

Ryan Reported Dead, Mark Lane Wounded In Guyana Shooting

From Our Press Services

GEORGETOWN, Guyana — Leo J. Ryan (D-Calif.) and four persons in his fact-finding party were shot and killed yesterday after visiting a settlement of Americans in remote northern Guyana, according to reports reaching here.

A government spokesman said the reports could not be confirmed. Some reports put the death toll as high as 20.

He said eight other persons in Ryan's group, including Mark Lane, attorney for James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., were reported wounded in the attack at Port Kaituma, a river port eight miles from the People's Temple settlement at Jonestown and 110 miles northeast of Georgetown.

"We have an eyewitness report of Ryan being hit by gunfire and some members of the NBC crew and others being hit," the spokesman said.

(April Ferguson, a member of Lane's staff in Memphis, said she had been contacted by the State Department last night.

"They just don't know who's been hit and who's been killed," she said. "All they know is that Mark was on the ground with Mr. Ryan." She said she was told last night a hospital transport plane would be landing at the airport strip to pick up the victims of the attack, and would not be known until then how many in the group had been shot. Lane had not expected to be back in Memphis before Thanksgiving.)

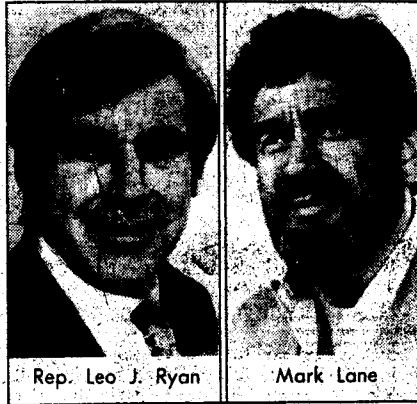
In Washington, State Department spokesman Tom Reston said a flash message was received from the U.S. Embassy in Guyana, saying Ryan and a number of reporters traveling with him had been shot and killed.

It was known that a television crew from NBC and several other journalists from the United States were accompanying Ryan.

National Police Chief Lloyd Barker said police and army reinforcements were being sent to the settlement of about 1,200 Americans that was established a year ago by Jim Jones, a former San Francisco city official.

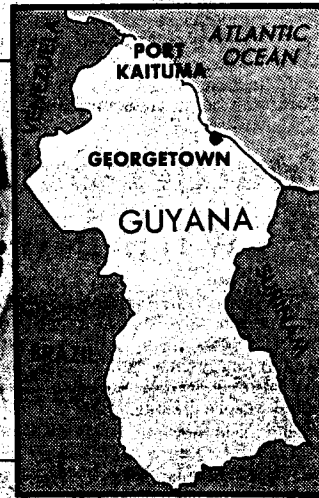
The government spokesman said the reports reaching Georgetown gave this account:

Ryan, 53, and about a dozen other per-



Rep. Leo J. Ryan

Mark Lane



Staff Graphics

sons were at Port Kaituma's dirt airstrip along with six Jonestown settlers who had decided to leave with the congressman. One or more persons from the settlement opened fire into the group waiting to board a small plane.

It was believed the attack occurred about 5 p.m. Georgetown officials said the Port Kaituma airstrip, eight miles inland from the coast, does not have lights, and the Ryan party was preparing to leave at dusk.

The People's Temple organization has an office in Georgetown, but a spokesman there said only vague reports were being received about the shootings and he would not comment.

Ryan's and his 13-person delegation ar-

rived in Guyana, a former British colony, on Thursday along with about 40 other Americans who said they were concerned about their relatives living in Jonestown.

Initially, the People's Temple leaders refused to meet Ryan, but on Friday they said they would receive him, an aide and a small group of the relatives.

On Friday afternoon one group flew into Port Kaituma in a light plane.

The People's Temple office in Georgetown issued a statement yesterday before the shooting saying Ryan had held a dozen

private interviews in the settlement and then addressed a gathering of more than 1,000 residents. It said Ryan "praised" his friendly reception at Jonestown.

Reston said the report received by the U.S. Embassy and relayed to Washington came from a pilot who had flown Ryan, a staff worker and the reporters to Jonestown.

The pilot escaped by flying away from

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Rep. Ryan Reported Killed In Guyana

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the attackers in one of two planes on the landing strip near the settlement.

Before leaving San Francisco five days ago Ryan said: "I am going to investigate the conditions of Americans (in the Jones settlement) who, I have been told, are working from dawn to nightfall, with terrible mental and physical punishments if they don't work hard enough."

Ryan's mother, Mrs. Autumn Ryan, when contacted in Washington, said the State Department has told her the congressman's condition is not known nor is that of others on the mission.

Jeff Dieterich, of the department's Latin American desk, said the pilot, who has not been identified by name or nationality, reported it appeared an entire NBC-TV crew headed by correspondent Don Harris was shot along with Ryan. It was unclear about the crew's condition, Dieterich said. Also left behind after the

shooting was Lane, who was along as counsel for Jones (Jim).

Dieterich said reports from the U.S. mission showed that two planes had flown to Jonestown and were preparing to leave when the shooting broke out.

He said some nine members of the controversial settlement were leaving with Ryan and had boarded one of the planes when one of the nine pulled a gun and began shooting.

After the passenger opened fire inside the plane, officials said, a tractor pulling a trailer arrived at the jungle landing strip and more shots were fired by those in the trailer damaging one plane so extensively it was abandoned.

The pilot and crew members from the plane that was to carry the departing sect members jumped from the plane, Dieterich said, ran to a second plane and flew from the remote Port Kaituma strip.

The pilot reported general panic with Ryan

and the NBC crew lying as if dead, others still moving but wounded and still others running for cover.

Dieterich said the Port Kaituma strip is not lighted and is blocked by the damaged plane. He said Guyana officials were flying soldiers and police to a nearby, lighted airport. He said confirmation of the shootings probably would not be available before this morning.

Reston said an Air Force medical evacuation plane was to arrive in Guyana from the United States this morning.

Those on the flight were:

Miss Jackie Speier, legislative counsel to Ryan; Lane; Charles Garry, 69, a lawyer; Richard Dwyer, U.S. deputy chief of mission at Georgetown, Guyana; Harris; Bob Flick, NBC-TV; Ron Javers, the San Francisco Chronicle; Tim Reiterman, the San Francisco Examiner; Charles Krause, The Washington Post; Gregory Robinson, the San Francisco Examiner; S. Song and Robert Brown, both of NBC.

INTERVIEWED GRACE WALDEN.

By Harris in Guyana
