

4 Cultists commit suicide

United Press International

GEORGETOWN, Guyana — A Guyana government official said today the band of American religious fanatics who massacred a California congressman and four members of his party had begun a wave of mass suicide and murder that left 400 persons dead and 600 missing.

Guyana Minister of Information Shirley Field-Ridley, who at first reported the mass suicide, said Guyanese troops today captured the headquarters of the Peoples Temple in the jungle city of Jonestown and found that some of the victims apparently were murdered.

MRS. FIELD-RIDLEY told a news conference that some of the victims showed signs of violence, including presumed gunshot wounds, which were not consistent with suicide. She said some of the victims showed no signs of violence and were presumed to have been poison victims.

She said a man who fled from the cult community headed by a fellow, the Rev. Jim Jones, escaped a police station in the jungle interior of Guyana Sunday and reported that leaders of the sect were preparing for a mass suicide procession.

Jones, 45, variously called himself the "prophet of God" and "father" and preached a flamboyant mixture of old-time faith healing, racial integration and socialism.

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

It was immediately known if they had fled into the jungle surrounding the Peoples Temple 120 miles west of Georgetown near the Venezuelan border, if they were dead.

THE BIZARRE CASE blazed into violence at 2:30 p.m. Saturday when an ambush by members of the sect in a jungle snuff killed Rep. Leo J. Ryan, D-Calif., and four other Americans when Ryan was leaving with 20 members of the sect after investigating reports that many innocents were being held against their will.

Killed with him were NBC television reporter Don Harris, 42; NBC cameraman Robert Brown, 36; both from Los Angeles, San Francisco

Ryan vowed to probe sect three years ago. Voters approved of congressman's foreign trip. Stories on Page 8.

Examiner photographer Gregory Robinson, 27, and Patricia Park, 18, an American settler.

Mrs. Field-Ridley said troops had been unable to locate Jones, a former San Francisco Housing Authority director, but religious said he had forced his followers—known locally as "7½ bunch of crazies"—into a mass suicide pact with him and predicted all 1200 members of the sect would die.

Mrs. Kathy Hunter, a free-lance writer from Ukiah, Calif., who is familiar with the Peoples Temple sect, said a Guyanese parliament member had told her in a telephone conversation that Jones had committed suicide—a fate many cultists had predicted for the bizarre figure.

Mrs. Field-Ridley said U.S. lawyers Mark Lane and Charles Garry were in Georgetown and in custody. They had been at the settlement when the shooting incident occurred. She said she did not know where they were staying.

Lane and Garry accompanied Ryan on the investigative trip as alternates for the religious leader. Lane wrote Ryan an unfriendly letter in speaking of "dire consequences" if the American government continued to harass the Peoples Temple. Ryan's administrative assistant Joe Holsinger said in Washington.

A short time before the massacre on his trip, Ryan had escaped a knife attack by a young cultist in the Jonestown compound. The congressman, whose shirt was drenched with his assailant's blood, credited Lane with saving his life at that time, but he lived only a few minutes longer.

Mrs. Field-Ridley said one suspect, Larry Layton, 22, an American member of the sect, had been arrested but no charges had been filed. Police reported nine other suspects had been named in connection with the murder of the California congressman.

The minister also confirmed that a mother and her three children, members of the sect, were found with their throats cut in Georgetown in a presumed murder-suicide. The sect maintained an office in Georgetown, the capital.

She said action to be taken by Guyanese government "would depend upon the decision of our leader." Prime Minister Forbes Burnham, who said a former member of the sect was cooperating with troops in the hunt for the religious leader and that a list of the dead would be provided to U.S. media as soon as identification was made.

Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Peter Frye fled to Georgetown to head the search and identification efforts.

U.S. State Department spokesman Mary Ann Bader said the United States was dispatching a four-man communications team and consular officers to Jonestown this afternoon. She said it would be a process since the sect's headquarters is remote and inaccessible.

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Bodies lay on the air strip at Port Kaituma, Guyana, after religious fanatic attacked Rep. Leo Ryan and his party Saturday, killing five persons.



NBC sound man Steven Sung, among the wounded, was flown to Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

Religious cult's leader predicted U.S. race war

United Press International

The Peoples Temple said racial warfare was inevitable in the United States, but promised its flock protection from any harm in the battle.

The Rev. Jim Jones, founder of the church, has said the main purpose of his ministry was to warn Americans about the race war. But he told his followers, the United States would eventually be a society free of race problems and in total peace.

The church was started in Indianapolis, Ind. in the 1960s. It was moved to the tiny northern California community of Ukiah in the 1960s because, according to Jones, Indiana was a haven for racism.

Then Jones took his flock to San Francisco and established his headquarters in an old building in the Fillmore District, a black ghetto near the Civic Center.

match in which a recalcitrant church member was placed in a ring and made to fight some of Jones' lieutenants—one after another.

There were also reports of beatings for minor transgressions. There were other reports that the property of members was taken over by the church. And some said Jones used force to prevent disillusioned members from leaving the church.

Jones, who boasted of the power to cure cancer, set up an agricultural mission in Guyana in June 1977. He then established his headquarters there.

A CHURCH publication said "He wanted to use the farm as a haven where San Francisco's mystic could get away from their pressures. Guyanese officials were dubious at first, but Pastor Jones is a persuasive man."

The publication went on to say that among the "problem people" were "the embittered son of a CIA agent, a school arsonist, a boy who cut off other's heads and the young cut a 5-year-old rated as a genius and a sociopath."

Jones said he got the idea for a jungle outpost while serving a two-year term as a Brazilian missionary.

He preached a gospel of racial integration that would create a society without class distinctions. In San Francisco, blacks and other minorities comprised a large segment of his following.



GUAYANA

Voters approved of Ryan's foreign trips

United Press International

Rep. Leo J. Ryan's heavy schedule of foreign travel was a major issue in his recent political campaign, but the voters of San Mateo County, Calif., south of San Francisco, overwhelmingly reelected him to a fourth term in the U.S. House.

He was a congressman who liked to see for himself, to check out the situation personally before taking a position on a cause.

THE 53-YEAR-OLD Democrat was killed Saturday on one of his investigative trips—a fact-finding visit to the tiny South American nation of Guyana to check out a controversial religious cult founded by a San Francisco man.

Ryan was generally considered a liberal, but he had substantial support in his home district from the wealthy Republicans of Hillsborough and Burlingame as well as the workers in "the industrial north" of the county.

At the time of his death, Ryan was looking forward to an increasingly active role as a member of the House International Relations Committee, chaired by the prominent, elderly and liberal Resources Subcommittee.

RYAN, TWICE DIVORCED father of five, also served on the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee.

Ryan, a Roman Catholic, was born in Lincoln, Neb., on May 1925, and attended grammar school in Andover, Mass. He later earned a B.S. degree from Creighton University and an M.S. from Boston College.

A NAVY SURVIVOR during World War II, he served as a school principal and superintendent in Nebraska before moving to California to teach at El Camino High School.

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Apparently, the night after he told them that—he had worked at the railroad yards in San Francisco—his name was found dead. Police were never able to determine whether it was an accident.

Holsinger said Bob's wife and two children left for Guyana. The

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Sect's house

The Peoples Temple religious cult, led by California's Jim Jones, owns this house in Georgetown, Guyana.

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