

Text

Daily Journal, Ukiah, Calif. Monday, September 27, 1976

Testimonial honors Fresno Four

The following are excerpts of an article written by the wife of the editor of the Daily Journal who was one of the guests at the benefit dinner.

...Assemblyman Willie Brown shared the emcee duties of the evening which featured the public thanks of the "Fresno Four."
"We have seen no greater example of the brotherhood of man," said James Bart, city editor of the Fresno Bee speaking for himself and the other three newsmen, "than was exemplified by Rev. Jones and the members of the multi-racial, inter-faith Peoples Temple" who came to Fresno in their support.

Mayor George Moscone presented a plaque thanking Jones for his personal support given on many occasions whenever asked, and State Senator Milton Marks presented the pastor with a resolution on behalf of the entire State Senate commending the work of the Peoples Temple.

A certificate of honor was also presented Jones by Bob Mendelsohn on behalf of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors thanking the church for its many projects "which have been so beneficial to all the citizens of the Bay Area."

Perhaps the most poignant accolade came from Lt. Gov. Dymally who commented that all people can live, work and love together for here was an example of thousands who had come together - blacks, whites, orientals, the young and the old of all denominations - in a temple, God's temple.



Rev. Jim Jones and the Fresno Four, (from left: William K. Patterson, Managing Editor of the Daily Journal; George Orsauer, City Editor of the Daily Journal; James Bart Jr., City Editor of the Fresno Bee; and Joseph Rosato, City Editor of the Ukiah Daily Journal.)

Thousands Pay Tribute to Jim Jones' Ministry

Over 7,000 people of widely divergent backgrounds, including government officials and community leaders, joined together for a benefit dinner Saturday night at Peoples Temple.

Originally the affair had been scheduled as a testimonial to Rev. Jim Jones, the founder and pastor of Peoples Temple church, and the man responsible for the wide-ranging San Francisco based human service ministry. At Jones' insistence, however, the event had been changed to a benefit for the many local charitable causes supported by the Temple.

Lt. Governor Mervyn Dymally and Mayor of San Francisco George Moscone are fit to praise Jones despite his request to remain unacknowledged. Senator Milton Marks gave Jones a written commendation from the State Senate; Supervisor Mendelsohn presented Jones with a Certificate of Honor unanimously approved by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors; and Rev. Cecil Williams expressed Clide Methodist's appreciation for the good works of Peoples

Temple and its Pastor with an inscribed plaque.

Assemblyman Willie Brown, the Master of Ceremonies, described Rev. Jones as a "total human being," and introduced him as a man who represents what's best in some of the world's great leaders.

A thunderous, prolonged ovation greeted Rev. Jones as he came forward. Addressing the gathering of over 7,000 in the main auditorium of various banquet halls viewing by closed circuit television, he spoke forthrightly about the danger to freedom in the land today.

Jones warned the crowd that whether person is black or white, a worshiper of God or an atheist, a liberal or conservative, his or her right to stand up strongly for what he or she believes may well be in jeopardy. Citing recent threats to the press, he said that the American people should resist such erosion of First Amendment guarantees with every ounce of their energies. He emphasized that the press is "both the arm and the protector of the people." (Continued on next page)



Mayor Moscone of San Francisco commends Rev. Jones and the Temple Ministry.



Senator Milton Marks presents Rev. Jones with a commendation from the California State Senate.

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Persons of both the so-called "Left" and "Right" of the political and philosophical arena made up the diverse gathering. The Mendocino and Lake Counties sections leader of the John Birch Society, a friend of Jim Jones, was there, along with conservatives such as Dr. and Mrs. Boynton. Marge Boynton is head of a Republican State Steering Committee and present campaign chairperson for Congressman Chabon. Equally prominent were the progressive lawyers such as Vincent Hallinan and Charles Garry.

Also among the many guests were: Dr. Carlton Goodlett, President of the National Newspaper Publishers' Association and publisher of the San Francisco *Sun Reporter* and other Bay Area newspapers; District Attorney Joseph Freitas; Chief of Police Charles Gain; Deputy Ambassador to the Guyanese Embassy in Washington, D.C., Claude Worrell; Executive Director of the Northern California Ecumenical Council, Dr. Lynn Hodges; the Regional Bishop of the nationwide Disciples of Christ denomination (to which Peoples Temple belongs), Rev. Gerald McInnis; Mr. Steve Gerwin, City Editor of the *Chronicle*; Dr. Ruth Love, Superintendent of Oakland Schools; Mrs. Kathy Hunter, editorial assistant and wife of the editor of the *Utah Daily Journal* of Mendocino County and active in democratic politics; and a host of other civic, religious, and official dignitaries.

The four Fresno Bee newsmen—William K. Patterson, Managing Editor George F. Gruner, James H. Bort, and Joseph Romano—recently released from jail following demonstrations and all night vigils held by over 1000 members of Peoples Temple, came with their families. The newsmen had been jailed for refusing to reveal a confidential source of information. Their own words conveyed their thanks:

"THERE IS NO DOUBT IN OUR MINDS THAT WHAT YOU, REV. JONES, AND YOUR FLOCK DID IN FRESNO AND WE UNDERSTAND, ELSEWHERE AT OTHER TIMES, IS THE MOST ELOQUENT TESTIMONY POSSIBLE TO THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN. YOU ARE TRULY A REMARKABLE GROUP OF PEOPLE, AN AFFIRMATION OF ALL THAT IS BEST IN THE HUMAN RACE."

Included in the evening's entertainment were exciting performances by the Africano dancers and the Black Velvet Revue, groups selected from among the talented youth of the Temple because of their participation in the vigils for the Fresno Four newsmen. Their performances were designed to especially honor the Bee Four.

Rev. Jones requested that no one who indicated a desire to come be turned away on the basis of their inability to pay, and that nearly half of the crowd was served the four course dinner for free. Hundreds of Peoples Temple parishioners are comprised of just average working people. The food was served by hundreds of parishioners who volunteered to help put on the huge benefit — the first of its kind at Peoples Temple. A vast majority of those in attendance, however, were members of Peoples Temple San Francisco Church.



Rev. Jones speaks out about the danger to freedom in the land today.



Rev. Jim Jones and his wife, Marceline, greet San Francisco Police Chief, Charles Gain.



Temple volunteers entered the entire banquet so that the donations could go directly to benefit local charities.