



PEOPLES TEMPLE AGRICULTURAL and MEDICAL PROJECT
P. O. Box 893, Georgetown, Guyana (South America)

November 4, 1978

General Manager & News Director
NBC News (KNEC)
3000 West Alameda
Burbank, California
U.S.A.

Dear Sirs:

In many ways over the past decade, Peoples Temple of California has defended Freedom of the Press and staunchly decried any intrusions upon the First Amendment. We feel somewhat regretful, therefore, to be refusing a welcome to certain NBC staff who want to come to our community of Jonestown in Guyana. We've heard from a trustworthy, albeit secondary source, that NBC personnel have been asked to participate in a team effort to denigrate our project here; the scheme being to report "first hand" that a number of concocted flaws mar our community and therefore "justify" the criticisms of Peoples Temple that have been flung about in the media for the last year and a half.

The media smear (that we know has been orchestrated by certain individuals with a determination to destroy us and what we stand for) then "justifies" others in a scheme of instigating problems for their relatives who are living here happily. These problems have caused a lot of grief and expense for our people. Even the Guyana government along with various religious, civic, and business leaders in the capital have been plagued by those who want to do us harm. Any action causing difficulties for Guyana, which has been very gracious to us at all times, is intolerable to us. We assume any action creating tension between the U.S. and Guyana is also reprehensible in the eyes of the U.S. State Department.

We have every reason to believe that we're entangled in a McCarthy-like web spun to destroy our church, our community and what we stand for, primarily because we are harmoniously interracial and we are outspoken about civil rights and social justice issues. Under the leadership of Jim Jones, we've built a community where people from all different backgrounds are free and equal and each has a responsible role to play in conducting our affairs. These facts alone make us a prime target for the American right wing. We have also become the target for a small but vociferous group of ex-members who could not live by the challenging standards we set for ourselves in order to survive in an environment hostile to an interracial, activist church, yet bothered by their failure, they could not simply walk away and leave us alone. We've never kidded ourselves about who would and who wouldn't like us.

AA-1-y-1

we do reasonably believe the staff

Please be assured, we don't impute any malevolence to NBC management, but we've heard from a trustworthy, albeit secondary source, that ~~the staff~~ now planning to come here are to be drawn into others' malicious plans. We know the media obviously isn't inherently grotesque but we also know painfully how it has been used to spread damaging lies and misrepresentations in a very grotesque way.

We know of no culture, no ethic, no precept that would expect a household to open its doors hospitably to someone coming to do it harm. We don't intend to do so now. Any NBC personnel involved in a smear against us, intending to spread lies with a Guyana datelines, will have to do so from the distance of Georgetown.

Because we dislike any action even resembling a curb on the press, we want to explain our position clearly. We have welcomed many visitors to our community, most of them strangers when they came. Their frank and open exchanges with us have invariably been a delight. Members of the media from several different countries have come, and as far as we know, every visitor has been enthusiastic about Jonestown -- about our accomplishments, our life-style, and what we stand for. Some have advised us against admitting the U.S. media because of a propensity, they say, to nit pick anyone who dares to be different. When we are informed that some want to come to do precisely that, or worse, we have determined to follow this advice.

*including a Danish film-maker &
a TV reporter who stayed for several
days.*

Very truly yours,

Residents of Jonestown,
Guyana

cc: President, National Broadcasting
~~Company~~, New York

Vernetta Christian
Secretary, Direction
Steering Committee

AA-1-Y-2

November 5, 1978

KNBC News - Los Angeles
3000 West Alameda
Burbank, CA USA

att: News Director, Assignment Editor, To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sirs:

~~You guys make a lot of people nervous. A trip to Guyana, maybe with a Congressman who wants to nose around, supposedly to investigate something. We smell a rat in this, he's bringing along the media. And what for? To make a few headlines for the folks back home in his well-to-do white district at the expense of a group of mostly poor non-whites who are trying to put together a community that they couldn't do in the USA? Is that the sleazy little scheme that's being cooked up? And again, to what purpose? We have to speculate that there is in all this an effort to create a climate so that other schemes cooked up on higher levels can be carried out without public outcry. We know this game well. It's a stinking abuse of power and public trust. Our residents here and members of the Temple in the United States have been victimized by this kind of stuff for over a year now.~~

Do you think the "news" is some planning and spying? That's just a hell of a mess.

~~We're sick of it and we're about to fight back. A National Enquirer airplane buzzed over our community and took aerial photos when we balked at letting them in here to authenticate the sewage they were preparing to dump onto the American people. ~~Now~~ ~~about~~ ~~a~~ ~~group~~ ~~of~~ ~~people~~ ~~who~~ ~~have~~ ~~decided~~ ~~to~~ ~~opt~~ ~~for~~ ~~a~~ ~~co-operative~~ ~~community~~ ~~of~~ ~~sharing~~ ~~and~~ ~~brotherhood~~ ~~rather~~ ~~than~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~consumer~~ ~~/~~ ~~junk~~ ~~/~~ ~~drug~~ ~~culture~~ ~~of~~ ~~capitalism~~. ~~And~~ ~~does~~ ~~K&C~~ ~~now~~ ~~want~~ ~~to~~ ~~cash~~ ~~in~~ ~~on~~ ~~the~~ ~~goodies~~, ~~and~~ ~~make~~ ~~a~~ ~~moneterized~~ ~~media-commodity~~ ~~out~~ ~~of~~ ~~children~~ ~~and~~ ~~seniors~~ ~~and~~ ~~working~~ ~~people~~ ~~who~~ ~~just~~ ~~want~~ ~~a~~ ~~chance~~ ~~at~~ ~~a~~ ~~future~~? Do you know what you are doing, or, in the fog of the brainless quest for 'news' to titillate the superficial gossip-mongering mentality of your audiences (who may be wiser than you think), have you been sucked into a cheap little political adventure, carried out under that bombastic, high sounding cause? ~~Do you realize that on the other side of the balance lie the~~~~

Supermarket to monopolize & sensationalize about Jonestown - and

for whom a scandal? Some people say... Could mean... name... Or do you...?

~~We are not sure what you're up to. We don't know if you are. But, I for one, don't believe it. I don't think you are coming here for honest purposes. I have learned about the commercial media. And this is why I have strongly voiced my opinion that you not be allowed into this community. You're not ready for Jonestown. The only way I'd have it would be if your reporter would come here, put his camera and pad away, and live here for a few months. We are tired of being re-created in the image of the advertising world that is without depth, meaning, and truth.~~

This is another system, a form of revenge that I doubt you

Sincerely,
~~Richard D. Tropp~~
Richard D. Tropp
Headmaster, Jonestown High Sch

And in not the only one - your credibility is low - read the things & gods.

AA-1-2-1

We are misunderstood by the superficial values of a world which we have

held in our hands
~~not only reported~~ because of its previous ~~and~~
~~superiority~~ ~~materialism~~ ~~to~~ ~~level~~ ~~of~~ ~~conscience~~ ~~and~~ ~~—~~
but which we ~~have~~ ~~been~~ ~~at~~ ~~war~~
~~with~~ ~~our~~ ~~own~~ ~~—~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~which~~
~~is~~ ~~obliged~~ ~~to~~ ~~enter~~ ~~tain~~ ~~and~~
~~free~~ ~~for~~ ~~here~~ ~~in~~ ~~town~~ ~~town~~ ~~—~~
A world whose
representatives
politicians, and
wage makers

AA-1-2-2