

Ryan to Visit Rev. Jones' Jungle Refuge

By Marshall Kilduff

Congressman Leo J. Ryan (Dem-San Mateo) intends to leave next week on a fact-finding trip to the South American jungle refuge of controversial People's Temple minister Rev. Jim Jones, Ryan said yesterday.

Ryan will fly Tuesday to Georgetown, the capital of Guyana, to investigate the living conditions of "more than a dozen" minor children and other relatives of constituents.

The Jones church quietly left its San Francisco base more than a year ago after media accounts attributed to former members reported faked faith healings, beatings of members and high-pressure money-raising.

Ryan said he and Congressman Ed Derwinski (Rep-Illinois) and staff aides will meet with U.S. Ambassador John Burke and Guyana government officials to discuss the status of the 1000-member church.

Ryan and Derwinski will be making the trip in their official roles as members of the House Committee on International Relations.

Ryan said he will attempt to arrange a visit to the interior of the country where Jones has set up an agricultural outpost for his followers.

Ryan said he sent a telegram to Jones about the planned trip but had not heard directly from the minister.

Last night Temple spokeswoman Jean Brown said Ryan would be permitted into the jungle hideaway only if church attorney Mark Lane was present. In addition, she said the temple wanted to choose "a cross-section of press" on the Ryan visit and wanted to review his record on "African liberation, women's rights, and other concerns that are pertinent to the interests of Third World peoples."

Ryan said he expected a number of reporters, former members of the church and relatives of present followers to accompany him.

"There has been a lot of alarming things said and written about this religious group," Ryan said.

"I intend to stay down there as long as it takes to find out what is going on," he added.

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