

# Soldiers find more victims

Saturday, November 25, 1978

By LEW WHEATON

GEORGETOWN, Guyana (AP) — Unsuspecting American soldiers clearing away Jonestown's field of death uncovered "more and more and more" bodies Friday. The grim arithmetic showed that at least 775 men, women and children — twice as many as first thought — died in the mass suicide-murder, U.S. officials reported.

Many of the newly discovered bodies were those of children hidden beneath corpses of their parents, U.S. Embassy officials said, and the toll might continue to rise as new victims are found.

The discovery was the tragic solution to a puzzle that had baffled investigators since the ritualistic deaths first came to light last Sunday, when about 400 bodies were reported found. It was thought then that hundreds of residents of the Peoples Temple camp must have fled into the surrounding jungle rather than take poison with the rest of the Rev. Jim Jones' fanatical followers.

A Guyanese government leader said Friday that, based on the death toll of 775, about 100 sect members remain unaccounted for.

A U.S. Embassy source explained that

it was not until Friday morning, after three days of working at the camp, that military search teams realized bodies in one area were stacked in "several layers."

The soldiers began clearing out what they thought would be the final group of bodies, said Air Force Capt. John Moscatelli. "We got into an area on a different side of the temple and found more and more bodies ... and we found more and more and more." The "temple" apparently refers to the camp's central pavilion.

Moscatelli said smaller adults also lay under the bodies of larger adults, and he said as far as can be determined the newly found victims, like those counted earlier, died by swallowing poison doled out by Jones' medical team.

The embassy source, who asked not to be identified, said the original count was made by Guyanese authorities and the American troops did not make their own estimate once they arrived.

The source said no bodies were found outside the camp's main clearing. Moscatelli said there were "no indications" of any additional survivors in the

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## Soldiers find

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nearby jungle. About 30 cultists who fled during the communal self-destruction ceremony have since emerged from the wilderness.

Moscatelli said that as of 1 p.m. local time Friday, 485 bodies had been flown by helicopter the 150 miles from Jonestown southeast to the Georgetown airport, 20 were in body bags at Jonestown, 270 others were counted at the camp and "more may be expected to be found."

The bodies were being loaded onto Air Force transports and flown to Dover Air Force Base, Del.

One ex-member of the cult, Debbie Layton, said she had told the State Department last summer that Jones forced followers to practice a weekly suicide drill using a non-toxic fruit drink as "poison."

# Frederick Post



## Together in death

A man and woman lie face down with a child between them in Jonestown, Guayana, Monday following a mass suicide late last Saturday. At least 775 bodies have been found, a figure much higher than the toll earlier estimated. See story on page A-1. (AP Laserphoto)

# Dover AFB strains to process victims

By PATRICK BRESLIN  
Associated Press Writer

DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Del. (AP) — The startling recount of the suicide-murder victims in Guyana will prolong the grisly, tedious process of identifying and embalming the dead, but Defense Department Officials said Friday that they can handle it here.

"We're beginning to feel the pinch at this time," said Army Maj. Brigham Shuler, shortly after the toll of 408 victims was revised to at least 775.

He said the base would lease three additional refrigerated trucks to house the additional bodies. Five of the trucks, each able to hold 100 corpses in body bags, had been rented earlier for the clean up operation.

By Friday afternoon, 270 bodies were in

Dover with more on the way aboard C141 cargo jets. The fifth planeload was due at 7:25 p.m. with 81 more bodies and the sixth at 8:50 with 70 corpses.

Officials had no estimate of when more planeloads of bodies would arrive nor of when the grisly ferrying operation would be completed.

Meanwhile, two C141s were loaded with aluminum caskets which had carried the first victims brought here and were later cleaned, steamed and disinfected for reuse in Guyana. The bodies in the aluminum boxes also were enclosed in plastic pouches.

Only the body of the Rev. Jim Jones, leader of the Peoples Temple cult in Jonestown, Guyana, was positively identified here. None have been embalmed, Shuler said, because identification was the top priority.

"This is a very tedious process," Shuler said, because most of the bodies

have "zero in identification" evidence.

Officials in Guyana tentatively identified 174 of the bodies, but Shuler said only 20 of those bodies arrived on the first three C141s. He said identification experts were working on those bodies first.

The FBI was sending eight more fingerprint experts here to boost its 10-person team because of the additional bodies.

Shuler estimated that it could take three weeks to finish preparing the bodies for burial, but he said that estimate could be revised later.

Shuler said he had seen some of the bodies, but he would not describe them.

One officer said privately that the bodies "had maggots all over them," and that limbs had fallen off some. "I've been through two wars," he said, "and this is the worst I've ever seen."

Jones reportedly ordered his followers to drink a mixture of juice and cyanide Saturday night after Rep. Leo Ryan, D-Calif., and four others were killed in an ambush near the camp.

The bodies of Jones' followers have been rotting there ever since. The ones here had been in the damp, tropical weather for at least four days and some longer.

Shuler said 182 of the victims were children under 15 years. Some of them were among those not counted originally because they were hidden under the bodies of adults.

There is no necessity for autopsies on the bodies because the cause of death was apparent, the operation spokesman said. He said there was no other legal reason for autopsies in the incident.

# A bloody, bewildering part of history

By BARRY REINFREW,  
Associated Press Writer

With each new shock from Jonestown come more questions. Why? Has this ever happened before? One need not look far to discover an unbroken chain of bizarre cults that have left a bloody, bewildering trail throughout history.

Mass suicide has been only one of the horrors of these fanatical causes or cults. Although little is known of many of them, certain patterns of behavior are apparent, many of them strikingly similar to several aspects of the People's Temple.

The followers of many such movements withdrew from the world to seek a life based on absolute values. They surrendered their sense of responsibility to leaders claiming to be a messiah or even God. They clung to the leader, shunning those outside the group, and were obsessed with mysterious enemies they believed were plotting their destruction.

Fearful of the world they reacted to it violently, often trying to seize power. When pressed by their enemies, real or imagined, they often killed themselves besleaving their leaders had promised.

In ancient times the inhabitants of some besieged cities killed themselves rather than surrender. According to the ancient Greek historian Plutarch an entire people, the Cimbræ of ancient Ger-

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many, wiped themselves out after being defeated by the Romans.

This preference for death was often associated with religious duty. When a city or nation fell its gods were invariably replaced by those of the enemy and some chose to die rather than abandon their faith.

Masada, perhaps the most famous mass suicide, exemplified this deadly struggle of men and their gods. The ancient Jews, who refused to accept the gods of their Roman overlords, rebelled time and again. In 79 A.D. the last survivors of one revolt, 960 men, women, and children, threw themselves from their stronghold atop the mountain of Masada to the accompaniment of song.

The Middle Ages witnessed a great rash of messianic cults. In the forboding, anarchic conditions of medieval society leaders promising paradise easily attracted armies of followers.

Their beliefs and practices differed greatly. On the one hand were the Albigenses, a 12th century sect that flourished in southern France and sought the end of the human race by forbidding sexual intercourse; on the other, the Tabori, a movement that spread across half of Europe in the 13th century, killing indiscriminately and living on the roasted corpses of their victims.

These groups placed little value on life, sacrificing everything for the cause. One leader mirrored their fanaticism when he described the destruction of a town that had refused to accept his faith: "The horses waded in blood up to their knees, nay up to their bridles ... It was a just and wonderful judgment of God." Another wrote, "What do I care if I die, since I am doing what I want to do," a cry which has underlain fanaticism in every age including our own.

In the Middle Ages, on several occasions it was believed that the end of the world was near. Believing they had angered God, men sought forgiveness

## Critics say U.S. could have averted tragedy

WASHINGTON (AP) — State Department officials reacted angrily Friday to the large number of critics who claim the U.S. government might have prevented the mass murder-suicide at Jonestown, Guyana, which claimed 775 lives last weekend.

The officials cite a series of interviews conducted at Jonestown during the past year by U.S. consular officers. The interviews suggested that agricultural commune led by the Rev. Jim Jones was little more than an off-beat religious hideaway.

According to the State Department,

by mercilessly whipping themselves and each other with metal thonged whips. The 13th century saw long columns of these flagellants marching across the countryside, beating themselves and each other into unconsciousness and sometimes death.

Many of these cults drove others to take their own lives. Fired with all the hatred and intolerance of fanatics they hunted down and killed those who refused to accept their beliefs. Priests of the established church were frequently attacked, but the favorite victims were Jews. In the city of Worms hundreds of Jews trapped in a castle committed suicide rather than convert to Christianity.

the officers came up empty-handed every time they tried to corroborate allegations of mental, physical or sexual abuse made by relatives and friends of the Peoples Temple cultists.

"We're not baby sitters," fumed one official, when asked whether preventive action should have been taken at Jonestown.

Since the disaster occurred last Saturday, some friends and relatives of the cult victims have complained that their warnings to the State Department about repressive activities went unheeded.

**Jones bodies  
to be returned  
to relatives**

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## Jim Jones could deliver the black vote

(AP) — Jim Jones, the black politician with his ability to deliver the black vote, and his ed speeches with prizes and datter ing claims to try to win over the press.

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