

"PEOPLE'S TEMPLE INVITES RYAN IN AND NOBODY ELSE," TIM REITERMAN, SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER, NOVEMBER 17, 1978

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GEORGETOWN, Guyana — The People's Temple has invited Rep. Leo Ryan, D-San Mateo, to its jungle mission here but hasn't offered to open the gates to reporters or a group of "concerned

relatives," the congressman said today.

Ryan is leading a House International Relations Committee delegation inquiry into conditions at the mission. He said he still has received no direct communication from the temple or its leader, the Rev. Jim Jones. Ryan said his

invitation came through diplomatic channels.

Though the invitation didn't mention the possibility of relatives of temple members accompanying him, Ryan said, there were strong signs that the dozen former members and other "concerned relatives" were unwelcome.

The group was turned away yesterday from the temple base in this capital city, an hour's plane ride from the jungle mission near Port Kaituma.

Furthermore, the U.S. Embassy here was presented with a petition signed by roughly 600 of the 1,100 mission inhabitants. The heading

on the four large pages of signatures said:

"Resolution of the committee: Many of us, the undersigned residents of Jonestown Guyana, have been visited here by friends and relatives. However, we have not invited and do not care to see Congressman Ryan, media representatives, members of the group of

so-called concerned relatives, or any other person who may be traveling with or associated with any of those persons."

The petition was dated Nov. 9. The invitation to Ryan came yesterday.

The temple also released a statement dated Nov. 13, the day the relatives started their long journey here in hopes of hearing first hand from loved ones about mission conditions. The statement labeled the effort an escalation of the group's "malicious campaign of lies and harassment," and it branded Ryan's visit "a contrived media

The statement said the visit "is being staged for the purpose of manufacturing adverse publicity for the Jonestown community, hopefully by provoking some sort of incident." It warned that if either Ryan or the group tried to enter the mission without permission the temple would request police protection.

"I want to see what Jonestown has and I don't understand why you can't look over my shoulder," he told reporters.

While most of the press corps was trying to avoid expulsion from this South American country yesterday, U.S. Embassy officials briefed Ryan about the 27,000-acre temple agricultural project.

In meetings with U. S. Ambassador John R. Burke, consular aide Douglas E. Ellice Jr. and other officials, Ryan said, he was reminded that "Mr. Jones is a private individual running a private operation in a foreign country."

Ryan said: "I am giving Mr. Jones every possible opportunity while we are here to address any and all of us."