

**Statement of Major Randy Johnson, Guyanese army  
Commander of northern Guyana in November 1978**

My army unit was more a collection of available troops that Saturday night [November 18, 1978], instead of my battalion. We landed at Matthews Ridge at 2:30am Sunday 11/19/78, travelled by train to Port Kaituma at 10 am, where we saw the bodies of Representative Ryan and others. I awaited the arrival of reinforcements and advanced into Jonestown [anticipating an ambush or fighting], arriving at dusk, only to find no sign of life, except for an elderly man sleeping in a latrine. I had earlier flown over the site with a Jonestown escapee, whom I met at Matthews Ridge, to get a lay of the land for the best approach, since we expected resistance.

I acknowledge that I was responsible for sending out to headquarters the low number of the deceased starting at 430, since that was what we saw, not realizing there were layers of bodies. It also corresponded with the number of people we thought living there, by the number of passports the police kept.