

# Key Aide to Rev. Jim Jones Testifies Before Grand Jury Probing Killings

From News Services

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 20—Terri Buford, reportedly a top confidante of the Rev. Jim Jones, appeared today before a federal grand jury investigating the Peoples Temple and the assassination of Rep. Leo J. Ryan (D-Calif. in Guyana.

She was accompanied by attorney Mark Lane, who was in Guyana Nov. 18 when Ryan and four others were killed at an airstrip just before Jones led more than 900 of his followers in a mass murder-suicide at the temple's jungle commune at Jonestown.

Buford says she defected from the Temple in late October. But many other defectors have said they doubt her claimed defection, saying she was Jones' top aide who managed millions of dollars in temple funds and was the "mastermind" behind his power.

U.S. Attorney William Hunter, who is in charge of the federal investigation into the Peoples Temple in San Francisco, said that Buford appeared before the grand jury under subpoena for approximately two hours but he would not say anything about what she was asked or what she testified.

Buford is scheduled to appear before the jury again on Jan. 11. About

16 other temple members are also scheduled to appear before it over the next month.

The grand jury investigation, Hunter said, is into any possible conspiracy surrounding the murder of Ryan. But in terms of other temple activities, he says, the inquiry will be "open ended." He would not discuss any specifics.

Hunter also said that any allegations made during the jury proceedings would be forwarded to state and local law enforcement officials if they concerned possible violations of the law within those jurisdictions. Asked if he would pass on any information to the California attorney general's office, he said he had "already done it."

He added, "After my first meeting with Buford and Lane in San Jose, I referred the information I'd gotten from them concerning local violations to the state attorney general's office and the local [San Francisco] district attorney's office."

Asked if this meant the state attorney general also had an investigation into the temple under way, he responded, "As a result of our referral they do." He added that he had

met with representatives of the state attorney general's office on several occasions and expected to continue to do so in the future.

Lane told reporters outside the grand jury room that he had not been asked to testify, but said Buford was giving the panel a "full and complete statement." Grand jury proceedings are secret.

He said she had turned over temple bank account records to the U.S. attorney's office. Lane said the temple had \$7.5 million in the account of a Swiss bank in Panama. "We haven't seen the money," he said.

Lane denied reports that he and Buford had gone to Switzerland to clear out bank accounts, saying the temple did not have bank accounts in Switzerland. He said the Justice Department put out false information.

However, the Swiss government said today it has ordered a Zurich bank to freeze an account apparently opened by the People's Temple.

A Justice Ministry spokesman in Berne said the account was blocked after U.S. authorities said they would request Swiss cooperation in their investigation into the sect and the deaths in Guyana.