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Bodies of 400 Cultists Are Found Mass Suicide by Poison Reported After Congressman's Slaying;

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The bodies of about 400 men, women and children, many of whom reportedly queued up to drink poison brewed in a vat, have been found in the Guyana jungle camp of a California sect whose members killed five Americans, including Rep. Leo J. Ryan, Guyana's minister of information announced today.

The minister, Shirley Field-Ridley, said some of the bodies showed no indications of violence — and thus were thought to be suicide victims — but others "showed signs of violence, including presumed gunshot wounds, which were not consistent with suicide."

Mark Lane, the attorney for sect leader Rev. Jim Jones, said he was present when Jones implemented a mass suicide pact by speaking of "the dignity of death, the beauty of dying." Poison was handed out, he said, and 85 bursts of semi-automatic gunfire accompanied the mass rite. Just before the shooting began, Lane said, Jones shouted, "Mother, mother, mother, mother." He and

another lawyer, Charles Garry, were in a house at the sect's commune while the suicides and shootings took place, Lane said.

Amid further gunfire and screaming, Lane said he fled into the jungle outside the camp. More than 600 members of the sect were unaccounted for and may have escaped.

Discovery of the bodies was made by Guyanese troops and police officers who went to a remote jungle area near the Venezuela border, where the religious cult has established a temple and farm.

"Some of the bodies were found in homes, some were found in clearings in the forests, but no live persons were found," said Field-Ridley. "The troops are searching for them. We estimate some 600 persons may be missing."

The whereabouts and fate of the 600 persons — who, like the dead cult followers, are former California residents who came to this one-time British colony at the behest of guru-like Jim Jones — was unknown.

AS FOR JONES, there was one report, unconfirmed by other sources, that he had committed suicide.

Kathy Hunter, a free-lance writer in California, said today that she talked by telephone with a Guyanese legislator who claimed Jones had killed himself.

However, Lane suggested that Jones may have escaped. The lawyer, who held a poolside press conference today at a hotel in Georgetown, Guyana's capital, said the commune possessed a boat.

Meanwhile, police in Georgetown, Guyana's capital, said they found the bodies of a woman and her three children in a separate Jones-cult commune in a suburb of the city. The throats of all four had been slit.

In Washington today, a State Department official declared: "There has been a great calamity in Guyana involving many Americans. There have been cold-blooded murders and apparently many suicides."

The official, Deputy Asst. Secretary of State John Bushnell, said military aircraft were being sent to Guyana to aid in any possible evacuations of Americans.

In the aftermath of the ambush of See GUYANA, A-10

Ryan's investigative team, Guyanese troops and police officers yesterday entered the People's Temple commune, which is called Jonestown in honor of the sect's charismatic founder, the 48-year-old Jones, a former San Francisco Housing Authority chairman and California political figure whose theology mixed Christianity and Marxism.

"They did not encounter any resistance," Field-Ridley said. In Washington, the State Department quoted a Guyana police official as saying: "It appears as if as many as 400 members of the Jonestown People's Temple community may be dead."

STEPHEN KATZARIS, a Potter Valley, Calif., psychologist who accompanied Ryan to Guyana in a futile attempt to get his daughter out of Jonestown, said the residents of

Found

the camp had held bizarre mass suicide rehearsals and had signed undated suicide notes, before they left California for Guyana.

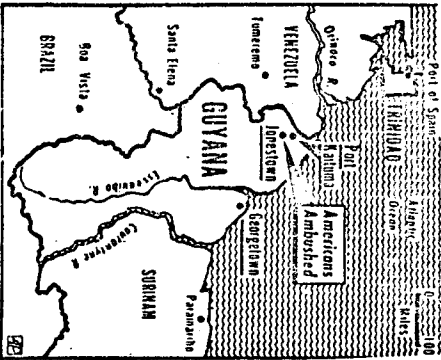
The mass suicide pact was confirmed by Lane, the flamboyant lawyer who represented Jones in the cult's dealings with Ryan. Lane who traveled to Guyana with the Ryan party, said suicide was openly discussed at a community meeting of the sect.

Later, he disclosed, two cultists told him that "we are all going to die now . . . They were smiling. . . they looked genuinely happy."

The use of an unidentified poison was reported by at least one eyewitness, according to information minister Field-Ridley. "A witness said that people in the area were having mass suicide," she told newsmen.

"He said the poison was being administered to them, that they were lining up for it," the official noted. The death poison was reportedly concocted in a tub.

RYAN, a 53-year-old Democratic congressman from San Mateo



County, Calif., was on a fact-finding mission Saturday when he, three U.S. newsmen and a young woman from the United States were fatally shot in the tropical rain forests of Guyana, a former British colony on the north-east coast of South America.

The attack occurred at a crude airplane landing strip in Port Kaituma seven miles from Jonestown, as the congressman was escorting disenchanted members of the cult to two chartered planes.

Ryan was investigating what he said had been persistent reports from constituents who said that their friends and relatives were being cruelly mistreated at Jones' agricultural commune.

One of those in Ryan's party who escaped unhurt was Robert Flick, a field producer for NBC News. His body trembling, his face heavy with fatigue, Flick said in San Juan, Puerto Rico: "They killed only the Americans. When the people would fall wounded, the men would come and shoot them point blank in the head."

Another person wounded in the shooting, NBC soundman Steve Sung, told reporters at a news conference at Andrews Air Force Base that the assassins carefully selected their victims. For instance, he said, they sought to slay Ryan but not the State Department official standing beside him.

MEANWHILE, the Defense Department quickly dispatched a C-141 medical plane from McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., to evacuate the wounded.

The plane left several seriously injured persons at a U.S. Navy hospital in Puerto Rico for emergency treatment. It then continued on to Andrews, where it arrived last night with five of the survivors.

The Justice Department disclosed that FBI agents were en route to Guyana at the request of the government of Prime Minister Forbes Burnham to assist in the investigation and determine whether any U.S. laws had been violated.

A Guyanese official said his government expects to prosecute those responsible for the murders. The bodies of Ryan and those killed with him could not be removed from Guyana until autopsies were performed.

One member of Jones' community, Larry John Leyton, was arrested

yesterday by Guyanese authorities. No specific charge was made public. According to one report, it was Leyton who began the shooting Saturday night.

STAIN IN THE fusilade of 50 to 75 shotgun blasts from cult members who had followed the Ryan party seven miles from their colony to the dirt airstrip at Port Kaituma were:

- Ryan, Don Harris, 42, of Los Angeles, a reporter for NBC News;
- Robert Brown, 36, a Los Angeles-based cameraman for the network;
- Gregory Robinson, 27, a photographer for The San Francisco Examiner; and Patricia Parker, an 18-year-old American who had asked to be taken away from the Jonestown Colony.

At least 10 others were wounded when Jones' followers opened fire.

Among the wounded were Richard Dwyer, deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Georgetown; Sung, 34, of Pasadena, Calif., a sound technician with the NBC News team; Tim Reiterman, 31, a reporter for The San Francisco Examiner; Ron Javers, 32, a reporter for The San Francisco Chronicle; Charles Krause, 31, a reporter for the Washington Post; Jacqueline Speier, legislative assistant to Ryan; Anthony Kataris, Carolyn Boyd and Beverly Oliver.

Kataris, Boyd and Oliver were described by official sources as "concerned relatives" of members of the Jonestown colony.

ON ARRIVAL AT Andrews, five of the survivors — Speier, Sung, Reiterman, Javers and Boyd — were taken to Malcolm Grow Medical Center, where they were admitted overnight for treatment. Sung appeared at a press conference, wheeled out by hospital personnel.

Hospital officials listed the condition of the five patients as follows:

- Speier was in serious condition after surgery at the Air Force hospital. She had "extensive gunshot wounds in the right thigh and elbow with considerable damage to extremities," an Air Force spokesman said. Physicians feared a "possibility of infection" to her wounds.

- Sung was in satisfactory condition. A hospital official said he had "extensive gunshot wounds in the right shoulder and elbow."

- Boyd was admitted for treatment of shock and emotional strain, although she was uninjured.

- Reiterman was listed in satisfactory condition with "superficial gunshot wounds in the left forearm and wrist." Lt. Col Bob Thatcher, a spokesman at the hospital, said the reporter was "in good spirits."

- Javers was listed in stable condition with a gunshot wound in his left shoulder. He still has a metal fragment in the shoulder," Thatcher said.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES of the ambush were not entirely clear. Witnesses said one of the Jonestown settlers had opened fire with a pistol after boarding a plane about to depart for the Guyana capital.

It was then that a flatbed truck, hauled by a tractor, appeared on the road from Jonestown to Kaituma. Three settlers jumped on the trailer, picked up guns and fired a barrage of shotgun blasts. Those not struck by the gunfire fled into the thick forest and concealed themselves until units of the Guyanese Defense Force appeared at Kaituma yesterday morning.

One of the two planes managed to take off in the midst of gunfire and arrived in Georgetown bearing the tragic news. The other plane was abandoned because the tires were shot out.

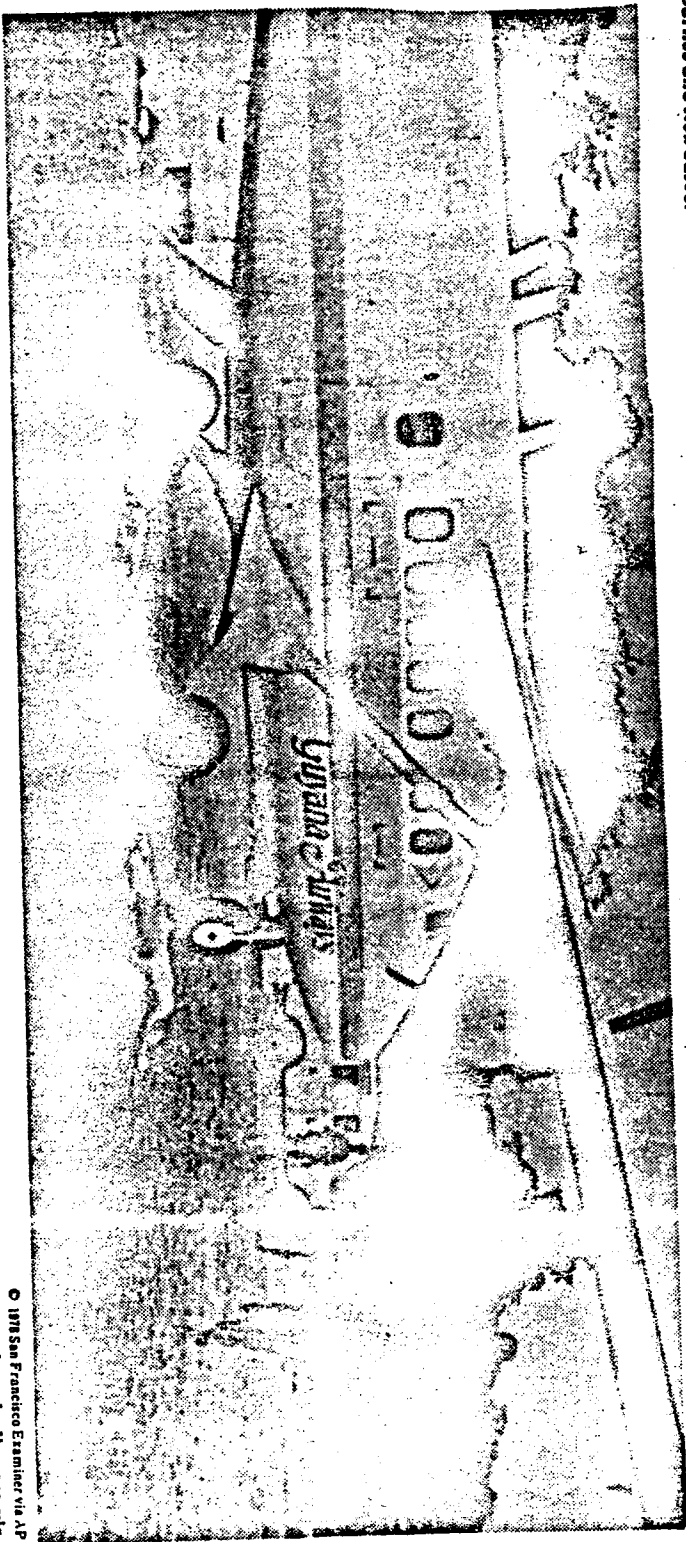
IN NEW YORK, Minister of State Christopher Nascimiento, one of Burnham's most trusted aides, said in a statement: "The government of Guyana deeply regrets the death yesterday of Congressman Leo Ryan and four other U.S. citizens. . . . The Congressman and his party were victims of an attack by Americans. There were no Guyanese involved."

All sources agreed that Ryan knew he was embarking on a dangerous journey when he ventured out to the Jonestown settlement. Tom Reston, a State Department spokesman, said Ryan had been cau-

tioned before he left for South America. "We urged general prudence," Reston said, because of the remoteness and isolation of the region.

Guyanese sources said Ryan had been advised not to go to Jones' jungle camp because his mission would be perceived as hostile by the People's Temple.

Also contributing to this story were Time-Life News Service Correspondent Donald Nelf and Washington Star Staff Writers Ross Evans, Fred Barnes and Ron Sarto.



This was the scene at a jungle airfield at Port Kaituma, Guyana, moments after the slaying of Rep. Leo J. Ryan, three newsmen and an American

woman by members of a California-based cult. At least three bodies are visible, the one at right believed to be the California congressman.

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