

STEVEN A. KATSARIS

AFFIDAVIT

AN ACCOUNT OF SOME OF MY EXPERIENCES WITH PEOPLE'S TEMPLE CHURCH
WHEN I ATTEMPTED TO VISIT MY DAUGHTER IN GUYANA.

In July, 1977 my daughter Maria called me from San Francisco to tell me she would be going to the People's Temple Agricultural Mission in Guyana and would be there several weeks. She also informed me that an article highly prejudicial to People's Temple Church was about to be published in the New West magazine and asked if I would send a telegram to the publisher in support of the Church's work. I did so stating in the telegram that I believed they were working with people that our social system had largely neglected. Shortly after the first article appeared in New West magazine my daughter called me from Georgetown to inform me that the article was untrue, politically motivated and that I should have no concern about her activities in the Church. She also told me that she wanted to stay several more weeks in Guyana if that was agreeable with me.

At that time a number of articles appeared in newspapers concerning the experiences of some members of the Church. I became increasingly concerned about my daughter when I read that members had been subjected to various types of psychological and physical coercion. In several phone calls with my daughter I was assured that she was well and told her that in several months I would be visiting Washington D.C. on personal business and was considering going on to Guyana afterward to see her. She appeared enthusiastic and receptive to this idea.

EXHIBIT C

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My daughter's letters continued to be positive mentioning that she missed me, was concerned about my health, and asked me to send down some mosquito netting and other things that she needed. Early in September 1977 I contacted the Church offices in San Francisco and asked them to inform Maria on their radio phone that I would be arriving in Georgetown on September 26. Several days passed and I received a telephone call from People's Temple Church telling me that radio communication had not been favorable and they were unable to contact my daughter. I told them to keep trying since there still was adequate time before I would be leaving for South America. Several days later at 3:00 in the morning I received a telephone call from an unidentified person who told me that she was part of the group of people who had left People's Temple Church. The purpose of her phone call was to discourage me from going to Guyana. She said it would probably put my daughter in a difficult position. The caller hung up before I could ask any questions. The following night again at approximately 3:00 A.M. I received another phone call. Again the unidentified caller cautioned me about going to Guyana and in more forceful terms told me that it might not be safe for me to do so. The following night I received another telephone call at approximately 4:00 in the morning. This time the caller was a man who told me I should think carefully about my decision to go to Guyana and mentioned that since I lived alone on a ranch in an isolated area my home could be burned down.

The next night on September 14 I received a radio phone call from my daughter Maria. She told me she had learned of my plans to visit her in Guyana and asked that I delay my trip until December when a group

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of prominent clergy would be visiting their agricultural project. The radio phone call was prolonged with many pauses and interruptions but the essence of the conversation was a series of obstacles presented to me by my daughter to discourage me from visiting. After I told her that I did not wish to travel with a group of clergy in December and that I would be going down September 26 she told me that the government of Guyana discouraged visitors due to the "tremendous harassment" that Jim Jones had been subjected to. She mentioned that he had been shot at in the jungle. I told my daughter that both she and Jim Jones knew that I would not harass them, that I had supported her membership in the Church and that I would go to the Guyanese Embassy in Washington and ask for clearance to travel to Guyana. After a pause, Maria told me that it was the policy of the Church not to permit visitors to the project. This seemed extremely strange to me since I had letters from my daughter indicating that there were daily visitors to the project. (See attached copy.) I then offered to meet Maria in Georgetown. She told me she would not be in Guyana but would be in Venezuela during the time of my intended visit. I suggested meeting her in Venezuela but she said she could not see me there since she would only be in that country several days and wanted to spend that time with her fiance. Her fiance's name reportedly was Larry who was the medical officer for the agricultural project. I have since learned that another parent Sherwin Harris has been told that his daughter in Guyana is married to the same doctor. I interpret this ploy as a rather crude attempt to assure parents that their children in the Church are well and married or about to be married to fine professional people. The radio phone call was extremely strange and caused me great anxiety because it

did not sound like my daughter was free to speak for herself and certainly her choice of words did not appear natural. The long pauses in the conversation made me suspect she was being coached. When I finally told her that I was upset and frightened and that I would use every legal and diplomatic means to see her she replied that she would not see me even if I did come to Guyana.

The following day I sent a telegram to Rev. Jim Jones telling him of my concern and asking for his reply. (Copy attached.) No reply was ever forthcoming.

Shortly afterwards I left for Washington D.C. where I contacted John Matheny, Military Advisor to Vice President Mondale, and Frank Tuminia of the Guyanese Desk of the State Department. I told them of my concern and solicited their help. I also went to the Guyanese Embassy and was assured that I could travel to Guyana. When I arrived in Georgetown I first went to the United States Embassy and made contact with Mr. Richard McCoy. He showed me a handwritten transcript that was delivered to the Embassy by People's Temple Church member Paula Adams. The message claimed to be from my daughter and had been received in Georgetown via radio phone. It stated that Maria was happy, she was twenty-four years old, engaged to be married and had had a traumatic childhood and did not wish to see her father. Mr. McCoy stated that Paula Adams volunteered background information on me saying that I was a child molester and had sexually abused my daughter and offered that as a reason that Maria did not want to see me. After an unsuccessful attempt to make contact with my daughter in the interior I returned

to Washington D.C. and related my concern to the State Department, Senator Hubert Humphrey's office, Senator Cranston's office, Congressman Phillip Burton's office, Congressman Lawson's office, the Vice President's office, and the International Human Rights Commission's office.

After my return to California I contacted and personally interviewed as many former members of People's Temple Church as would speak with me. To my dismay I learned that my daughter had been received into the innermost governing body of People's Temple Church and held a position of influence and intimate knowledge of the workings of the movement. I further learned from former members that she was responsible for large amounts of money and while in San Francisco would on occasion have upwards of \$200,000.00 in cash and checks in her room at the Temple. I ascertained from people who had firsthand knowledge that Maria had been required to sign an undated suicide note that could be used to explain her disappearance should she ever attempt to leave the Church. In addition to this she had signed statements incriminating herself and her family of various imagined bizarre misdeeds. I was further told by a former member of the Church that she and Maria had been required to sign statements that the Children's Residential Treatment Center that I direct was involved in a gigantic welfare fraud, that it was staffed by child molesters and homosexuals, that I myself was a child molester, and had sexually abused one of the girls in the program and that the children in our care were being abused. I was also told that my daughter's life could be in jeopardy if People's Temple Church thought that she was about to defect. In view of the threatening

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phone calls that I have received, this appeared to be a definite possibility. After speaking with Mr. Robert Chilamidos an investigator for the State of California, with Mr. James Hubert investigator for the United States Treasury Department, and Mrs. Jan Tespool an investigator for the Mendocino County Sheriff's Department I lived in constant anxiety for my daughter's safety. I was convinced that People's Temple Church was using their humanitarian efforts and social welfare activities to cover for their ultimate goal which is the establishment of world socialism (facism?) with Jim Jones as their leader and that they would stop at nothing including calumny, character assassination, blackmail, threats of violence and even murder to achieve their goal. In early November I made another trip to Washington D.C. where I convinced Guyanese Ambassador Lawrence Mann to arrange a meeting between my daughter and me. He went to Georgetown and while there called me and told me that Rev. Jones had agreed to the meeting and assured him that he wanted the members of his Church to have the closest possible relations with their families. I was told to come to Georgetown which I did the following day. Ambassador Mann met me at my hotel in Georgetown, told me that Maria would be in the following day and that he had arranged to take Maria, Mr. McCoy from the United States Embassy and me to dinner as his guests. After the dinner he and Mr. McCoy would depart and Maria and I could have the opportunity to speak privately. Maria did not arrive as planned and the Ambassador phoned me explaining that the Church was having difficulties getting her to Georgetown from the interior. The following day I was given the same story. And finally by Saturday of that week the Ambassador called and told me that Maria would be arriving at 4:00 p.m. At 6:00 p.m. that day the Ambassador again

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called, appeared somewhat irritated and said he had been informed by the Church's offices in Georgetown that Maria had arrived but was not feeling well and could not go to dinner. I immediately called the Church offices and asked to speak with my daughter. I was told to wait and after a considerable delay was told that Maria was not there and had gone out to dinner. I asked that she call me at my hotel when she returned and was assured that she would. I did not receive a telephone call on Saturday night. However, at 7:15 Sunday morning I was informed by a representative of People's Temple Church that Maria would meet with me in 45 minutes. Ambassador Mann and Mr. McCoy were at the meeting when Maria arrived with four other persons, two men -- one who identified himself as an attorney representing the Church -- and two women. Maria appeared agitated, could not look me in the eye, and did not return my embrace which appeared unusual and even ominous to me. She looked as if she had not slept well or had been deprived of sleep over a long period of time and her general attitude was one of suspicion, hostility and paranoia. She accused me of causing trouble for the Guyanese government and stated that because of my efforts Guyana had been black listed by the International Human Rights Commission. She stated further that the Church had been informed by the United States government that I was a member of a conspiracy against the Church and was associated with a right wing congressman who intended to destroy the Church. She accused me of lying to her about my health. When I pointed to Paula Adams, one of the women who accompanied her to the meeting, and asked if she knew that this woman had gone to Mr. McCoy and told him that I had abused my daughter sexually, Maria refused to discuss the subject. When I told her that I had information that she

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had signed an undated suicide note, she demanded to know the source of my information. I told her that was not the important issue and that she could alleviate my anxiety by simply telling me it was not true. She replied that since I would not reveal the source of my information she would not discuss that subject. In the course of the conversation with Maria I told her that before leaving for Guyana I had spoken with Grace Stoen who wanted me to convey her love and concern to her son John. Maria told me that Grace was an unfit mother and she had abused her child and that Maria was now the mother for John. She also told me in a tone that I did not believe possible from my daughter that if Grace made any attempt to get her child back she would be sorry. My daughter's affect and the manner in which she spoke conveyed to me the tone of a serious threat. The entire meeting was extremely painful for me and depressing. I managed to tell my daughter that if she ever wanted to return home a ticket would be waiting for her at the Embassy. When I told her of my belief in God and that somehow things would work out, she and another woman from the Church were quick to point out to me that they do not believe in God.

After the meeting I went to the airport to catch a flight to New York City. At the airport I received a message to call Mr. McCoy. In our telephone conversation he told me that both he and Ambassador Mann were disturbed by the meeting and believed that something strange was happening since he could see no reason why the Church should take that attitude toward me. He told me that he would write to me, but to this date I have received no communication from him. After arriving in New York City I proceeded to Washington D.C. where I spent numerous days

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contacting as many people in the government as I thought would help me. Most were sympathetic but were quick to point out that since my daughter is 24 years of age and since it appears that she is in Guyana voluntarily there is little they could do to help me.

Since November I have received no communication from Maria and have not attempted to make contact with her since I believe this might be interpreted either as an attempt on my part to get her out of the Church or as a sign that Maria is waivering and is about to defect and might place her life in jeopardy.

Steven A. Katsaris
Steven A. Katsaris
Trinity School for Children
Ukiah, California

April 4, 1978

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

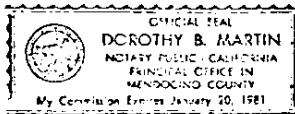
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ON April 4, 19 78
before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said State, personally appeared

STEVEN A. KATSARIS

known to me,
to be the person whose name is subscribed to the within instrument,
and acknowledged to me that he executed the same.

WITNESS my hand and official seal:



Dorothy B. Martin
Notary Public in and for said State.

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