

February 19, 1978

President Jimmy Carter  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Carter:

There is an issue of concern to Americans working for viable alternatives and solutions in our society, which has just been brought to my attention. It concerns the Peoples Temple, a remarkable amalgam of people of every race, age, and socio-economic background who have been providing constructive remedies for the problems of urban life for many years.

Against a long history of provocation and attempted disruptions of their work, Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple have now launched out into the Third World, to Guyana, South America, where they have built a community that is a model of social cooperation, interracial harmony, and economic democracy. It has brought the hope of a lifetime for youth who were previously very disturbed, or lost in the world of drugs and crime. In addition, the community now incorporates people of every age and background, including many professionals, to build a life which Charles Garry, the Temple's attorney and my own attorney in the Chicago Seven trial, has described as a "paradise". This is the kind of hope we need for disadvantaged Americans to believe is possible for them, and I believe it would be a national tragedy if certain unscrupulous individuals were to succeed in destroying it.

There have been repeated attempts in recent weeks, I have been told, to pressure and influence Congressional representatives and officials in the State Department to act on the interests of Mr. Timothy Stoen, who appears to be bent on destroying the Peoples Temple work in Guyana to suit his own personal ambitions. This should not be allowed.

I also understand there has been pressure exerted on the State Department to influence court proceedings under local Guyanese jurisdiction. This would be very bad policy in any case, and especially wrong to undertake in this situation.

Anything you can do to prevent unfortunate, even devastating ramifications from coming out of the disruptive activities of Mr. Stoen, would be appreciated by myself and my wife. We have met Rev. Jim Jones and the people of the Peoples Temple personally, and found them to be unusually motivated towards bringing about constructive and humanitarian social change.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Tom Hayden,  
California Campaign for Economic Democracy

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