

# Survivor vainly cautioned Ryan about fake defector



Examiner: Eric Meskauskas

**GERALD PARKS OF UKIAH, AND DAUGHTER BRENDA, 18, DISCUSS WHAT FUTURE MAY HOLD**  
 Their wife and mother, Patricia, was among five slain at jungle airstrip

By Jim Willse  
 Examiner City Editor

GEORGETOWN, Guyana — Rep. Leo Ryan and others ignored warnings of imminent violence as they prepared to leave Jonestown, a survivor of the terror said today.

Gerald Parks said in an interview that Ryan was the prime target in Saturday's assassination and that Peoples Temple member Larry Layton was clearly lying when he expressed a desire to join other temple defectors leaving the mission with Ryan and his group.

"We knew he was up to something, but nobody would believe us," said Parks, 45. "We warned Ryan and the others, but they didn't think it was serious."

Layton has been charged with the shootings of Ryan and four others on a jungle airstrip. The shootings triggered suicides by hundreds of followers of the Rev. Jim Jones.

Parks and two dozen other

**'We knew he was up to something, but nobody would believe us'**

survivors were freed yesterday from protective custody by Guyanese police. In interviews, they discussed the desperate quality of life at the temple mission and the nightmare events of the weekend.

Chris O'Neal, 18, recalled rehearsals of the mass suicide procedure, which Jones had called a "white night."

"We voted to see who would be willing to die," O'Neal said. "If you didn't raise your hand, they'd call you up to see why. I thought it was just a scare. I knew he was crazy, but I didn't think he'd go all the way."

Eighteen-year-old Brenda

Parks said her family was drawn to the foreign mission by Jones' tales of agricultural harmony.

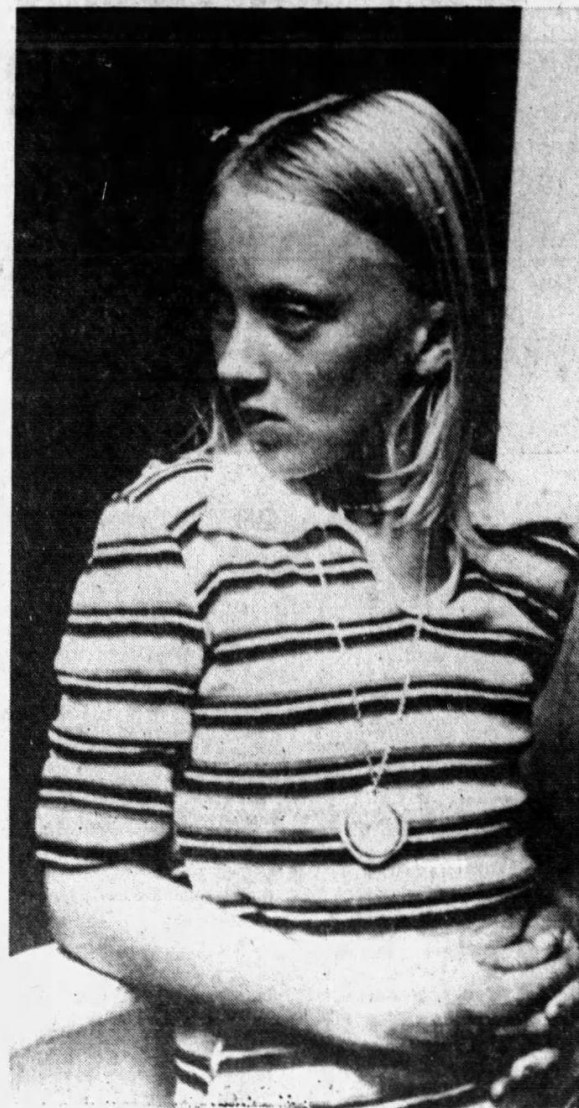
But when they got to Jonestown, she said, they were exposed to beatings, solitary confinement and harassment for petty violations of the rules.

"He (Jones) had a lot of power, but I don't think they committed suicide voluntarily," she said.

The elder Parks, of Ukiah, was attempting to leave Jonestown with his wife and four children. His wife, Patricia, was among the five persons fatally shot on the airstrip at nearby Port Kaituma.

Parks, a temple member for 12 years, said he felt his family's decision to leave contributed to the violence that ensued.

"Everybody seemed to be happy with Ryan's visit, and we made up our minds we were going to leave with them," he said. "I think that's partly why it



**TRACY PARKS, ONE OF FOUR CHILDREN IN FREED FAMILY**  
 Gropes for answer on how she feels about mother's death

happened."

The Examiner reported Wednesday that sources had identified temple members as participants in the airstrip confrontation. Parks confirmed that four of those named — Tom Kice, Joe Wilson, Eddie Crenshaw and Ronnie James — were among the assailants and said he could not immediately recall the names of others.

In another room in the aging Park Hotel here, another group of survivors drank beer and rum and tried to forget their ordeal.

"I can't sleep. I tried sleeping one night without alcohol and I

had nightmares," said one, Odell Rhodes, who witnessed the start of the ritual suicide and fled.

As armed national police patrolled the hotel corridors, survivors said they did not know when they would return to the United States nor what they would do when they did. Several expressed fear of reprisal from vestiges of the temple leadership.

In all, 32 survivors have been identified, 25 of whom were registered at the hotel. Layton remained in jail and there was no immediate word on the status of the other six, including Jones aides Tim Carter, Michael Carter and Michael Prokes.