

Duke University Library
Newspaper Department
Durham NC 27706

inside...

- Holy Convocation held in Memphis—Page 3
- Coping: If you lose your job—Page 15
- Durhamite Grace Noel has role in Hollywood film—Entertainment Page 5
- Donald Byrd & 125th St. N.Y.C.—Entertainment Front
- National Scene Magazine Supplement

The Carolina Times

THE TRUTH UNBRIEDED

(USPS 091-380)

DEC 4 1982

Words Of Wisdom
Associate with men of good quality if you esteem your reputation.
—George Washington

Men do little from reason, much from passion, most from habit.
—Painin

VOLUME 60 — NUMBER 48

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA — SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1982

TELEPHONE (919) 682-2913

PRICE: 30 CENTS

Con Men Are Out To Get You Don't Be Marked

Part II

By Milton Jordan
Executive Editor

Con games rip Durhamites to the tune of several hundred thousands of dollars annually, according to Durham fraud investigators, but even this estimate is misleading, they say.

"Most people never call us," explained fraud investigator J.C. Morris. "I suspect that we hear about less than two per cent of the successful con games that take place in the city."

But those they hear about not only take money. They sometimes ruin lives.

"About the biggest trouble we have with con games in Durham are the traveling gypsies, we call them," explained Capt. E.A. Allen, head of the Durham Public Safety Department's detective bureau. "They ride around and usually pick older people, promising them house repairs, or to fix their driveways, charge them exorbitant amounts of money, do little or no work and disappear."

According to Capt. Allen, the best thing for anyone to do is not to deal with traveling repair workers at all. But all the repair cons aren't committed by traveling artists passing through.

Some local "repairmen" rip off elderly citizens, especially widows. According to fraud investigators, these "fly-by-nighters" contract for work such as gutters, roofing and other things either too high, or concealed so the person paying for it can't check it too easily.

These shysters not only do shoddy work, according to the investigators, but also often cheat customers by buying materials not needed on the present job and charging them to the customer.

"People get themselves in these fixes though," Capt. Allen said. "They simply should not deal with these shysters. My advice would be to deal with reputable firms that have been around awhile and that have track records."

Another popular con game in Durham is "slumming," a scam that features "hot" jewelry.

The con is worked several ways. Here are two of the most popular variations:

Sometimes at night, but often in broad daylight, the con artist approaches a likely looking "mark" saying that he has this diamond ring that he has to sell. The con artist tells some sort of heart rending

story about lost love, lost money, or something else, anything to get and keep your attention. Usually, he'll try to sell you the ring or bracelet or whatever for about \$25 to \$100, after convincing you that it's worth much, much more. Usually the jewelry is an industrial-manufactured gem that often retails for no more than \$5 or \$10.

Sometimes the con artist shows the victim a real diamond, even goes with the mark to a jewelry store to have it appraised. Often, the first diamond you see is worth several hundred, or even a thousand dollars. But the ring you pay a couple of hundred dollars or more for will be cut glass.

Durham fraud investigators say that most Durhamites get ripped off by paying too much money for items, often sold from the trunk of cars, that appear to be more than they are.

"These guys will have a car filled with various merchandise," detective Morris explained. "And they'll sell you a 'Boliva' watch that you buy, thinking it's a Bulova. But they never tell you it's a Bulova; you draw that conclusion yourself, and help con yourself."

In another popular variation of this con, shysters put expensive watch faces on inexpensive watch works. So the gold watch you buy for \$25 says "Helbros," but the works are strictly second rate, and might stop running within a couple of days.

"Some of these car trunk con artists even have peddler licenses," Capt. Allen noted. "It's hard to bust them for anything because the people help con themselves."

But probably one of Durham's most unbelievable con games involves alleged stolen goods.

Usually, they tell you they have several "hot" television sets, still in the crates, just like the one on the back seat of their car. But what's really in the crates are rocks.

"You might not believe it," Capt. Allen said. "But some hard working people have actually paid hard earned cash for a box of rocks."

"And so even though Durham is not a New York, Chicago or Los Angeles, con games still hit here, and people just have to be careful."

Capt. Allen's advice is simple: "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is."



Cop Goes After Demonstrator

A Washington, D.C. policeman chases a demonstrator from the street, Saturday, November 27, as several hundred anti-Ku Klux Klan demonstrators throw rocks and bottles at police.

UPI Photo

Under New Black Grant Funding

Operation Breakthrough Shifts Aim

By Sharon Trice-Bodrick

In its 19th year as an advocate for Durham's poor, Operation Breakthrough faces two formidable challenges.

One challenge is for the agency to change from its historical role of giving its clients direct services such as community organizing and crisis intervention to becoming an educational resource that helps people help themselves.

But probably the bigger of the agency's two challenges is convincing its traditional constituency to accept and respond to the agency's new thrust.

"Our constituents will definitely make the transition from seeking programs which provide immediate service or gratification," said Mrs. Elizabeth Knight, OBT project director, "to taking part in those (programs) that will develop their long term skills that will benefit them in the long run."

But effective change for both agency and

clients is mandatory because each year's funding, under the block grant program, is determined in large measure by the previous year's success. Success means numbers, pure and simple.

Officials of the N.C. Department of Community Development and Natural Resources want to know simply if Breakthrough by the end of the year served the number of people it promised to work with at the beginning of the year.

Caught in the winds of change, Breakthrough is banking on four new programs. They are:

*Consumer Credit Counseling Service — This program is designed to help families and individuals manage their finances. This program is based on the fact that in 60% of personal bankruptcy cases, individuals can pay their debts from future earnings if they receive and follow sound advice. Clients are encouraged

to confer as frequently as necessary with the counselor. The goal is for the client to be able, eventually, to make his own budget and his own payments. The program does not provide funds for paying anyone's debts.

*Youth Enrichment — This program is aimed at high school students who are interested in getting school work help. It is a one-on-one arrangement, four hours a week. Tutors are volunteers.

*Job Skills — This component teaches participants how to "survive in the job jungle." It offers classes in adult and basic education, the GED, job planning, job hunting skills, and assistance in finding a job. It is a two-week course whose curriculum includes how to write a resume, how to conduct oneself for a successful interview, etc.

*Crisis Intervention — This is the only program which requires only that one qualify to receive its services. Its purpose is to

provide aid in the form of emergency shelter, clothing, food, and heating fuel for low-income individuals who are faced with life-threatening conditions or severe injury to health.

The winds of this new course are felt as much by those receiving services as they are by the crew administering them, largely because of the radical shift by the Reagan Administration in its approach to dealing with community action agencies (CAAs) and the poor people these agencies serve.

In the 1960's, the federal government implemented a wide range of entitlement programs, such as Model Cities, the Economic Opportunity Act, and the Urban Renewal and Urban Redevelopment Program, in a major attempt to eliminate urban and rural poverty. Twenty-odd years later the Reagan Administration has criticized this approach as being "wasteful," "costly,"

and "unresponsive to local priorities." Consequently, in 1981 Congress passed the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (ORA) which dismantled many of these programs and cut deeply into the way they were handled. So far, some of the most severe changes include these:

*The Community Block Grant Program — which has traditionally been considered a flexible, all purpose work-horse program with primary emphasis on low and moderate income communities, has been cut by 25% and has had more than 40 federal programs merged into it. CDBG funds are now broken down into nine categories: Community Services, Primary Health Care, Maternal and Child Health Services, Social Services, Low-Income Energy Assistance, Consolidated Refugee Education and Education (Elementary/Secondary/Educationally Disadvantaged.) The responsiveness question was answered by giving the states the power to distribute the funds the way they see fit — the old theory being that the states can handle their problems better than the federal government because they must deal with them on a day to day basis.

*Additionally, the federal government now requires very little information to approve a CDBG application. They no longer require summaries of community development/housing needs, profiles, or strategies. All that needs to be detailed now are the activities to be conducted, the number of people to be affected, and the agency's objectives and certifications.

Dr. Isaac Robinson, who has been working with OBT for six years and who served as its chairman of the board from 1979-1981, explains the impact of this regulation.

"CAA's now have to sign a contract with the (Continued on Page 7)

State Block Grants Raise More Questions Than Answers

By Donald Alderman
Entering the second year of the federal government's block grant program, several state officials say it's good, but...

The good refers mainly to the increased flexibility in the programs under the block grant concept, as opposed to the categorical grant program where every cent of the federal money was tied to a line item in a budget.

For example, with the community development block grants, the state can continue to finance community action agencies, such as Durham's Operation Breakthrough, or it can give this money to county governments. So far the state is sticking with the community action agencies.

Also under block grants, for example, state officials can decide program priorities and can even adjust in some cases in mid-year to accommodate unexpected changes.

The "but" notes that all restrictions have not been lifted from the federal money, and state officials still don't know

precisely how much money North Carolina will get.

As an example of the restrictions, the federal

government mandates that 60 per cent of the money for mental health must go to community (Continued on Page 6)

City Officials Say

Alston Avenue Plan Will Disrupt Only 4 Families

By Isaiah Singletary
If you are among the more than 12,000 drivers who travel along Alston Avenue each day, you know the street is heavily traveled. And if you're among the nearly 3,000 drivers who struggle along Alston Avenue, virtually bumper-to-bumper during rush hour, you probably wish for relief.

Well, the city has plans to relieve the congestion on Alston Avenue.

The plan, part of a citywide thoroughfare plan that is designed to work in conjunction with state plans, calls for a portion of Alston Avenue to be widened to four lanes. Another portion of the heavily traveled street, that moves much of the city's north-south traffic flow, will

be rerouted and linked with Old Oxford Highway.

"We think that the area between the expressway and Gilbert Street is probably wide enough to handle four lanes," said Rudy Griffin, director of the city's traffic engineering section, "but some widening may have to be done in the future to add a fifth lane, or a left turning lane."

Griffin went on to say that the rerouted portion of the street will pick up at Holloway Street and go back of what is now part of the city's street maintenance department. The new

road will follow a creek bed, and will run parallel to the Norfolk and Western railroad track near Geer street, finally connecting with Old Oxford Highway.

"This plan will be less damaging to area residents," Griffin asserted, "because much of the land through which the corridor would cut has already been acquired over the years."

According to city planner, Mrs. Linda DelCastilho, the current plan was developed with the help of residents in the area, under the city's neighborhood planning process.

"As it stands now,"

CORE Holds 40th Anniversary Convention

By Shirley I. Thigpen
The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) will hold its 40th Anniversary National Convention in New York City the first week-end in December at the Prince George Hotel. The convention will focus on

Reconomics, unemployment, and government attacks on black leaders and disruption of dissident organizations.

According to Wendall Garrett, Board Secretary, "CORE's four decades of struggle for civil and human rights sets the theme of this momentous occasion. CORE's tradition has always been to champion the cause of the

grassroots people. For this reason we encourage individuals and other organizations to lend their suggestions and input into setting CORE's direction."

Roy Innis serves as chief executive officer and national chairman. The Board of Directors of CORE invites all people of all persuasions

to attend and participate in this decision making convention. For more information and pre-registration, write: CORE — 40th Anniversary Convention Committee, CORE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, 1916-38 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10037 or call (212) 690-2000.

Join The NAACP