

RADIO REV, PAL CHARGED IN IMMIGRANT SCHEME

Daily News (New York)

September 26, 2001, Wednesday, SPORTS FINAL EDITION

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Section: NEWS;

Length: 317 words

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Body

A popular radio evangelist and an associate were arrested on charges they bilked dozens of immigrants in a massive green card scam exposed by the Daily News, authorities said yesterday.

The Rev. Errol O'Connor won the confidence of immigrants through his popular Jesus is Lord Ministries program on WWDJ (970 AM) radio and from the pulpit of his Royal Worship Center International on Laconia Ave. in the Williamsbridge, the Bronx.

The 48-year-old self-styled apostle allegedly took at least \$260,000 from dozens of undocumented immigrants with false promises of helping them get permanent residence status, authorities said.

Also arrested was Emanuel Felder, 33, of Argyle Ave., Uniondale, L.I., who allegedly posed as an Immigration and Naturalization Service agent in the scam.

The two were arrested and charged with numerous counts of grand larceny, scheming to defraud and criminal possession of stolen property. Felder also was charged with criminal impersonation. They face a maximum of seven years behind bars for each count.

The two men bilked victims of an average of \$4,000 each, according to Bronx prosecutors. One man allegedly paid \$18,000 hoping to get a green card for himself, his wife and two children; another coughed up \$10,000.

One suspect is still at large, investigators said.

The News exposed the scam in April, after receiving numerous complaints about O'Connor from immigrants, many of whom said they had turned over their life's savings in the hope of becoming legal residents.

After authorities began investigating, more than 200 immigrants showed up at a meeting with detectives.

One of them, an undocumented domestic worker who asked to be identified only as Jean, said yesterday she was "delighted that they caught him." But, she added, "I am still out \$5,000 and no closer to legal residency. I hope they force him to pay us all back."

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: CRIMINAL OFFENSES (94%); IMMIGRATION (92%); LARCENY & THEFT (90%); ARRESTS (90%); FRAUD & FINANCIAL CRIME (90%); INVESTIGATIONS (89%); CHRISTIANS & CHRISTIANITY (88%); ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS (78%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); RELIGION (78%); PROPERTY CRIMES (78%); CLERGY &

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RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS (77%); RECEIVING STOLEN PROPERTY (73%); IMPERSONATION (73%); PUBLIC PROSECUTORS (73%); JAIL SENTENCING (73%)

Company: IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (56%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (56%)

Organization: IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (56%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (56%)

Load-Date: September 26, 2001

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