

## Council

(Continued from Front)

Hunter and discuss the "Smith Affair", as it is now being called, and several other concerns. It is certain that Hunter's response did not satisfy the black lawmakers, and Pledger's

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revelation seemed to incense matters.

Council member Mrs. Margaret Keller acknowledged this week "the whole affair has made matters extremely difficult". While Hunter's remarks did satisfy some members of the council, they failed to satisfy four of the blacks and some of the whites interviewed by *The Carolina Times*.

Black council member Ralph Hunt responded to Hunter's letter with a second letter asking that the matter be discussed in full session. An informal survey of the council Wednesday afternoon indicated that at a majority of the council would hear the matter. The discussion, if it takes place, will be held in executive session, or in other words, behind closed doors as required by North Carolina law.

## THE CASE AGAINST HUNTER

Dexter Smith made available to *The Carolina Times* a voluminous stack of monthly memoranda sent to Hunter and Assistant City Managers Regina Brough and Richard Stevens, and former Acting Personnel Director Robert Slade.

The memoranda show that, for a period beginning at least in August, 1978 and continuing to August 1979, Dexter Smith complained monthly in written reports of unfiled vacancies, and lack of resources to carry out all of the objectives of the department.

Smith says his pleas for assistance from Hunter and his assistants went unheeded. By April and May of 1979, through budget decreases and transfers, his workforce had dwindled from fourteen to seven. But according to Smith's memoranda his work load was increasing.

The following excerpt from a memorandum dated December 5, 1978 somewhat captures the tone of much of Smith's correspondence to the manager's office: "Loss of Personnel. Our draftsman II, Mr. George Granger, resigned in late November and left us with a problem in completing work assignments and in overloading work onto other remaining staff members. 2 Lack of Adequate Manpower. This is continuing problem with the need to fill a clerical position, a drafting position, and the Assistant Planning Director position. The unfilled Assistant Planning Director position provides a problem in providing adequate supervision and handling of public contact. 3 Overextended Work Program. There is a continuing problem of having more work items than should logically be handled."

Smith responded to the charge that he had not "controlled" the black employees in his office, saying that the only possible reference he could imagine was Linda Swetner, now Mrs. Linda DelCastilho, who became dissatisfied with black staff members who were conducting a survey of the Crest Street neighborhood. Mrs. DelCastilho, who married Public Safety Director Barry DelCastilho, reportedly was dissatisfied with progress on the survey, and staff members reportedly were dissatisfied with her. In any event, she was transferred shortly from the planning division to the community development division. A good friend of Mrs. DelCastilho, Mrs. Regina Brough was one of Dexter Smith's supervisors, but Mrs. DelCastilho said this week that she never discussed her problems in the planning division with the assistant city manager. When Smith was fired

last August, his job was advertised in newspapers across the state before he was notified he was fired.

City Manager Dean Hunter could not be reached for comment this week. His secretary said he was out of town and could not be reached for comment. Hunter returned to town Wednesday, but his secretary said he did not have time for an interview. Mrs. Brough also could not be reached for comment.

## SMITH AFFAIR, AN INDICATION OF HUNTER'S OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Blacks, particularly, are not pleased with what appears to be Hunter's performance on the *Smith Affair*, and they cite many other shortcomings of his administration.

Hunter was formerly city manager in Lexington, Kentucky. He was hired here last August following a lengthy search. Some of the council members say their first disappointment was Hunter's failure to establish a residence in Durham since he was hired over a year ago.

Real estate broker James W. Brown said he felt that Hunter's failure to move to Durham is more than Hunter's inability to find a house, as Hunter has stated.

Residency is but one of Hunter's problems. Several key positions have been left unfilled with permanent staffers since Hunter's arrival. Some white council members have replied that Hunter had a difficult time filling vacancies, but he has now hired a personnel director, which will make the job of filling other vacancies easier. That is the rationale advanced by Council member Mrs. Margaret Keller and several others.

"A personnel director is nothing but a sophisticated clerk whose job is collecting papers sent from one office to another," said Ralph Hunt, a bit irritated over hearing the call for gradualism. "Don't come pointing the personnel director to me," says Hunt.

Black councilman Paul Bland is also very critical that Hunter has left key positions vacant. The personnel director was vacant longer than a year, Bland notes. A former city comptroller, Bland says the city "cannot be run effectively and efficiently while key positions are vacant." Other key vacancies he cites are director of administration, assistant city manager, and safety plan administrator.

Safety was a key concern of the council when it hired Hunter. Durham then had the highest rate of injury of any other city in North Carolina (1977

and 1978). Using statistics of the North Carolina Department of Labor, Durham's sanitation workers had the highest rate of injuries of any workers in the state. Those statistics haven't changed much since Hunter's arrival. To some extent they may have worsened.

Marcus Allen, a 39-year-old black sanitation worker, was crushed to death last month at the sanitary landfill, a death that possibly could have been avoided, if proper safety measures had been developed and followed.

Councilman Ralph Hunt is dissatisfied with Hunter's performance in managing the sanitation division, overseeing police enforcement of laws toward black citizens, and the hiring of blacks in city government.

In general many of the councilmen say Hunter has told whites and blacks different and conflicting stories, sometime causing conflicts. The "Dexter Smith Affair" is an example cited.

Hunt describes the relationships between blacks and whites in Durham as a "plantation," talk that hasn't been common by lawmakers since blacks were marching in the streets in the sixties.

"The City of Durham through City Hall, including us on the council, is a plantation, based on the master-servant relationship," Hunt says. Hunt says that many of the whites, he calls liberals, are passive when black council members attempt to fight racism. He fears that may be the case with some of the council members who traditionally are black allies.

What to do with the "Smith Affair" and, above all, City Manager Dean Hunter has some of the middle of the road council members puzzled. But not the blacks who were interviewed by *The Carolina Times*.

White Councilman William Smith is satisfied with Hunter's performance, and his response to the letter sent by the black council members. Councilman Mrs. Margaret Keller, a candidate for mayor, says she doesn't think Hunter's performance should become an election issue, and that Hunter's job should not become political.

One of her more conservative opponents, Harry Rodenhizer, has been critical of the city management, for which Hunter is held responsible.

Many observers say the outcome of the so-called "Dexter Smith Affair" may have significant impact on the City's population, particularly blacks for some time. Affirmative action and black

progress are said to be in the balance.

Morale among black employees is particularly low in the days following the termination of eighteen city CETA employees whose jobs ran out last week. Most of those employees were black.

CETA regulations would not allow their employment past eighteen months. White CETA employees similarly affected, sources say, have been hired in permanent positions, while blacks remained in temporary CETA jobs.

One case mentioned by one black council member is that of Mrs. Sharon Baker, formerly an employee in the comptroller's office, and a law school graduate, who has held several jobs for the city. Her job ended with the other CETA jobs.

## Caucus

[Continued from Page 8] Martin Luther King, Jr., Birthday Holiday Bill. This bill would designate January 15th of each year as an official U.S. holiday.

The ten Legislative workshops, led by members of the Caucus and participated in by some 7,000, covered education, arts and humanities, aging, communication, black voter participation, network development, economy, inflation, science and technology, foreign affairs, housing economic development, minority enterprise, criminal justice and health.

The final workshop statements, shaped from the presentations and question answer periods will help form the 1980 legislative agenda presented by the Members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

The new Caucus fundraising event of the Legislative Weekend—the First annual VIP Reception and Buffet Dinner Dance—took place Friday evening. Vice President Mondale, Ben Vereen, former U.N. Ambassador Young, U.N. Ambassador Donald McHenry, Clarence Mitchell, Mayor Marion Barry, and many other national leaders were present as people danced to the music of Teddy Pendergrass.

## Workshop

[Continued from Front]

Carolyn Johnson, Special Research for the National Institute of Education (NIE), Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana.

The program is being coordinated and administered by Dr. Lawrence E. Johnson, Director of Black Church Affairs of Duke Divinity School. For further information and registration forms, contact: Dr. Lawrence E. Johnson, Director of Black Church Affairs, The Divinity School, Duke University,

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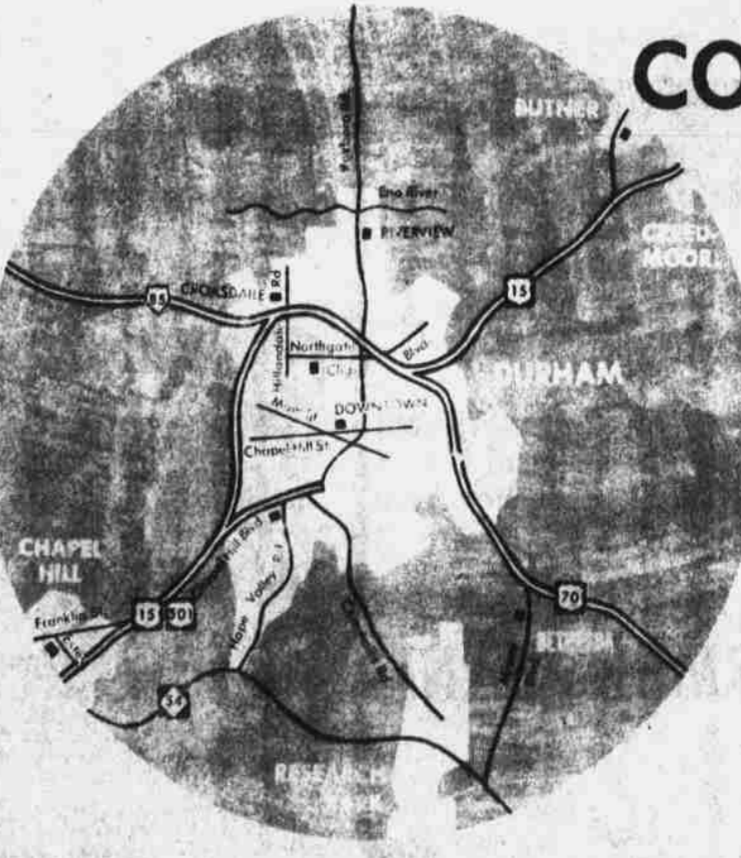
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## CALENDAR

**BLACK LAWYERS TO MEET IN DURHAM** — The North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers will hold its October Meeting in Durham, October 5, 6, 7, 1979. The meeting will feature "Trial Advocacy Workshop III" — a program of continuing legal education — designed to enhance advocacy skills for members of the Association. The Workshop will include lectures and a demonstration on jury arguments in death penalty cases. Recent legislation will be analyzed.

The Executive Secretary of the organization said he expects some one hundred lawyers from all parts of the state to attend the meeting. The Association has some two-hundred and fifty members.

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