

# Jones attracted masses to Temple sect

**United Press International**  
The Rev. Jim Jones was such a dynamic preacher that he built the People's Temple into the biggest Protestant congregation in California during the late 1960s.

His flamboyant religious mixture of old-time faith healing, suicide pacts, racial integration, Socialism and raising people from the dead drew converts from throughout the state. His membership included minorities, elderly dowagers and young divorcees.

The whole concept, including an occasional "seniors' dance" — featuring people in their 80s and 90s who boogied on a raised platform in front of the congregation — tumbled into apparent ruin during the weekend.

As echoing gunfire faded at the church's jungle headquarters in far-away Guyana, the bodies of a

U.S. congressman and four others fleeing the sect were left crumpled in the mud.

Jones, 46, who at various times called himself "The Prophet of God" and "Father," professed to have raised more than 40 people from the dead at the height of his ministry and to have caused the "passing" of cancerous tumors from the bodies of the faithful.

A short, slightly pudgy man with straight black hair, he wore glasses, second-hand suits and exuded a dynamic self-confidence.

Jones moved his multi-million dollar religious operation to the South American jungle outpost of Jonestown last year. There a dramatic change apparently began in the man who claimed the ability to cure disease through faith.

"Jones has struck us as a madman," said San Francisco Chronicle

reporter Ron Javers, who was wounded in the arm during the Guyana ambush. "We watched him as he kept taking pills until he seemed dazed by them. He listed a whole catalogue of diseases he said were afflicting him, starting with cancer."

Jones began his ministry in Indianapolis, where he said he founded a church at the age of 18. Jones, who claims to be part American Indian, grew up in Lynn, Ind., once the national headquarters of the Ku Klux Klan.

Blacks were not allowed in town after sundown, Jones would tell interviewers, adding that his own father, a disabled war veteran, was sympathetic to the Klan.

Smarting from his "racist" background, he attended Indiana University and graduated from Butler University in Indianapolis with a teaching certificate. He attended Cleveland Bible College and was ordained a minister of the Disciples of Christ.

A stout advocate of civil rights, he was a pastor of churches in and near Indianapolis. He worked as a nursing home director and served as a missionary to Brazil in the early 1960s.

Proclaiming Indiana too "racist," Jones moved in 1965 with about 100 of his followers to an area near the Northern California city of Ukiah. He began expanding his holdings as he received "gifts" of land and money from followers, which included a number of rich, elderly widows.

His preaching became a mixture of healings, help programs for the disadvantaged and warnings that a race war was inevitable in America. The People's Temple, said Jones, with its vision of a peacefully integrated society, would provide protection for its members.

But disaffected followers charged he often practiced "mass suicides" with his congregations, explaining while they all drank a dark, evil looking liquid that it may become necessary for them to die rather than submit to evil.

His following grew until it boasted more than 20,000 members, making it possibly the largest single Protestant congregation in California. He commuted, with 13 special Greyhound buses and about 200 of the hard-core faithful, between church centers in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Bakersfield and the Redwood Valley, near Ukiah.

Jones also became a powerful force with local politicians, winning letters of praise from Gov. Edmund

G. Brown Jr., as well as legislators and city officials, once he became known for his ability to produce hundreds of supporters at rallies within a few hours' notice.

He was appointed by San Francisco Mayor George Moscone to the City Housing Authority, where he served as chairman until he gave notice of his resignation with a letter from Guyana in the summer of 1977.

Jones had founded the Guyana

"Agriculture Mission" in 1973 with about 200 "misfits" whom he said needed the rigorous work of the outdoors.

As the pressure mounted to investigate complaints from relatives of church members that physical force was used to punish Temple members or force them to turn over properties and money to his group, Jones began moving his operations en masse to the 27,000-acre South America settlement.

# Guyanese deaths included suicides

**United Press International**  
GEORGETOWN, Guyana — Attorney Mark Lane said Monday a band of American religious fanatics who massacred a California congressman and four members of his party apparently used a tub of poison in a mass suicide ceremony that left 400 of them dead. Six hundred others were missing.

Lane told a news conference he counted 85 bursts of semi-automatic weapons fire when the Peoples Temple sect gathered at an open air auditorium of its commune at the Guyanese jungle town of Jonestown, presumably for a mass suicide rite.

The American lawyer said he had heard that the doctor and nurse of the commune carried a tub of poison to the auditorium prior to the mass suicide.

Lane said the Rev. Jim Jones, a former San Francisco city official who heads the religious community, had sent him and fellow attorney Charles Garry away from the scene.

"Jones had sent me (and Garry) away to the East House," said Lane. "We could hear him speak of the dignity of death, the beauty of dying. Jones shouted 'mother, mother, mother, mother!' Then there was the first burst of shooting."

Lane said he and Garry fled into the bush near the commune settlement after the massacre Sunday night. "He said they heard lots of gunfire and people screaming, including children, fleeing through the jungle."

The attorney told newsmen at an impromptu poolside hotel news conference that in a statement to Guyanese police he suggested that Jones may have escaped from the commune. The commune was known to possess a launch.

Earlier, Guyana Minister of Information Shirley Field-Ridley, who

first reported the mass suicide, said Guyanese troops Monday captured the headquarters of the Peoples Temple in Jonestown and found that some of the victims apparently were murdered.

The bizarre case blazed into violence late Saturday when an ambush by members of the sect at a jungle airport 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 Americans were being held against their will.

Killed with him were NBC television reporter Don Harris, 42, and NBC cameraman Robert Brown, 36, both of Los Angeles; San Francisco Examiner photographer Gregory Robinson, 27; and Patricia Park, 18, an American settler.

Lane, who had accompanied the investigating party to the jungle commune, said that after Ryan and his group left for the airport, he and Garry attempted to calm an atmosphere of panic that swept through the commune.

He recalled that months earlier Jones had been accused of suggesting a mass suicide. Just before the suicide ceremony, Lane said, he and Garry encountered two armed black members of the commune en route to the auditorium where others had assembled.

"They said to us with smiles on their face, 'We are all going to die.' They were relaxed and happy and I wondered if they were not doped."

Shortly after that they heard the shooting.

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

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