

URGENT!:

Just as this letter was being prepared for mailing, we received an Editorial which appeared in the Ukiah Daily Journal April 13, 1978, re the "Concerned Parents" group outlined herein:

"ONE FATHER HAS EVEN THREATENED TO HIRE MERCENARIES TO RAID JONESTOWN AND LIBERATE HIS SON BY FORCE. TROUBLE THAT COULD LEAD TO AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT MAY LIE AHEAD."

We commend this situation to your immediate attention.

*This was clipped
to the front.*

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April 15, 1978

United Nations
International Human Rights Commission
Palais de Nations
Geneva 10, SWITZERLAND

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing in urgent haste, on issues critical to the Peoples Temple Agricultural Project, Jonestown, in Guyana, South America, founded by the Rev. Jim Jones and some 1500 members of his church. I write specifically in reference to a threat made against the Peoples Temple in San Francisco California, and Guyana, South America, by a group calling itself "Concerned Parents". We understand they were about to contact your Commission. We do not wish to impose on your time, but under these circumstances it is imperative to write.

The Peoples Temple agricultural and medical program in the interior of Guyana has been underway for only four years, but has already received international acclaim. The American Ambassador to Guyana, Richard McCoy, was recently given a warm welcome at the Project, and has been most helpful. The Foreign Minister of Guyana, Fred Wills, is greatly impressed, as are many officials from other Ministries of the Guyanese Cabinet. The Chairman of the Board of Guyana Livestock Corporation, a world traveller who describes himself as cynical, was overwhelmed by what he termed "the best model community I've seen anywhere in the world" -- no crime, excellent sanitation, superb medical care, educational, and recreational facilities, complete interracial harmony. As the enclosed information details for you, Jonestown is an exceptional community in every respect, cast into a setting of great natural beauty and peace, where racial, economic, and social barriers have become a thing of the past.

Yet for the past year, we have been subject to persistent attempts at disruption, even destruction of our work. Two men were discovered spying outside our church building during a visit from a Black mayor of Mayersville, Mississippi. Their identity was traced and they turned out to be electronics communications experts in the Air Force, under a powerful Mississippi Senator's jurisdiction. Since that time our phone lines have been intercrossed and obviously bugged. Our shipping crates bound for Guyana were broken into by U.S. Customs agents, who refused to explain why, even our attorney demanded a response of fair cause. Our Social Security checks for our disabled and elderly members in Guyana were withheld by an official directive we obtained, which was rescinded when it was exposed. American Indian Movement (AIM) leader Dennis Banks was threatened with blackmail if he did not join those lying on Jim Jones. We have proof that large sums of money have changed hands in exchange for harassing Peoples Temple. A whole media campaign was whipped up ostensibly by hostile "ex-members" of the church, but later discovered to be coordinated by a man with a 75-page criminal record and connections with Interpol. The Internal Revenue Service suddenly sent us a notice of investigation, although we had checked under the Freedom of Information Act in the wake of threats that such an investigation would be provoked, and the IRS had absolutely no issue with us at all. The Federal Communications Commission decided to reopen a very minor complaint against us that was resolved a

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year ago, also on the heels of threats, and cannot but suspect this as intentional to cut off our lifeline of communication between the United States and Guyana. Vicious and repeated attempts have been coordinated by a Tim Stoen, to force Rev. Jones' son to be taken away from him, deceiving and misusing numerous government officials in the process. Most recently Tim Stoen and David Conn (the man who attempted to blackmail Dennis Banks) collaborated in approaching our church denomination, the Disciples of Christ, with whom we have had excellent relations for many years, and threatening that if the denomination did not oust us from our affiliation by May 1st, they would be severely embarrassed through bad press. The denomination refused, and brought it directly to us; they also told us that Conn and Stoen had bragged about whipping up the IRS probe, and about the interruption of our corporate tax-exempt status as well.

The present effort, is misnamed "Concerned Parents". Most of the "children" range in age from 18 to senior citizens. It is spearheaded by Tim Stoen, who stole money from the church, had tried to provoke us towards a terrorist course, and is trying to destroy the life of Jim Jones' young son; and Steven Katsaris, whose 24-year-old daughter (at Jonestown) he molested as a child. It also includes Elmer and Deanna Mertle (aka Jeanne and Al Mills), who also stole money from the church, and molested their own children; Micky Touchette, who stole money from both the church and her own dad (for whom she claims "concern") by forging checks, and advocated terrorism in our ranks; Jim Cobb, who was discovered manufacturing ammunition; and Neva Sly, who embezzled thousands of dollars from her job. A very concerted campaign preceded this new harassment, involving prejudicing the minds of relatives who had by-and-large never been near the church at all, such as Tim Stoen playing on the racial prejudices of the parents of a young white man who had recently married a young black woman.

It is clear the Peoples Temple is being victimized by a deliberate, orchestrated, well-financed campaign to destroy it. In fact, every agency probe thus far has resulted in absolutely nothing, as the church has been scrupulously honest, and a model of human service and compassionate help for those in need. It is the Peoples Temple, not the conspiracy, that can prove everything relative to our claims. We have documents, affidavits, letters, every type of proof; and our members stand ready and willing to verify their personal testimonies with lie detector tests. Our most urgent desire at this time is simply to be allowed to build in peace, and cooperation, as Americans, with the gracious and hospitable Guyanese people.

We also feel it relevant to express to you at the United Nations our concern that concerted efforts are being made to jeopardize U.S.-Guyanese relations by trying to force intervention of U.S. officials in Guyanese internal affairs, and pressures to cut U.S. aid to Guyana, all on trumped-up and false pretexts. The Peoples Temple is establishing a work which is a great credit for the United States throughout the Caribbean, and promoting the interests of world peace.

We would like to expose to you the sham of the "Concerned Parents" effort specifically, as this is what we understand is being brought to your attention. Tim Stoen, the organizer, and his estranged wife Grace are the only "relatives" in the group who have ever been to the Jonestown project at all. The personal interest they claim is Rev. Jim Jones' six-year-old son by Grace, John Victor, whom Tim is using as a pivot point in his headlong campaign. The child is safe and very happy with his dad in Guyana, with Tim and Grace Stoen presently challenging his custody in a Guyanese court. Contrary to ANY speculation, the pending custody case is the reason

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Jim Jones is unable to return to the United States at this time; and he has risked even loss of reputation to claim the child as his and protect his son from people who have no other interest in him than to use him as a pawn. The case is in Guyana because that is where Tim left John, Grace having signed prior to that for John to go there, confirmed by Tim Stoen's own statement (attached). Rev. Jones left the country prior to adverse publicity, and was running away from nothing (as has been portrayed), indeed there are no "charges" to face: the D.A. and every other agency to investigate to date has cleared the Temple entirely.

Tim Stoen is not the father of John Victor, as his own attached affidavit reveals. He personally witnessed the child's abandonment by his mother Grace Stoen (his statement attached), when she ran off with another man and thousands of dollars Jim Jones had set aside for his son's future education. Months later she returned demanding to see John, only to fling the child into Rev. Jones' arms saying, "Take him -- he's yours!", in the presence of numerous witnesses. Rev. Jones nearly suffered heart failure seeing his son go through this emotional trauma of rejection. Yet he even provided Grace with a round-trip ticket to visit John in Guyana whenever she chose (see Tim Stoen's statement attached), after she had made her hostility so blatant, in deference to her maternal interest, knowing her long history of threats to destroy the group as a whole. She cashed the ticket in for her own use. Many other details could be given; all show that John Victor has been nothing more than a tool to Grace Stoen, a pawn to attempt to extort her demands. The child himself remembers cruel and inhuman conditions she inflicted on him, and is traumatized at the thought of Grace and Tim Stoen. Tim Stoen left the child in Guyana in the Spring of '77, not only insisting to everyone there that John remain in Guyana with Rev. Jones, but even stating to the press that John was well cared-for and he had no issue. Tim Stoen was always very open about the paternity of John, in any case, and adamant that he be reared by his natural dad. For him to be leading a group of "Concerned Parents" against Rev. Jim Jones is a travesty of any moral judgement he himself ever professed.

Bringing John into the world was not Rev. Jones' proudest achievement by any means, but he is deeply devoted to the child now that he is here, and John has identified with Rev. Jones from earliest childhood. Our Pastor was pressured into relating to Grace from the outset, when the Stoens' marriage was on the rocks, she was hostile to Tim about his deviant patterns (her statement attached) and had threatened divorce, suicide, going to the press, lying to agencies -- all to ruin Tim, his career and the church. And indeed this was her character, as her subsequent actions in the conspiracy have confirmed. A situation was forced on our Pastor in the most desperate and imminent terms those many years back, by both these unstable and destructive individuals, in terms of jeopardizing the work as a whole, a work which -- by its interracial orientation alone -- has been the target of repeated persecutions and harassment over the years. John was the result; and indeed, the child is a moral issue with the thousands of Peoples Temple members who would vote to defend Rev. Jones' child as though their own.

Indeed, if there is anything unique about our organization, in contrast to countless organizations that have folded under pressures like these, it is that those who have chosen to weather the storm are of a moral fiber to stand by one another through any kind of crisis, something rarely understood in a basically affluent and comfortable society that does not necessitate (for the majority) any more loyalty than to one's own personal

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needs. And we have begged understanding of no-one in that regard; only to have peace. Our people in Jonestown are living happy, fulfilling lives, busily engaged in giving thousands of people a better life in the most humane, concrete ways, which we could provide thousands of letters to verify.

But we do take heated issue when everything we do or say is grotesquely distorted and manipulated, with vicious intent, to suit the self-serving interests of people who apparently find unity, interracial harmony, and the breakdown of economic barriers more threatening than they will tolerate. Our lives, especially our Pastor's life, has been threatened more times, in more ways, than we could begin to detail -- arson, bomb threats, poisoning, shooting, and threats against children to name just a few. And the very people who are now acting so self-righteous about the "rights" of their relatives are the ones who have gone out of their way to jeopardize the wellbeing of us all -- threatening violence, trying to cut off our finances, our communications, our tax-exempt status as a church, our denominational affiliation, even attempting to influence legislators towards cutting off economic aid to all of Guyana, because of the Peoples Temple's presence there!

We find it strange too, that "Concerned Parents" makes no mention of the types of issues for which our Pastor and members stand. It is common knowledge, for instance, that when we exposed the local Nazis in our newspaper, and subsequently received numerous death threats, we printed that we would stand up every man, woman, and child against any Nazi threat! But we do not see these self-righteous hypocrites, the conspirators, bringing that to the attention of the Commission. In fact Interpol, established as a continuation of the worldwide fascist threat, is heavily implicated in this entire matter, a fact we find impossible to reconcile with these conspirators' claim of a "moral" position. We have the file number of an Interpol report drawn up to damage us; and know of the efforts of "Louis B. Sims", a known Interpol agent, to have our organization maligned and destroyed, as friends of "black power". We have proof of Interpol's directive for smears in the press, even internationally, like the lie that Rev. Jones was involved in a Guyanese riot at a time his passport proves he wasn't even there; and proof of their lies to the Guyanese which provoked the U.S. Customs to break into our shipping crates. Our senior and disabled members in Guyana who had the Social Security checks to which they are legally entitled for life (even living in Guyana) arbitrarily cut off for several months have their own view about "human rights" as well; and any objective observer could hardly blame them.

We raise very serious question too, who is funding all these so-called "spontaneous" efforts, such as "Concerned Relatives"? Joseph Mazon, the man connected with Interpol who hired one of the most expensive public relations firms in San Francisco to organize the media campaign against us, and was himself convicted in several states on various bogus check and fraud charges, still has not revealed who has financed his venture. But he did say he is in the employ of Elmer and Deanna Mertle (aka Mills), who are themselves longtime friends of David Conn, the man who claimed to be working with Treasury Department agents when he tried to blackmail Dennis Banks. It was in fact Conn, Mertle, and Stoen who went to our church denomination with their crude threats. It was no surprise then, to see the Mertles, along with Grace Stoen and the man she ran off with, plus known advocates of terrorism, appearing together as "indignant ex-members of Peoples Temple" in the press; and subsequently many of these same individuals on our church steps recently in the guise of "Concerned Relatives". The magazine to ori-

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ginally print the "story" praised people of the character of the Mertles and Stoens for "the courage to step forth" (and malign Jim Jones); yet we have considerable evidence of such individuals being paid for such "courage".

There is no way these people can even plausibly conceal that they are being paid for their dirty work: Grace and Tim Stoen, both unemployed, travel all over, staying at the most expensive hotels, and retain highly-paid attorneys. Tim Stoen, who hasn't worked for over a year, claims he has established residence in Manhattan, plus law offices in San Francisco and Washington, D.C. Who is footing the bill? He pleaded poverty in several newspapers, saying he and Grace had to be supported by "working and loans", an obvious lie. In addition, we have proof of large sums of money changing hands to harass us through means even other than the legal system.

Another equally relevant fact is that Tim Stoen has virtually established himself as having been a provocateur planted in Peoples Temple from the start: Note the enclosed article and his involvement in East Berlin. He insisted to us that he had never been in that part of the world. He always claimed to be far to the left, "further left than Huey Newton", and was always pushing for violence. We always rejected his attempts to steer us off a peaceful course; but in the process documented his advocating the use of a poison dart to do in a conservative reporter who had embarrassed him publicly, trying to influence young people towards poisoning the water system of a major city, etc.

Nor has this conspiracy been limited to hurting simply the Peoples Temple and Jim Jones. Tim Stoen has gone across Capitol Hill, falsely claiming paternity of John Victor while maligning Jim Jones, getting Congressmen to compromise themselves by urging that the U.S. intervene in Guyanese internal affairs, using and manipulating the State Department through deceptions and lies. He admitted lying to Guyanese officials; and stated he would hurt U.S.-Guyanese relations. Two of our members can personally verify that he lied to a Guyanese Inspector that "John was not the real reason Jim Jones was staying in Guyana", as a step in provoking the investigation by IRS. He had the audacity to broadcast in the press here the lie that Jim Jones has the Guyanese government "very much in his hands" -- the reason cited that he, Tim Stoen, was not granted an instant audience with Dr. Reid, the Deputy Prime Minister of Guyana! It's the "Ugly American" all over again, the nerve of expecting to barge in on a high official at whim, simply because it is a Third World country. The damage intended is widespread and reckless, violating legal, Constitutional and human rights, and international protocol.

We have never asked for international incidents; or to have to appeal our situation to the highest echelons of government, as we have had to do, or to you in the United Nations. But we firmly trust that you will understand that we are left with no choice; and that it is a matter of international importance, but in completely the opposite way than what has been portrayed by these "Concerned Relatives":

We would also welcome giving you some background and description of our very wonderful community in Guyana, Jonestown, the most unique community of its kind and the pride of our lives. In fact, the only "ex-members" of this group that have even been there are Grace Stoen, a long while back, who praised it enthusiastically to hundreds of people; Tim Stoen, who

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was there even before it was so developed, and gave it glowing praise; a very spoiled, selfish young woman later induced to tell outrageous lies, whose chief obstacle appeared to be abandoning wigs, jewelry and expensive clothes to acclimate to a life closer to the earth; her mother, who along with the Mertles whipped up the false "suits" they had threatened, to provoke an IRS investigation; and the young woman's husband, who was a hopeless drug addict before the Peoples Temple not only rehabilitated him from his habit, but put him through college and law school entirely at the church's expense. We have good reason to consider several of the others as well, to be of no higher character or any more noble intent; and the literal fact is that the "relatives" in question living in Guyana DON'T WANT TO SEE THESE PEOPLE, and we naturally have to take their wishes into consideration as well. The great majority of the people at Jonestown are on friendly terms with their relatives and friends back in the States. But no-one wants to deal with anyone --even their relatives-- feeling that everything they say will be taken to some federal agency, or to the press, twisted and distorted to try and harm a movement and a work that has given thousands of people security and peace for the first time in their lives. In fact, considering that only 37 people on the Project are even considered an issue --out of 1500--, this is no more, and even far less than an average cross-section of the population that wants absolutely nothing to do with their relatives for their own personal reasons.

And there is in fact a free train going right by the Project every day, which anyone is perfectly free to take if they choose to leave! And so many visitors to the site --many in an official capacity--, that it is completely ludicrous to claim that anyone wanting to leave could not do it easily.

As you might well understand by now, we are tiring of this mindless and groundless harassment. The fact is we are eager, not reticent, to have the truth known about Jonestown. As civil rights attorney Charles Garry states in an enclosed article, the Jonestown community is a virtual "paradise"! The environment is pristine: no violence, no crime, no anti-social behavior, none. Not one family uses corporal punishment at all, we don't believe in it -- that's as factual as can be: Leadership is through example, without any coercion at all. Everyone's abilities are fostered and used to the highest. Youth can learn any trade or skill they choose, or profession. Children who previously had severe learning problems in crowded urban conditions are now functioning extremely well, without exception. Senior citizens are treated royally, have had beautiful cottages built for them, and have their every need attended to; Many of them are thrilled for the opportunity to serve as advisors and teachers, and feel useful for the first time in their lives. One with an artistic flair supervises the landscaping of the homes; another has discovered how to make soap from indigenous resources, now developing into an industry. Professional people and laborers work side-by-side equally, with no friction or competition. People previously denied opportunities have become revered as leaders, because they have every opportunity to excel in their chosen fields with no obstacles of discrimination in their way. The climate is ideal, and everyone loves being out in nature with the abundant wildlife, fishing, soccer, basketball courts and teams of every type, and all kinds of musical opportunities as well. A large video-tape library, records, and films provide additional recreation as well. Now the Project has burgeoned out into a remarkable cooperative, where poverty and chronic ill-health, slums and unemployment --all the earmarks of urban deterioration-- are fading memories for people who were largely veterans of the inner cities here.

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The medical facilities are outstanding, with modern equipment, and free clinics and health care classes for the entire surrounding area. Over 1200 people were given comprehensive examinations free during a round-the-clock cancer clinic conducted some months back. Diabetes (even severe cases) have been virtually corrected by the fresh, natural diet; and high blood pressure, even severe cases, is routinely brought down to absolute normal within a month's time (routinely monitored). Arthritis is remarkably improved, and the wonderful climate, food, freedom from tensions has had an amazing effect on everyone's health.

Almost all our food is home-grown (including livestock), abundant, nutritious, and very delicious to eat. Families have individual cottages, colorful and beautifully decorated, and the furniture is handmade on the Project from beautiful indigenous hardwoods, the finest in the world. Everyone has an important part in what is happening at the Project, and all are eager to participate. It is hard to envision a happier group of people than the people living at Jonestown!

It is just unthinkable that people in our own government would be persuaded to work against such a remarkable American achievement in the Third World. This is the kind of goodwill endeavor America should want and support, just as the Guyanese do. And indeed, we have confidence that the more exposure Jonestown has, this will be the greatest single way our government (and anyone else) will become convinced that this vast humanitarian endeavor must be encouraged rather than hindered. We can say without hesitation that we would be thrilled to welcome any kind of delegation from the U.N. that would care to come; we have absolutely nothing to hide, and everything to be proud of. We have in fact welcomed every member of the U.S. government, from the President on down, to come see for themselves. We have no doubt we are a source of pride for America, in many many respects.

So far as welcoming people like Tim Stoen at this point, and expecting any kind of accurate assessment to result, I don't feel that needs to even be dignified with an answer.

I hope this will enable you to understand our position. We know that the threat was made to bring this "Concerned Parents" issue to your attention, and we felt obligated to expose it to you for the shame that it is. It is shameful that a high-finance conspiracy can in fact get away with so much, and we regret even having to recount the tale. But we see a tide turning as more and more people learn the truth; and our greatest confidence lies plainly and simply with the facts.

Rev. Jones and our members have been very enthusiastic about more open Caribbean policies on the part of the Carter Administration, and Ambassador Andrew Young, and we support such efforts wholeheartedly. Rev. Jones praises this in regular broadcasts from Georgetown, as well as in the well over two thousand goodwill contacts he has made over the short-wave radio. We hope you will feel free to respond, for again, any type of U.N. interest in our Guyanese work would be very warmly received. Our greatest aspiration is to share with the peace-loving peoples of the world our efforts in helping to build a better life for all. The Guyanese have been hospitable helpful beyond our greatest expectation, and it is enormously fulfilling for us to do our share in the development of the emerging Third World.

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We wish you the best of succes in your difficult and challenging work, and regret that with all of man's inhumanity to man still plaguing our planet and demanding your conscientious concern, that you have had to be bothered with people like the "Concerned Parents" contingent. If there is anything we can do to be of assistance at any time, do let us know.

Cordially,



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CC: United Nations, Division of Human Rights, New York, N.Y.
Hon. Andrew Young, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations

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