



Self-proclaimed Messiah predicts holocaust, flood

By KAREN GIESEG

A man claiming to be the Messiah is willing to bet with the New Zealand Government there will be a nuclear war in the next eight to 16 days.

Mr Michael Martin Sherry said he suddenly knew at 4am yesterday there was going to be a nuclear war.

He was about to watch a United States television news broadcast at his motel unit in Christchurch when snow appeared on the screen and the lights went out.

"I felt a warmth, a glow, and the realisation came to me."

Mr Sherry, an American, said he knew when he came to New Zealand in January last year "New Zealand was blessed by God."

He said New Zealand would not be a target in the war and would be one of the few places where human life would continue.

Mr Sherry had a full-page advertisement in the Dominion yesterday and the Christchurch Star on Thursday announc-

ing the formation of a group called Priority Life 1.

The advertisement tells of anti-nuclear marches to be held today to the United States military base at Harewood outside Christchurch and measures to stop the spread of Aids — "The anti-Barefoot Within Massage Parlour Campaign" — and "Ecological Assaults."

Million-dollar winner

The two advertisements cost more than \$8000 but to Mr Sherry money is no problem. He was an Atlanta (Georgia) casino's first million-dollar winner and has also won money in games of blackjack.

He said winning the money, and strange coincidences that often happen to him, has convinced him he is the Messiah.

"I know now why I won the money. It was to make this bet with the New Zealand Government."

Mr Sherry said he had contacted the Department of Foreign Affairs yesterday morning but had not received a reply.

He said the Bible supported his belief in an impending nuclear war. By using the same chronology of events as in Genesis, Noah's flood is also about to happen.

"I pray to God I'm wrong. God help us. God stop this."

He said all overseas New Zealanders should come home, and talked of emergency measures to bring them back. "The flights in the next two weeks will be the arks."

Mr Sherry said things were "falling apart" and a war was inevitable.

According to him, United States President Reagan is Satan and wants to go to war. "He has such a vile hatred of communism because the Soviet Union is doing better than the States."

Mr Sherry, 35, grew up in Manhattan, New York. He has an Orthodox Jewish background. Now living in Christchurch, he says he is doing personal research for the United States Information Service.

He said he was being followed and feared for his life.

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