be able to let Jim adopt the child without interference from Grace.

Grace's petition to the court shows, however, that she had been in touch with Tim several times before actually filing her August 11 declaration. Tim had promised to travel to Guyana to institute legal proceedings if negotiations with Peoples Temple failed to result in John Victor's release.

Grace's San Francisco attorney, Jeffrey Haas, flew to Guyana instead, two weeks after the California Superior Court awarded Grace temporary custody of John Victor. A Guyana court had to make a similar ruling, since the California order had no legality in Guyana. Haas therefore hired Clarence Hughes to represent the Stoens in Guyana.

Hughes, a Georgetown lawyer, was an odd choice. He had defended the ex-wife of the Prime Minister in a messy divorce suit. He was not likely to prevail against the Prime Minister's friends. For a week or two, however, he did succeed in getting favorable rulings on the Stoen case: the court ordered Jim Jones to appear before it, and when Jim refused to accept service of the order, the justice issued an arrest warrant for him, and for John Victor, to obtain custody.

Haas made two trips to Jonestown, on September 6 and 9, to serve the papers on Jim. Both Jim and John

Victor were unavailable -- or hiding -- at the time of Haas' visits. Community members removed the writs that had been nailed to some of the buildings in Jonestown, and returned them to Haas' LandRover.

The U.S. Embassy reported to the State Department on September 19 that the Stoen case had entered the political arena, "impeding its progress." The Embassy was probably referring to the Guyana government's inaction on the arrest warrant. However, the Embassy itself also became involved in the case, although its staff was supposed to act as an impartial mediator between two groups of American citizens.

The Embassy reported to State on Haas' two unsuccessful trips to Jonestown. It also prepared an emergency passport for John Victor, in case he could get out of Jonestown. At least one Embassy employee had already taken sides on the custody issue. Two Temple members found T. Dennis Reece, U.S. Vice Consul, with Jeff Haas at Haas' Georgetown hotel. Reece told Paula Adams and Harriett Tropp that "the U.S. Embassy would not allow this mother to be denied her child."

This was a surprising opinion, since American citizens rarely win custody suits in other countries. Foreign courts usually rule in favor of keeping children within their jurisdictions. "Haas was unrealistic to think a California court order would mean anything in Guyana," Richard McCoy, former Embassy Consul, told us. Unofficially, he added, the Stoens had abandoned John Victor to Peoples Temple.

Temple members believed Haas used money to influence the custody proceedings in Guyana. Karen Tow Layton reported that the group's barrister-at-law, Sir Lionel Luckhoo, told her

that money had passed through the Guyana court to assist the expeditious execution of orders against Jim Jones. He also said that Clarence Hughes, the attorney representing Jeffrey Haas who claims to be representing Grace Stoen stated, 'I hope this goes on forever. I'll be a very rich man.' Sir Lionel said on several occasions that there is 'very big money behind this.' He also said that he was positive that Burch-Smith, who deals with the passing of court orders, was given money. Burch-Smith would not issue court records which Sir Lionel was legally entitled to when Sir Lionel first applied for them.

Sir Lionel believed from the beginning that the Stoen case was political. "I can help you if this is a matter of the law," he explained to Temple members, "but if it is political, there is nothing I can do for you." According to a paper Carolyn wrote, Luckhoo advised the group to refuse service and not to cooperate with the court orders which he insisted were illegal.

A cable from the U.S. Embassy dated October 4, 1977, describes a meeting with Sir Lionel in which he told the U.S.

Consul, McCoy, that the Stoen case was full of legal errors. The judge had mishandled the case, he felt, in an effort to resolve it quickly. He cited the problems, which included the lack of personal service of the summons; the lack of the names of police officers who reportedly saw Jim; and the lack of precedent in the order to arrest John Victor. On October 6, the judge in the case ruled against a motion by the Stoens, and the case was postponed for another month.

Haas' failure to bring back John Victor did not deter Grace Stoen. On the contrary, she escalated her pressure by enlisting vigorous support from her estranged husband.

It's important to remember that no one in Peoples Temple knew where Tim Stoen was at that time. No one in the church knew he'd defected either, until later in September. His disappearance and subsequent emergence as leader of the opposition led Temple members to reassess Tim's past involvement in the church.

One theory they formulated was that Tim had embezzled Temple funds. After all he had instructed others on how to sneak U.S. currency past customs officials. Grace knew of the embezzlement, the hypothesis went, and used her knowledge to blackmail Tim into supporting her efforts to get John Victor. The money would have helped finance what Charles Garry estimates to have been a quarter million dollar effort to obtain custody.

Another theory members developed was that Tim worked as an agent provocateur for a U.S. law enforce-



Kimo Prokes (l.) and
John Victor Stoen.

ment organization. A number of facts supported this idea.

First of all, Tim's personal conservatism made him suspect. Raised a strict fundamentalist, a graduate of Wheaton Bible College in Illinois and Stanford Law School, Tim gave up what he called a "posh" lifestyle -- Porsche, wardrobe, women -- when he joined Peoples Temple. While idealistic about changing the world, his own political beliefs differed from those of Temple leaders. He registered with the Republican Party in 1976. His notes from a trip he made to East Germany in 1958 revealed a strong anti-communist attitude. The notes also echo comments he made about Peoples Temple twenty years later. During the trip, which he made when he was seventeen in connection with Rotary International -- an alleged CIA front -- Tim was arrested. He based his notes on a conversation he had with a fellow prisoner.

I saw things that textbooks and newspapers can't make vivid. I saw what a police state can do to individual human beings...

The restrictions of a communist police state are as bad as you read about. At the newsstands you buy papers of East Germany which serve as propaganda only...

Each week [in East Germany] a person must attend meetings some as often as 2-3 times a week. Meetings can last as long as four hours -- what is discussed is Marxist writings and the virtue of a democratic state. The groups are so arranged that they separate friends and people with common interests. My informer told me that the meetings were not too successful in indoctrination because too many people had been to the West.

He [Stoen's informant] said that if East Berliners had known before the borders were being set up, that 40 percent of them would have left all worldly goods to escape. Less than 10 percent of them still support the regime...

Even in [the] East German army, Saxons had to be brought in from other areas to keep check on the local soldiers because many of the local soldiers had anti-communist sympathies. It was fear alone that made most men carry out orders... The soldiers are told that there are two kinds of Germans, good

and bad -- the good are those who obey communist orders, and the bad are to be shot...

All I can do is anguish about the problem and pray to God that it won't last forever.

Another reason the group eventually believed Tim was an agent provocateur was his dual role as law enforcer -- that is, assistant district attorney -- and Temple legal advisor. He frequently gave unethical, if not illegal, advice. For example, he suggested to John and Barbara that they "lose" Lester Kinsolving's briefcase. As John wrote, "I remember thinking, here is an officer of the court, urging me to do something which I presumed to be illegal."

Terri Buford, who left Jonestown less than a month before the suicides, recalled another incident in which Tim suggested doing something illegal. In an affidavit signed October 10, 1978, she said that Tim gave her a note he'd written and asked her to pass it along to Jim, saying he felt it would be "a good way to handle [Temple ex-member and critic] Jim Cobb."

During the conversation Tim Stoen told me that he would recommend that something be written up as a 'script' that someone could read to Cobb over the telephone. He said this way he could word the 'script' so as to 'scare the shit out of Cobb.' Tim Stoen said that when the call was made, that it should be done, if not by Annie Moore, then by some other unknown voice, and that the caller should call from a pay phone (not located near the church). Tim Stoen said that the call should not last longer than three minutes for the reason that there was a slight possibility that someone might have the call traced. Tim Stoen recommended that the caller wear gloves so that his fingerprints could not be traced. Tim Stoen suggested that the caller say something to make Cobb believe that his life was in danger.

Tim Stoen told me at the time that if Annie Moore could not do it, that I should interview other people to do the same.

The note was never acted upon.

The text of the note, which Tim wrote in 1973, said:

I still think it advisable to proceed. Person who does it should be unknown to subject and should try to disguise voice and speak to the point. Annie Moore probably good.

I don't think that the authorities will go to all the trouble to make a voice print since nothing illegal involved.

It's rare that such a 'natural' opportunity will present itself.

Tim sent another note to Jim Jones around the time he wrote the note about scaring Jim Cobb. A church member had received a bomb threat over the telephone, and taped the conversation. Tim recommended reporting the call to the police, but not playing the tape for them, "because with no beeper, it's against the law. Maybe we should debate the point, however," he added.

According to David Conn, an employee of Standard Oil who contacted Dennis Banks regarding his extradition problems, Tim routinely recorded conversations with Temple members and prominent citizens, such as the Hearsts. Tim supposedly encouraged people in the church to make revolutionary or violent remarks to use against them later. "Every illegal act, every plan for violence was either initiated or approved by Stoen," Terri Buford told reporters after November 18, 1978.

Perhaps none of this is evidence of anything more than zeal and devotion to Jim Jones and Peoples Temple. However, the fact that the chief legal advisor for the Temple was also a law enforcement officer, and personally conservative, made Temple members wonder why he consistently encouraged people to break the law.

For whatever reason -- concern, provocation, opportunism, desperation, paternal caring -- Tim joined forces with his wife Grace. After Jeff Haas' failure to retrieve John Victor from Guyana, the Stoens took their case to the U.S. government. They sent a mailgram to ninety-one Members of Congress, including a California Representative named Leo Ryan, who wrote to the Secretary of State on their behalf in early December 1977.

As a result of pressure on the State Department, the U.S. Embassy actively followed the custody case proceedings. The Embassy reported regularly on the Stoen case to the department. A chronology prepared by State hints at the extent of the Embassy's involvement in the case.

9-22-77

Embassy reports that it has been informed by the Foreign Minister that the GOG [Government of Guyana] has decided to act on court orders issued on September 10 in response to the Embassy note requesting due process (Georgetown 2316 - Log 35)

In other words, the Embassy had complained to the Guyana Foreign Minister that Jim Jones had not been arrested. Additional memos show how deeply the U.S. Consul participated.

9-23-77

Embassy reports that, while not permitted to attend hearings in the Stoen case which are held in camera, the Consul has been available outside the Judge's Chambers during the hearings... (Georgetown 2334 - Log 36)

10-12-77

Embassy reports that judge ruled against motion submitted by the Stoens' local attorneys on October 6 and that the next hearing would be held on November 18... (Georgetown 2528 - Log 41)

12-23-77

Memo from R. Hennemeyer, Consular Affairs, to S. Shelton, ARA, requesting ARA consult with Guyanese Ambassador Laurence E. Mann urging expeditious handling of child custody matters by the GOG, memo notes Ambassador Mann's interest and previous contacts with the People's Temple... (Log 427)

A diplomatic note sent to the government of Guyana on September 16 shows still deeper involvement. The note summarized the facts of the case up to that point, and made a recommendation.

We are concerned that expeditious and unimpeded due process under Guyana judicial procedure be followed. It is significant to note that this case involves only American citizens, all of whom are residents of California. Accordingly, it would seem appropriate that the California court would be the proper authority to decide the custody

question. Indeed, normal procedure in cases such as this would require the recognition of the California decree.

While the Stoens relied on the judicial process and Embassy interest to obtain custody of their child, other relatives of Temple members took different steps. Several hired a private detective to investigate Peoples Temple and report on the condition of relatives in Jonestown.

Joseph A. Mazor first investigated Peoples Temple in late 1976, at the request of a friend on the San Francisco police force, he told The Los Angeles Times in a lengthy interview. He claims New West Magazine referred ex-members to him for help early in 1977. But it wasn't until April 12, 1977 that he applied to the State of California for a private investigator's license. That was unusual, since Mazor was an ex-convict who had been in and out of California prisons since 1963 on bad check charges and parole violations. Before then he'd run into trouble in Illinois and Florida. Nevertheless, Mazor boasted, he was the first and only ex-convict to get licensed by the state.

By August that same year, Mazor said he was working for eighteen families or former Temple members. Grace Stoen hired him to serve papers on Jim Jones. Marvin and Jackie Swinney asked the detective to investigate a property transfer. Howard Oliver retained him to return his sons, Bruce and Bill. Walter Jones paid him to retrieve Vincent Lopez, as did Neva Sly, to return her son, Mark.

Mazor saw Peoples Temple as a potential goldmine. In a conversation taped by Temple plant Carol McCoy, he warned that it would take a lot of money to get her children out of Jonestown. "I'm not going to encourage you or discourage you," he equivocated, "but it's going to cost and there's always a chance you may not get them. I think you stand a good chance, though. About a seventy percent chance." Mazor did not quote any prices to McCoy, but he did mention the possibility of kidnapping her children.

According to Mazor, he recovered several relatives by force. He says he nabbed two kids destined for Jonestown as their mother was packing. He returned the children to their legal guardians, and turned over the mother to other ex-members to be deprogrammed. He also claims he grabbed two teenagers out of a hut in Jonestown, chloroformed them, and escaped through the Venezuelan jungle.

Mazor was the ultimate con-man. He told people what he thought they wanted to hear. He told Carol McCoy,

for example, that there was no school in Jonestown, and that he expected Jim to pack up, take the money, and leave. He told Times reporter Evan Maxwell that the Concerned Relatives lied to him: there was no barbed wire, no armed guards at Jonestown, "nothing like what they had been led to expect." He told Jim Jones -- when he finally met him in September 1978 -- that he, Mazor, was part of a conspiracy plotted by the Concerned Relatives. He told Karen Tow Layton's mother that he had recruited Karen as his spy in Jonestown, and that he'd had an autopsy performed on Karen in Guyana which showed she'd been beaten before her death.

We could not find out whom Mazor supposedly kidnapped from Jonestown. It's unlikely that such a dramatic rescue would have gone unnoticed since most of the "huts" in Jonestown housed several people. Our own visits to Guyana convinced us it would be almost impossible for foreigners to carry two unconscious bodies through the jungles of the Northwest District. We are also convinced it would have been impossible for anyone to perform an autopsy on Karen Tow Layton before the Guyana Defense Force arrived following the suicides.

Mazor made one of his more outlandish statements at a meeting initiated by attorney Mark Lane and author Donald Freed. Mazor, Lane, Freed, and Charles Garry's assistant Pat Richartz got together to discuss a movie contract for the Peoples Temple story. According to Richartz, Paul Jerrico was going to pay \$25,000 each to Garry and Mazor to serve as technical advisors for the film. At the meeting, Mazor told the group he had asked Idi Amin to intercede with the President of Guyana on behalf of the children of Jonestown. His statement provoked the following exchange:

Lane: Did you go to Uganda to talk to him?
Mazor: No.
Lane: That was a good decision. That was wise.
Mazor: He said he called him.
Richartz: Idi Amin said he called the President of Guyana.
Mazor: Whether he did or not, I don't know.
Lane: You appealed to one of the leading humanitarians in the world on behalf of the children.

Mazor's stories are a combination of fact and fantasy. Parts of them are true, but out of context. Other parts are absolutely false. It's impossible to tell for whom he worked or why, although money was one motivating

factor. He said a secret visit he made to Jonestown in September 1977 convinced him that the defectors were not being candid with him.

I began to have second thoughts about the whole thing... Some things really began to bother me... [Most defectors were in the] upper levels of the class system that was Jonestown.

Almost all the defectors had been on the planning commission -- up in the hierarchy. They were almost all white, and were for the most part directly involved in carrying out Jones' wishes. There wasn't a peon among them.

But Pat Richartz says Mazor was never there in 1977. And State Department cables show that Mazor hadn't been to Jonestown before September 1978. He met with Embassy Consul Doug Ellice on September 10, and told him he had been to Guyana before, but not to Jonestown. Ellice suggested that he visit the settlement. He did so, and returned September 14 to tell Ellice that he'd offered to help 35 to 40 people leave. None accepted his offer.

Mazor later swore in a deposition that one of his clients, Grace Stoen, told him that her son had been conceived in the back of a Temple bus -- by Jim Jones.

Everything about Mazor is contradictory. We don't know if he were merely an opportunist, willing to work for whomever would pay him, or if he had ties to American law enforcement. Or if, as Peoples Temple members began to suspect, he worked for Interpol.

Certainly Peoples Temple did not trust Mazor. A letter from Gene Chaikin to Charles Garry dated August 25, 1977 suggested that the group file a complaint with the California Office of Consumer Affairs. Temple members believed Mazor had been the one who was calling the U.S. Embassy from "the Attorney General's office." Chaikin felt they should retaliate by getting the detective's license revoked.

The only thing clear about Mazor is that he became an important link between ex-members, relatives, and the Stoens. He fed them information -- and misinformation -- about Jonestown and about each other. Eventually he fed Jim and other church leaders the same thing about the relatives. He was in Guyana at two crucial times: during Jeff Haas' September 1977 visit, and again in September 1978, two months before the suicides.

Peoples Temple tended to operate in secrecy, as do most new religious groups whose believers feel under attack. People who left the Temple maintained the secrecy because they were afraid. The New West articles released many ex-members from fear by killing some of the secrecy surrounding Peoples Temple. As a result, they began to file lawsuits. Al and Jeannie Mills, for example, sued Peoples Temple August 30, 1977 to recover property they had given to the church. On August 11, Grace Stoen amended her divorce case to regain custody of her son. On October 17, Howard and Beverly Oliver revoked the power of attorney they'd granted certain church members to care for their 18-year-old son Bill; less than a month later, they decided the Temple would not voluntarily return him and asked the courts to order his return. Harry and Rosemary Williams sued Peoples Temple December 9, claiming interest in a property on Lobos Street in San Francisco.

During this time only one criminal complaint against the church was lodged with the police. Ex-members Wade and Mabel Medlock alleged that Jim and other church leaders had extorted the Medlock's property.

The magazine articles, subsequent publicity, a phone call from Joe Mazor, and pressure from the Stoens' lawyer prompted U.S. Embassy Consul McCoy to visit Jonestown on August 30, 1977. He talked with Caroline Looman, decided that she wasn't being held against her will -- as her parents had claimed -- and also checked on the whereabouts and condition of John Victor Stoen. At that time, Leo Broussard, a Jonestown resident, told McCoy he wanted to return to the U.S. McCoy in turn informed Jim Jones of the request. "The Embassy later confirmed that the Peoples Temple assisted Broussard and that he had returned to the U.S.," observed the House Foreign Affairs Committee report on Leo Ryan's death.

Besides the Stoens and the Olivers, other families began to inquire about their relatives in Jonestown. Steven Katsaris traveled to Guyana September 26, 1977 to meet with his 24-year-old daughter, Maria. Maria, who lived in Jim's cabin and took care of John Victor, refused to see him. Katsaris returned to Washington, D.C., where he talked with the military advisor to Vice President Walter Mondale, the State Department's Guyana Desk officer, and several Members of Congress.

He flew to Guyana again in November and after several days' wait finally talked to Maria in the presence of several Temple members and U.S. Consul McCoy. At the meeting, Maria accused her father of making sexual advances when she was a teenager. Her coldness and distance increased Katsaris' anxiety, and his fears, along

with the Stoens', became rallying points for the Concerned Relatives.

In an effort to deal with some of the relatives, Peoples Temple patched several phone calls through the radio from Jonestown to the U.S. Transcripts of the calls reveal a terrible affection and antagonism between the relatives. A phone patch between Sandy Rozyngo in California and her brother Mike in Jonestown shows the dilemma each faced:

- Mike: Listen, there is no need to debate this. I am happy. I am living my own life -- and you live your own life.
- Sandy: OK, Mike, let me at least tell you about some things that are happening here in the U.S. so you will know what is happening... Mike, the Klan is not marching in the streets. Marshall Kilduff is not dead. Whatever you have heard -- it's probably a lie, OK? But life is going on in the U.S. as normal. There are no racists hanging blacks in the parks.
- Mike: Sandy, why don't you live your own life? I am in agriculture and I am enjoying it very much.
- Sandy: ...Why don't you come back and you can go to college and you can do the things that I know you have always wanted to do. I know you wanted to be a doctor more than you wanted to live even... I'm giving you the chance to do what you wanted to do and I know you can be happy doing it. I just don't understand.
- Mike: I am a free moral agent and I came down here because I wanted to. I love you, Sandy.
- Sandy: I love you too, Mike. But please remember, if there is ever anything you need from me, you know what to do -- call me, write a letter, somehow, go to the Consulate down there -- they will help you.

Sandy was just one of many relatives who offered to help their family members to leave Jonestown. Mickey Touchette was another who told her family to call her in San Francisco if they ever wanted to leave. The conver-

sation with her family had an odd tone to it, as though Mickey's relatives in Jonestown were speaking to an audience larger than one individual. Her mother Joyce accused her of engaging in terrorist activities, while her father asked about a check she supposedly forged. An interesting exchange between Mickey and her father occurred towards the end of the discussion.

Mickey: I don't know if that was my father or not talking -- was that Charlie?

Charlie: Mickey, this is your father and I am tired of this nonsense.

Mickey: OK, daddy, call it nonsense, but I know I am telling the truth, and I know that in your heart you know I am telling the truth. I want you to know I am here in San Francisco and I can easily be reached. Call me when you want to get out of Peoples Temple. You don't have to stay there and live that life you are living for the rest of your life. You can get out and be free and be your own person and make your own decisions.

Charlie: Mickey, government people from all over Guyana look at this place and tell us how beautiful it is and what a good job we have done here. You talk like a fool!

Mickey: I'm sorry you think that, daddy, but like I said, when you decide to leave and when you want to leave and when you want to get out of there, come out. We are not going to give up here. Tell Jim Jones that, we are not going to give up. And he can sit back there and he can laugh and laugh and laugh because we in the U.S. are going to continue until our families are returned to us.

Charlie: Mickey, are you going to kidnap us?

Mickey: No, daddy, that is your word. I didn't say that. We'll do it legally, everything will be done legally. And like I said, Jim Jones will not be able to continue ripping up families and controlling peoples' minds the way he does it.

Charlie: Mickey, I am an adult and I have made up my own mind.

Mickey's comments indicate the Concerned Relatives had already begun to organize by December 1977. Their plan, according to Mickey, was to hit Peoples Temple with legal action. Earlier lawsuits might have been coordinated. Future lawsuits most certainly would be.

It's likely that California state action against Jim also resulted from organized pressure. On October 17, the California Attorney General filed notice in Los Angeles Municipal Court that it planned to rescind a 1974 order sealing Jim's arrest record. He was arrested in December 1973 on a misdemeanor lewd conduct charge in Los Angeles. The city attorney moved to dismiss the case at the time because he received no evidence of violation. The judge ordered Jim's record sealed and destroyed. But the 1977 Notice to Vacate Order appended all the records in that case as exhibits.

Charles Garry fought against opening up Jim's arrest record, although the state effectively published it in its initial notice. Garry argued that the judge acted properly in sealing the records. Furthermore, "to unseal the records at this time would be an unreasonable and unconstitutional invasion of Mr. Jones' right to privacy."

The Municipal Court denied the Attorney General's request. On April 28, 1978 an appeal was filed. And on August 4, the Appeals Court for the California Superior Court dismissed the appeal. An order sealing records, it said, was not subject to appeal.

Tim Stoen knew of the arrest, and of the court order. The Los Angeles attorney handling the original case for Jim wrote him briefly on October 31, 1977.

It is most urgent that you contact me as soon as possible. This is in regard to a matter which I handled with Tim Stoen several years ago.

It's possible Tim instigated the Attorney General's action through his contacts as a former Assistant District Attorney.

So with several lawsuits, a criminal complaint, and the revocation of the seal on Jim's arrest records pending, Tim Stoen and the rest of the relatives waited. They would try to do things calmly, legally -- for a time.