

**"TEMPLE PROBE HITS WRANGLING," TIM REITERMAN, SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER, NOVEMBER 16, 1978**

By Tim Reiterman  
Examiner News Staff

GEORGETOWN, Guyana — Rep. Leo Ryan and members of his congressional delegation began talks with U.S. officials in this South American country today in their effort to investigate a People's Temple mission here.

Ryan, D-San Mateo, met with U.S. Embassy officials before what he hopes will be a trip through the jungle to where some 1,200 Americans live at the temple's agricultural project.

He is accompanied by relatives of some temple members who have complained that members of their families are being kept here against their wills.

Meanwhile, it appeared that a small group of reporters will be allowed to remain in the country, at least temporarily, despite a night of bureaucratic wrangling.

This reporter and Examiner photographer Greg Robinson, who were admitted to the country upon arrival last night, were visited today by an immigration official who altered their passports and reduced the length of their stay from five days to one.

In addition, San Francisco Chronicle reporter Ron Javers was detained for 15 hours at the Timehri International Airport in Georgetown before being released. He apparently was held for currency violations.

A State Department official in Washington said John Burke, U.S. ambassador to Guyana, believes the reporters will be given official clearance to enter the country today.

Deputy Director of Caribbean Affairs John Griffith said Burke is optimistic that the press corps will be allowed to remain in the country and that he will do everything he can to assure that.

The Guyanese government is believed to look favorably on the People's Temple, which has been the subject of numerous accounts describing physical abuse of members as well as financial shenanigans.

Ryan's delegation and the relatives hope to be able to visit the temple's jungle mission where 1,200 North Americans are operating a massive agricultural project under leadership of the Rev. Jim Jones.

Several temple members were at the airport for the arrival of Ryan, House International Relations Committee consultant James T. Schollaert, Ryan's legal aide, Jacqueline Speier, relatives and the small press corps.

The congressional group journeyed to this humid South American country to inquire into the mission, at a 27,000-acre project about an hour's plane ride north of here.

Ryan said his visit was prompted by reports that some of the 1,200 Americans may have been physically or psychologically abused and may not be free to leave the remote settlement.

His efforts to arrange a visit to the mission, described as paradise by temple supporters, have not been well received to date. But Ryan says he is determined, with the help of U.S. and Guyanese diplomats, to persuade Jones to grant his request, made with nearly

20 relatives of the so-called Concerned Relatives Group.

Today Ryan planned to discuss the matter with U.S. Embassy officials, then meet later this week with Guyanese officials.

"The government has been very friendly," he said en route here yesterday. "I intend to do everything I can to cooperate. It's the same as if they came to the U.S. and asked about 1,200 Guyanese (who are) in a colony in my country."

The temple has made statements through attorneys Charles Garry and Mark Lane that the Ryan visit would not be possible at this time.

"They say they can't see us now because they are not ready," the congressman said. "I want them to explain." Added Speier: "They've been non-communicative more than anything."

Ryan revealed that he became interested in the controversy after he was approached by Robert "Sammy" Houston, an Associated Press photographer and a longtime friend.

Houston's son Bob, a temple member and a former Capuchino High School student of Ryan's, died in a train yard accident a few years ago and young Houston's two daughters, Patricia and Judy, reportedly have been at the mission

for some time without their mother.

The temple has a Parliament-approved lease to operate an experimental agricultural project near Kaituma. Under it the temple reportedly can develop the 27,000 acres of densely foliated land.

Work intensified in the summer of 1977 after Jones came here and resigned as head of the San Francisco Housing Authority, in the wake of published reports alleging that the temple used corporal punishment and pressured members into donating homes and property.

At that time the jungle mission's population swelled from roughly 150 to more than 1,000. The temple has said more than \$1 million has been spent to build housing and a sawmill and plant orchards and fields in hopes that the mission will some day make the project self-sufficient.

To temple members, the project was reported to have been a haven in the event of nuclear holocaust or a fascist takeover in the United States.

For Guyana, the mission, some observers say, is an important settlement — an inroad into the country's relatively undeveloped jungle interior.

Roughly 90 percent of Guyana's estimated 822,500 population lives in a less dense 40-mile coastal strip better suited to agriculture.