

Former cult leader wants off parole

MIAMI (AP) - Yahweh Ben Yahweh, a former cult leader linked to nearly two dozen gruesome killings in the 1980s, is seeking immediate release from parole supervision because he has advanced cancer and wants to

"die with dignity," his lawyers said Friday.

Yahweh, 70, is asking U.S. District Judge Marcia

Cooke to order the federal Parole Commission to make a quick decision on whether to terminate parole in his case. He lives in the Miami area.

"He is not a risk of flight. He is not a danger to the community. He is frail and he is dying," his attorney Jayne Weintraub said. "It's time for the bars to be removed."

Yahweh can no longer walk because of bone and nerve damage from the cancer, according to his doctor. "His prognosis is extremely poor and death appears imminent," Dr. Wynne A. Steinsnyder wrote in a Sept. 28 letter filed with the court.

Yahweh, a self-proclaimed "Black Messiah," served 11 years of an 18-year federal prison sentence for a

racketeering conviction stemming from his role in up to 23 murders, some involving beheadings and severed ears and fingers.

He was born Hulon Mitchell Jr. in Oklahoma but changed his name to the Hebrew words for "God, son of God." His Nation of Yahweh boasted hundreds of followers who often dressed all in white. Yahweh preached a brand of racial and religious separatism for Blacks and was accused of sending followers to kill "White devils" and bring back proof.

Yahweh was released from prison on parole on Sept. 26, 2001. His lawyers argue that under federal law his parole should be concluded because he has followed all the restrictions, in-

cluding no contact with his former followers.

The law, however, gives the Parole Commission the final decision. A hearing officer is scheduled to consider the case on Oct. 19 and then make a recommendation.

The process could take weeks, if not months.

Weintraub and co-counsel Steven Polotsky want the judge to accelerate the process, in part because Yahweh's doctor says being on parole causes stress that is hampering his cancer treatment. "Yahweh Ben Yahweh is entitled to die with dignity," Weintraub said.

Cooke did not indicate when she would rule but ordered government attorneys to respond to Yahweh's petition this week.

Malvo seeking broad deal to admit actions

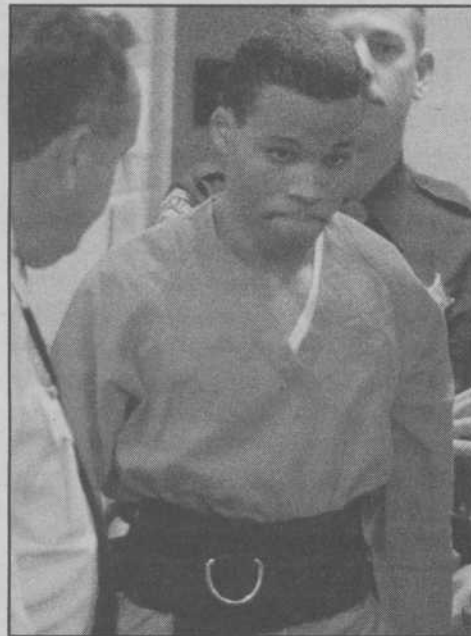
ROCKVILLE, Md. (AP) - Convicted Washington-area sniper Lee Boyd Malvo is seeking a broad plea agreement in which he would plead guilty to other 2002 shootings that authorities have linked him to, defense attorneys and Maryland prosecutors said Tuesday.

The deal, announced as Malvo formally pleaded guilty to six Maryland murders, could be reached before his Nov. 9 sentencing for those killings. He is expected to receive six life sentences, without chance of parole, at that hearing.

Malvo lawyer William Brennan told Montgomery County Circuit Judge James Ryan that he hoped to use the time before sentencing to "reach a global resolution to Mr. Malvo's legal problems." Asked later by reporters for specifics, Brennan would only say that he would have "candid, frank discussions with some local prosecutors."

Montgomery County State's Attorney Douglas Gansler said such a plea deal could mean Malvo may not serve his sentence in Virginia, where he was sentenced to life for his 2003 conviction in the death of FBI analyst Linda Franklin. He also pleaded guilty to another Virginia sniper shooting.

Malvo, 21, could plead guilty to the Oct.



Lee Boyd Malvo shackled in this file photo.

3, 2002, shooting of Pascal Charlot in Washington and serve his life term in the federal system, Gansler said. Federal prosecutors handle murder cases in the District of Columbia.

Gansler said the decision rests with Vir- (See Malvo, Page 13)

NAACP

(Continued from Page 1)
NAACP chapter.

"All we can do is look locally at what the store does. We can't ask specific questions about this case because it is in litigation," he said.

Bruce Johnson and three other Black men from Houston, ages 28 to 42, filed a lawsuit in June 2003 seeking at least \$2.5 million each in damages. The four men said that after they complained about the quality of a photograph processed at the store in February 2003, the clerk shouted a racial slur, slammed a door and refused service.

Jeff Pinto, manager of the Reno store, referred questions about business practices to Walgreens headquarters in Deerfield, Ill.

Corporate spokesman Michael Polzin said the company had not been contacted by the NAACP and had no immediate comment.

"Clearly, this is something instigated by one of the plaintiffs in hopes of pressuring us outside of the courtroom," Polzin said. "As far as the lawsuit is concerned, our investigation revealed that no discrimination occurred. We have zero tolerance for dis-

crimination of any kind."

Polzin said they may answer the survey but typically don't respond to such inquiries because "they tend to ask for information that we don't normally provide publicly."

Feemster said he discussed the possibility of pursuing a boycott with NAACP legal counsel in Baltimore last week.

"A boycott is a pretty serious thing," Feemster said.

John C. White, a spokesman for the NAACP in Baltimore, confirmed the national group has been in touch with the Reno chapter but had no immediate comment.

Feemster advocated approval of the review sought by Johnson partly because Johnson has researched other discrimination lawsuits filed against Walgreens in recent years.

"They presented a tremendous amount of information and put a lot of work into it," Feemster said.

One class-action suit filed last year in federal court in East St. Louis, Ill., accused Walgreen Co. of racially discriminatory employment practices involving Black managers and pharmacists

with stores in Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Kansas, Florida, Texas and Michigan.

In another filed last year in federal court in Chicago, three former Walgreens cashiers claimed white supervisors had ordered them to follow Black customers the supervisors assumed would steal.

Feemster said the local chapter will review the store policies and forward a packet of information to the national NAACP "to see if merits further investigation by the national office."

The questions would include such things as the company's worker diversity, whether the company contributes to local charities and if it does business with Black-owned vendors.

Johnson presented his case Thursday night to 22 members of the local NAACP, who voted unanimously to pursue the local investigation. "People say, 'Oh, it's a lawsuit. He just wants money.' It's not about that," Johnson said.

"This isn't about Bruce Johnson being called the 'N' word. This is about what Walgreens is doing to people around the country."

Hospital

(Continued from Page 3)

extended urgent care services, plus expanded outpatient services.

Complex specialties such as neonatology and thoracic surgery, for example, now housed at King-Drew would be combined with those offered now by Harbor-UCLA at the Harbor campus, which is about 10 miles away from King-Drew near Torrance.

The report also suggests that the county sever its relationship with the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, which trains about 300 medical students at King-Drew.

The details of the proposed restructuring remain to be worked out between the hospitals.

"Of course the Board of Supervisors will have the final say," Chernof said. "However, we believe this model makes sense because it assures a continued high level of medical care to people living in the King-Drew service area."

The plan was met with cautious approval by area activist Earl Ofari Hutchinson, who held an emergency meeting of his weekly Los Angeles Policy Roundtable at the hospital last Tuesday.

"A Harbor general takeover will keep King Hospital a public hospital, and that's welcome," Hutchinson said. "But any dimin-

ishing of service at King would adversely affect thousands of patients that rely on the facility for urgent care. This would create yet another potential healthcare disaster for Los Angeles County."

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger said he applauded the plan.

"Patient health and safety comes first," Schwarzenegger said. "That's why my administration will work shoulder to shoulder with the county to keep these essential services in the community where they belong."

During a meeting last week at the Los Angeles Black Firefighters headquarters in South Los Angeles, Hutchinson and a group of Black firefighters were expected to announce the formation of a King Hospital Crisis Watchdog Team that will consist of health and emergency professionals.

"We're on the frontline," said Brent Burton, president of the Los Angeles County Black Firefighters Association. "We know the importance of top-flight health and emergency services in South L.A."

"The team will give input at every phase of the transition process to ensure full health services and emergency care," added Armando Hogan, president of the Los Angeles City Black Firefighters Association.

Gene C. Johnson Jr. writes for WAVE Newspapers.



Price of \$339,000

3 Bedroom/ 3 Bathroom • 2,267 sq. ft/ 2 car garage
Never been lived in • Gated community w/ 3 parks
Gas Fireplace and granite countertops in kitchen
Less than 3 miles to 1-15, The Cannery & Shopping Centers

Fantastic Find

Call Day Gang REALTOR®

Dyson & Dyson Real Estate Associates
702.378.9183 Cellular
See a virtual tour at
www.DayGang.com

