

Memorandum

- Assoc. Dir. _____
- Dep. AD Adm. _____
- Dep. AD Inv. _____
- Asst. Dir.:
- Adm. Serv.
- Crim. Inv.
- Ident. _____
- Intell. _____
- Laboratory _____
- Legal Coun. _____
- Plan. & Insp. _____
- Rec. Mgnt. _____
- Tech. Servs. _____
- Training _____
- Public Affs. Off.
- Telephone Rm. _____
- Director's Sec'y _____

TO : Mr. Moore

DATE: 3/16/79

FROM : W.D. Gow

- 1 - Mr. Moore
- 1 - Mr. Ingram
- 1 - Mr. Gow
- 1 - Mr. [Redacted]
- 1 - Mr. Boynton

SUBJECT: RYMUR

INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 12/18/92 BY 60320 DM/MLK

PURPOSE: To report the facts surrounding the suicide and press conference of Michael Prokes, a survivor of the mass suicide of People's Temple (PT) members at Jonestown, Guyana, on 11/18/78. (u)

RECOMMENDATION: None. For information. (u)

Handwritten initials/signature

APPROVED: _____	Adm. Serv. _____	Legal Coun. _____
Director _____	Crim. Inv. <i>M/S</i>	Plan. & Insp. _____
Assoc. Dir. _____	Ident. _____	Rec. Mgnt. _____
Dep. AD Adm. _____	Intell. _____	Tech. Servs. _____
Dep. AD Inv. _____	Laboratory _____	Training _____
		Public Affs. Off. _____

SYNOPSIS: Michael Prokes, PT member and survivor of the mass suicide in Guyana, committed suicide during a press conference at Modesto, California, on 3/13/79. Prokes left a suicide note claiming that life wasn't worth living. Prokes' statement to the press included accusations that the FBI or the Attorney General was withholding the final hour tape recording from Jonestown from the public because it would embarrass the United States. Prokes claims that the State Department purposefully allowed Congressman Ryan to be killed to create an incident which would bring an end to Jonestown. (u)

DETAILS: Michael Prokes, White male, DOB 5/31/47, a high-ranking PT member and confidant of Jim Jones, shot and killed himself at Modesto, California, during a news conference at 7:15 p.m., 3/13/79. (u)

EX-125 REC-50 89-4276-2006

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An undated statement signed by Michael Prokes was previously located by the San Francisco Division on 3/13/79 among documents recovered from Jonestown. This statement reads as follows: (u)

Handwritten initials/signature

DES/jap (6)

CONTINUED - OVER

Handwritten notes and date
1979

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"To Whom It May Concern,

I plan to kill Henry Kissinger and
Governor Reagan as soon as I can.

Michael Prokes" (u)

The above intended victims as well as local authorities and U. S. Secret Service (USSS) were advised of the above threat. No interview was attempted of Prokes as he was represented by counsel who, along with Prokes, previously advised us that Prokes would not submit to interview. (u)

During the above-mentioned press conference, Prokes started to read a 30-page prepared statement in support of the mass suicide at Jonestown. At the conclusion of the reading of the first five pages of the statement Prokes was asked if Jones ordered the murders in Guyana. Prokes suddenly excused himself and went to an adjoining washroom where he shot himself with a Smith & Wesson .38 caliber two-inch barrel revolver. Prokes died at approximately 10:35 p.m., 3/13/79. A suicide note was found in the washroom which reads as follows: (u)

"Don't accept anyone's analysis or hypothesis that this was the result of despondency over Jonestown. I could live with "despondency." (u)

"Nor was it an act of a "distrubed" or "programmed" mind in case anyone tried to pass it off as that. (u)

"The fact is that a person can rationally choose to die for reasons that are just, and that's what I did. (u)

"If my death doesn't prompt another look at what brought the end of Jonestown then life wasn't worth living anyway." (u)

This matter is being investigated as a local homicide. Copies of the suicide note and press statement have been obtained by Sacramento and have been reviewed for relevance to the RYMUR investigation. Sacramento has instituted a weapon's trace on the suicide weapon inasmuch as we are (u)

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currently investigating possible weapon laws violations on the part of the PT. Prokes' brother, Thomas Prokes, Jr., told local authorities that the suicide weapon was obtained several years ago by Michael Prokes from unknown persons in the PT in San Francisco. (u)

The salient points of Prokes' statement to the press include the accusation that the Attorney General or the FBI is keeping the tape recording of Jonestown's final hour from the public because the tape would embarrass the United States. Prokes claimed that Charles English, a United States Embassy official at Jonestown, Guyana, told Prokes in the presence of two reporters and Michael Carter in 12/78, that the tape recording would never be made public because it would embarrass the United States. English stated that he and a number of others listened to the tape in the United States Embassy at Georgetown and United States Ambassador John Burke told them that they had better not breath a word of what they had heard. Prokes challenged that the tape should be made public if there is nothing to hide. (u)

For information, copies of the above tape recording are in the possession of the Government of Guyana, the State Department, and the FBI. Criminal Investigative Division has reviewed the tape and is of the opinion that there is no reason that it cannot be released to the public at such time that it is not retained as evidentiary material relevant to a pending investigation. (u)

Prokes claimed that the State Department was well aware of the PT negotiations to move to the Soviet Union. Prokes claimed that the State Department and the CIA wanted to prevent a Soviet propaganda victory and went to the length of sacrificing a Congressman to provoke an incident that would bring about the end of Jonestown. Prokes claimed that the State Department was in possession of a legal affidavit (source undisclosed) that there were arms at Jonestown and a visit by Ryan would be considered an act of provocation. Prokes alleged that the State Department knew that the PT members would rather die than be harassed from continent to continent. Nevertheless, State Department purposefully called the bluff by sending Ryan. (u)

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Prokes claimed that in 1972 he was recruited as an informant by one Gary Jackson, who stated that he (Jackson) worked for the Government but would not be more specific. Jackson placed Prokes in the PT and agreed to pay him \$200 per week in return for information regarding the PT. Shortly after joining the PT Prokes quit working with Jackson and became a true follower of Jim Jones. (u)

The above allegation that Prokes was a Government informant cannot be verified, however, he was not working for the FBI. (u)

The facts surrounding this incident are being furnished to USSS and State Department. The State Department has been asked to furnish this Bureau with its comments regarding the allegations set forth by Prokes. (u)