

RELIGION

Catholics offer to pick Hong Kong leader

The Roman Catholic Church in Hong Kong said it was willing to help select the territory's leader once sovereignty reverts from Britain to China in 1997. The Chancery Office of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong revealed its views, endorsed by the Bishop of Hong Kong Cardinal John Baptist Wu, in notices posted in Hong Kong parishes. "The Catholic Church, if so invited by the preparatory committee for the special administrative region, will nominate some members to sit on the selection committee, but they are expected to elect the first chief executive-designate only," the notice said. The Beijing-picked preparatory committee responsible for transforming Hong Kong into a special administrative region of

China next year is to assemble a 400-strong selection committee to choose the first post-colonial leader, or chief executive. Various professional groups and grassroots organizations in Hong Kong are nominating candidates to the selection committee, which is expected to start work in October. In a move still hotly disputed by many in Hong Kong, the selection committee's powers were extended to cover selection of a provisional legislature which China plans to install at the handover at midnight on June 30, 1997. The provisional legislature is due to replace the present elected chamber which will be dismantled because it was elected under democratic reforms which Beijing strongly opposed.

Black church markets health plan

African American Church Health & Economic Services Inc. ("ACHES"), also known in New York as "ACHES Insurance Brokerage," announced recently that it has been approved by the Department of Insurance of New York to broker health plans in the state. ACHES simultaneously announced U.S. Healthcare as the health plan they will be marketing. ACHES will initially market to consumers primarily through the African American church network in New York. ACHES will launch an educational, grass roots campaign emphasizing the importance of preventive care such as mammography, influenza vaccines, and fitness and nutrition in maintaining good health. "We are very serious about making sure that African Americans are focusing on illness prevention and health maintenance as a way to show marked improvement in their health status," said Rev. Dr. Elgin Watkins of Bethany Baptist Church in Brooklyn, and president of ACHES-East.

"A fundamental goal of the ACHES program is to provide quality health coverage, which includes comprehensive benefits and broad networks of physicians and hospitals, to the African American community. Improving the health status of African Americans and others throughout New York state is the first step in improving the economic outlook of the community." U.S. Healthcare was selected after a rigorous review of the best national managed care plans in the New York area, according to Ernest A. Bates, M.D., chairman of the board, ACHES. U.S. Healthcare was chosen based upon the quality and breadth of services offered under its Medicare plan, including prescription coverage, inpatient and outpatient hospital care, vision care and reimbursements on purchases of prescription lenses and hearing aids. "U.S. Healthcare's New York HMO was recently honored by the Sachs Group as being one of six plans nationally to make the Sachs

HMO Honor Roll, and the only plan in New York. This type of ranking supports our decision in choosing U.S. Healthcare." ACHES will act as a broker for health plans, and through a non-profit foundation established by ACHES, the company will reinvest 51% of the profits earned through this agreement in local community programs and services. "New York, which has a well-organized network of African American churches, is a key market for ACHES," said Rev. Watkins. "We will work with seniors to educate them on the benefits of managed care. We believe it will be very satisfying to help a large number of people gain access to better health care." ACHES, a subsidiary of San Francisco-based American Shared Hospital Services, is a licensed health insurance carrier whose mission is to improve the health and economic status of African Americans and other minorities through the delivery of high quality health care services.

"We are pleased to work with ACHES in the state of New York," said Sal Uglietta, U.S. Healthcare's regional manager of health plans for the northeast market. "We believe that through the ACHES program, we will be able to have a positive impact on the health care of residents of New York." U.S. Healthcare provides managed care services through HMOs in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Ohio, Georgia and the District of Columbia. The company also provides a variety of other managed health care services to self-insured and other employers, including workers compensation managed care, coordination and administration of multiple health plans for multi-state employers and quality measurement and improvement programs and data analysis systems for providers and purchasers of health care.

NYC Minister repays investors

A minister who claimed he got investment tips from God has agreed to repay more than \$188,000 to the low-income investors government investigators say he bilked. The Rev. Rufus Jackson reached a settlement with the Securities and Exchange Commission by promising to return money to at least 145 people who borrowed on credit cards or withdrew their life's savings to invest with him. At "success seminars" he held at the Zoe Tabernacle church in the Bronx, Jackson told investors he would lead them to the promised land of 60 percent returns on their money by investing it in real estate. The church is now closed. Jackson told seminar participants that God advised him to gather a

group of 1,000 people and have them each give him \$1,000, according to the SEC complaint. Jackson said they "could prosper and be blessed by the Lord" by investing in his company, Kingdom Corp., the SEC said. But in fact, Jackson diverted the funds to pay expenses at his daughter's beauty parlor and to finance TJ's Southern Gourmet, a Chambers St. restaurant he still owns, the SEC said. Jackson raised over \$300,000 in the scheme, which he promoted from his pulpit and during his weekly radio broadcast in New York and northern New Jersey. He repaid some of the participants, not with real estate proceeds but by raising additional funds from unsuspecting new investors, said Eric

Schmidt, the SEC's assistant regional director. "It was Ponzi scheme," he added. As part of the settlement with the SEC, which was announced yesterday, Jackson did not admit or deny wrongdoing. But Schmidt said the commission stands by its earlier contention that Jackson defrauded the investors. "Most of the investors lost substantially all of their investments," he said. "For many of them, it was their life's savings." Under yesterday's settlement, Jackson has 10 days to make a \$15,000 payment to the group of investors. He must then pay \$15,000 a month until all the money is returned. If he fails to meet the schedule, the SEC can either seize his assets or

take him to court, Schmidt said. Jackson could not be reached for comment. Schmidt said the SEC received reports a few months ago that Jackson was conducting church services in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. "One of his ex-investors sent us an advertisement he ran in a newspaper," Schmidt said. When the SEC filed its complaint against Jackson last year, it had asked a Federal Court judge to impose fines and also demand that he repay his victims. But the commission dropped its effort to collect fines "because his financial statements show that he doesn't have the money," Schmidt said. The agency opted to settle on the repayment plan.

Cardinal seeks dialogue

BY ANDREW STERN Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago, troubled by what he called the "increasing polarization" and "meanspiritedness" dividing American Catholics, said Monday he would oversee a conference to open dialogue on Church issues. The first of a series of conferences, which Bernardin termed "a call to find common ground," was planned for sometime in the spring of 1997 on the "relationship between the Church and U.S. culture." It may be held in Chicago, the second-largest U.S. archdiocese, where Bernardin, the nation's longest-serving prelate, has served as cardinal since 1983. Lay Catholics will be offered an opportunity to air views on issues dividing the Church such as bans on contraception and the ordination of women, strict Vatican edicts on priestly celibacy, the growing shortage of priests, the organization of religious education and the meaning of the liturgy. "Working within the boundaries of authentic Church teaching, these conferences will address with fidelity and creativity the myriad challenges that we face as a Church and as a society," Bernardin said. "Our invitation is extended to those who are interested in a dialogue," Bernardin said. He was

joined at a news conference by several members of a 24-person committee of both official and lay Church leaders from around the country. He said the conferences would not result in recommendations to change church policy or teachings but he hoped the dialogue would address an "increasing polarization within the Church and, at times, a meanspiritedness (that) have hindered the kind of dialogue that helps us address our mission and concerns." At least one liberal Church group praised the effort. "Call to Action has for many years called for such an 'open and honest airing' of these critical issues in our church," the group's president, Linda Pieczynski, said in a statement. Some of the roughly 15,000 members of Call to Action, who support changes such as married priests, women priests and reversing the birth control ban, were recently threatened with excommunication by the bishop in Lincoln, Nebraska. Bernardin said the conferences grew out of a five-page statement, "Called to be Catholic: Church in a Time of Peril," prepared by the National Pastoral Life Center. The idea for the conference was his and he said he received approval from the Church hierarchy both in the United States and in Rome.

Church of Scientology claims discrimination

The Church of Scientology International accused the German government of discriminating against its members there and said it had asked the United Nations to monitor the situation. In a statement issued by its world headquarters in Los Angeles, the church said it had also asked the Office of Security and Cooperation in Europe to investigate the claim. The United Nations and the OSCE "have been asked to monitor religious discrimination against scientologists in Germany and take effective action to restore their rights and the rights of other religious minorities which have suffered under

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's government," the statement said. The Church of Scientology, which was formed by the late American science-fiction novelist L. Ron Hubbard, said the request followed support expressed by leading U.S. politicians for "Mission: Impossible" star Tom Cruise and Grammy award-winning jazz musician Chick Corea who, as scientologists, "have been targets of religious discrimination instigated and fueled by Germany's governing CDU (Christian Democratic Union) party and its under-30 youth faction." The statement also noted that "Mission: Impossible" was a box

office smash during its opening week-end in Germany, showing that "the German people are refusing to go along with the extremism and fanaticism of CDU politicians." The statement said documentation sent to U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jose Iyala Lasbe, and to other human rights directors at the United Nations as well as to OSCE officials "contains chilling evidence of a systematic campaign

of discrimination sanctioned and promoted at high levels of Kohl's government, in particular by Federal Minister for Family Affairs Claudia Nolte and Norbert Blum, Federal Minister of Labor." "By remaining silent while his ministers and his party's Young Union trample the rights of minorities, Kohl is sanctioning Germany's return to fanatic extremism," it added.

Karen Domino-White releases gospel album

Karen Domino-White, daughter of the legendary Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Fats Domino, is set to launch a musical career of her own. Possessing a 7 octave vocal range along with a determination she believes is heaven sent, Karen's album is appropriately titled "Open Our Eyes" on Sacred Voice Recordings, which is due in stores on September 3, 1996. Karen's first professional debut was in Baltimore, Maryland, opening for the Winans, singing at different church related affairs along with various gospel groups around the New Jersey area, also having performed at the opening ceremonies of the Philadelphia Convention Center, as well as the 1993 Black Expo.

Twice receiving television exposure nationwide, she attained national exposure again in 1994 after winning first place in the female vocalist category in a contest sponsored by Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN), Leon Patillo's television show and being interviewed on the 700 Club in 1996. In an effort to not only be a sayer of the word but a doer of the word as well, Karen has also been involved in an outreach youth program by local radio station V101 along with comedian Louis Dix and Marvis Frazier, son of Heavyweight Champion Joe Frazier. Says Karen Domino-White, "I'm grateful where God has put me. In the past, I could have been doing secular

music. But because God has developed me, my purpose is to share what God has done." And Karen has had her faith severely tested. While filming her video for the title track, "Open

Our Eyes", her home was lost to a fire, still her faith in God and her career went unwavering. Three days later she performed a free concert in Philadelphia's Paramount Park.

Worship will be held every Sunday

A unique worship experience that combines the music of Jazz, the Gospel, and current issues of peace and justice, is held every Sunday at Augustana Lutheran Church at 6:00 p.m. Leading the services are well-known Portland Jazz musicians Marilyn Keller - Lead Vocals, Trip Hardin on Drums, Kevin Deltz on


Bass, Darin Clenderin on Piano, and Pastor Mark Knutson. Augustana Lutheran Church is located at 2710 NE 14th Ave (Corner of 15th and Knott, a few blocks from the Lloyd Center and Broadway) For more information call 288-6174.

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MISSING



Lennon Drew Smith (known as Len)
Son of Marie Smith, Brother of Diann Washington-
Woods, and Jessie Ray Burns.
6'0" --130 lbs.
Medium Complexion (Black)
D.O.B. 1-26-61
Eyes: Brown
Hair: Black/Wavy/Short Cut

Last seen in Eugene and Portland driving a white Chrysler
New Yorker--Newer model 4 dr. '84.

His other car is here in Portland and has been seen around
town, a '85 Olds. 4 dr. Linc. #BVB--195. Tan in color all over.
A.P.B.--Contact Portland Police or 497-8427 ask for Diann.