

Liquor houses cause problems for police

By ALBERT NICKERSON
Chronicle Staff Writer

Although they are called liquor houses by customers, most people visit them not to purchase illegal tax-paid liquor but to buy drugs and prostitutes, according to authorities.

Lt. Harvey Tuttle of vice and narcotics division of the Winston-Salem Police Department said the owners of illegal liquor houses continue to prosper despite the best efforts of police to remove them from the crime picture.

"We seem to be just holding our ground," said Tuttle.

Tuttle said the complete picture about the nature of the illegal liquor house business can't be painted, because police don't separate liquor house violations from general violations of the liquor law. In 1983, police issued 305 warrants for liquor law violations, according to statistics provided by the planning division of the police department.

Doug Mason, chief law enforcement office for the Alcohol

"We seem to be just holding our ground."

-- Lt. Harvey Tuttle

Beverage and Control Commission, said his office last year made 311 arrests, confiscated about 1,358 gallons of non-tax paid liquor, and about 41 gallons of tax-paid liquor while raiding illegal drink houses.

In addition, Mason said ABC agents confiscated about 1,262 pounds of marijuana, and a half pound of cocaine. Agents didn't confiscate any heroin during the raids.

Illegal drink houses are not particular to one distinct area of the city. Although police get most of the complaints from East Winston, liquor houses are located all over the city. Police estimate there are about 200 liquor houses operating in the city, generating thousands of dollars for its owners. Tuttle said the owner of a thriving drink house can earn about \$500 to \$600 each day.

"The number of illegal establishments haven't decreased significantly, but the nature of the business has changed," said Maj. Joseph Masten, acting police chief.

Masten said there are generally a handful of owners who operate

these establishments. Besides selling illegal tax-paid liquor they engage in fencing stolen property, prostitution, gambling and other illegal activities. In 1983, police made 39 arrests for prostitutions, 134 for stolen property, but those statistics include all violations.

"There is a strong correlation between violent crimes -- murders and stabbings -- and the operation of illegal drink houses," said Tuttle.

Tuttle said last year the city recorded 19 murders, 432 aggravated assaults, 118 robberies, which included crimes unrelated to liquor houses.

East Ward Alderman Virginia Newell, whose ward contains numerous drink houses, said before a recent police crackdown on drink houses she received about four to five complaints each week.

"People are generally afraid to complain about drink houses for fear of retaliation," said Mrs. Newell. "People complain secretly to me about the rowdiness, noise, traffic and violence associated with the drink houses."

Mrs. Newell said normally after police close a liquor house, the violators simply move to a new location.

"The police close down one house, but the owners relocate to another house, or another neighborhood," she said.

A spokesman for the North Carolina Restaurant Association said it is difficult to determine the extent illegal drink houses hurt the operation of licensed restaurants and bars.

"We can't really tell if the loss is substantial," the spokesman said. Similarly, a spokesman for the local ABC board said officials couldn't tell how much in tax revenue was lost through the operation of drink houses.

Owners will continue to operate drink houses, despite the risk and as long as their is a market, police said.

"We don't know what attracts people to drink houses," said Tuttle, especially since most people can buy cheaper liquor from the Alcoholic Beverage and Control stores. "It is perhaps the convenience of the location, or could be the atmosphere most people just like to be where the action is."

However, Tuttle said the primary reasons for the flourishing of the houses is the illegal activities. Plus, people can go to the drink houses and buy liquor after the closing of the legal ABC stores.

"People are going to always go where the action is happening," said Tuttle.

FBI: Local police broke into activists' home

By ALBERT NICKERSON
Chronicle Staff Writer

Federal investigators have launched a probe into allegations that two Winston-Salem police officers illegally entered the home of members of the Socialist Workers Party, according to internal Federal Bureau of Investigation documents.

According to a 1982 FBI document, the FBI was investigating whether officers Robert Spillman and Barry Owens entered the home of Betsy Soares, and three other members of the SWP, who lived on West Street, without a warrant.

U.S. Attorney Dan Bell, in the Civil Rights Unit of the Justice Department's Criminal Investigation Division, declined to comment on the alleged break-in. "I'm not in a position to comment on any of your questions," he said when asked whether investigators were probing the allegations.

Spillman, now assigned to the detectives division, declined to answer any questions. Owens was unavailable for comment.

But a source familiar with the documents said the "investigation was still open."

Public Safety Attorney Claire McNaught also declined to discuss any police department issue with the press.

"This doesn't really surprise us, because they have been conducting surveillance against blacks, women and worker groups for years," said Greg McCartan, the SWP's local chairman in Greensboro.

McCartan said he hadn't met officially with SWP members to determine what measures the party could take regarding the inci-

dent. He said the party currently has a 10-year-old civil suit filed in New York City against the federal government and other police agencies for spying. The allegations could be linked with that civil suit.

Federal agents started investigating the incident in 1980 as a result of their probe into a shootout between members of the Communist Workers Party and Ku Klux Klansmen and Nazis.

During the confrontation at a "Death To The Klan" rally Nov. 3, 1979, five people were killed and 10 wounded. Killed were Bill Sampson, Jim Waller, Sandi Smith, Cesar Caucce, and Dr. Michael Nathan.

Klansmen Virgil Griffin, David Wayne Matthews, Lawrence Gene Morgan, Coleman Blair Pridmore, and Jerry Paul Smith were found innocent in connection with the shooting incident. Nazis Roland Wayne Wood and Jack Wilson Fowler also were found innocent.

The families of the slain political activists and survivors of the attack joined with black leaders in Greensboro to organize the Greensboro Civil Rights Fund. The fund is suing the federal government, the Greensboro Police Department, the FBI, and U.S. Justice Department in a \$48-million suit. There are 88 defendants in the case.

Through the Charlotte FBI probe into the Klan shooting, they discovered allegations of the break-in by officers R. A. Spillman and Barry Owens, who were then assigned to the Winston-Salem Police Department's intelligence unit.

According to the documents, the bureau's investigation reveal-

ed the following sequence of events:

On Feb. 11, 1980, four members of the SWP -- Janice Sams, Meryl Farber, Hilde Elder, and Betsy Soares -- rented a house at 941 West St. All of the women were employed by the Bahnsen Co. Soares had campaigned for the mayoralty on the SWP ticket that year.

During the spring of 1980, Mark Fulk, co-owner of the residence with several other businessmen, hired workers to paint the house.

"We never had any complaints about them," said F. Vernon Glenn, one of the co-owners. "They were always very polite and cordial."

After waiving his rights with an attorney present, Spillman told the investigators that he met with "two unidentified individuals who were painting a residence on West Street" and made entry into the home.

Spillman denied

"photographing any records, documents or communications, but he admitted calling into the Winston Salem Police Department to Officer Harms telephone numbers, names, and license numbers that were listed near a phone in the kitchen."

Spillman told the agents no investigation had been started by the department regarding the SWP members who lived at the house, according to the documents.

Spillman was quoted in the documents as saying he had "no lawful reason to enter the residence other than that he felt it was his obligation to obtain as much intelligence as possible concerning these type groups in case of future problems."

Detective Barry Owen, according to the documents, declined to give a statement, but had obtained a lawyer. The documents state that Owens' attorney "would offer a proffer and in Please see page A13

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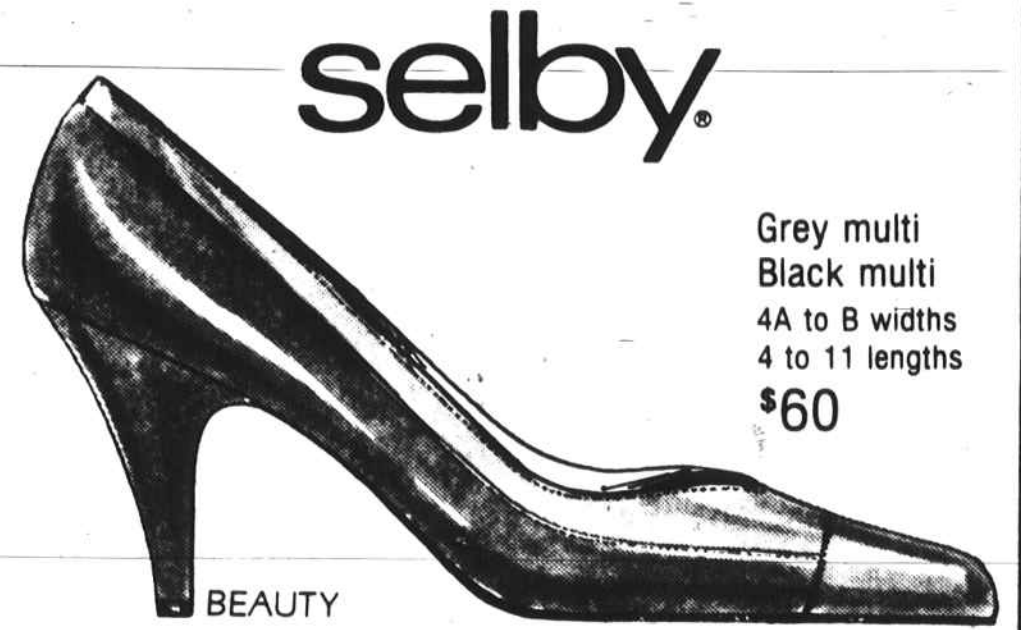
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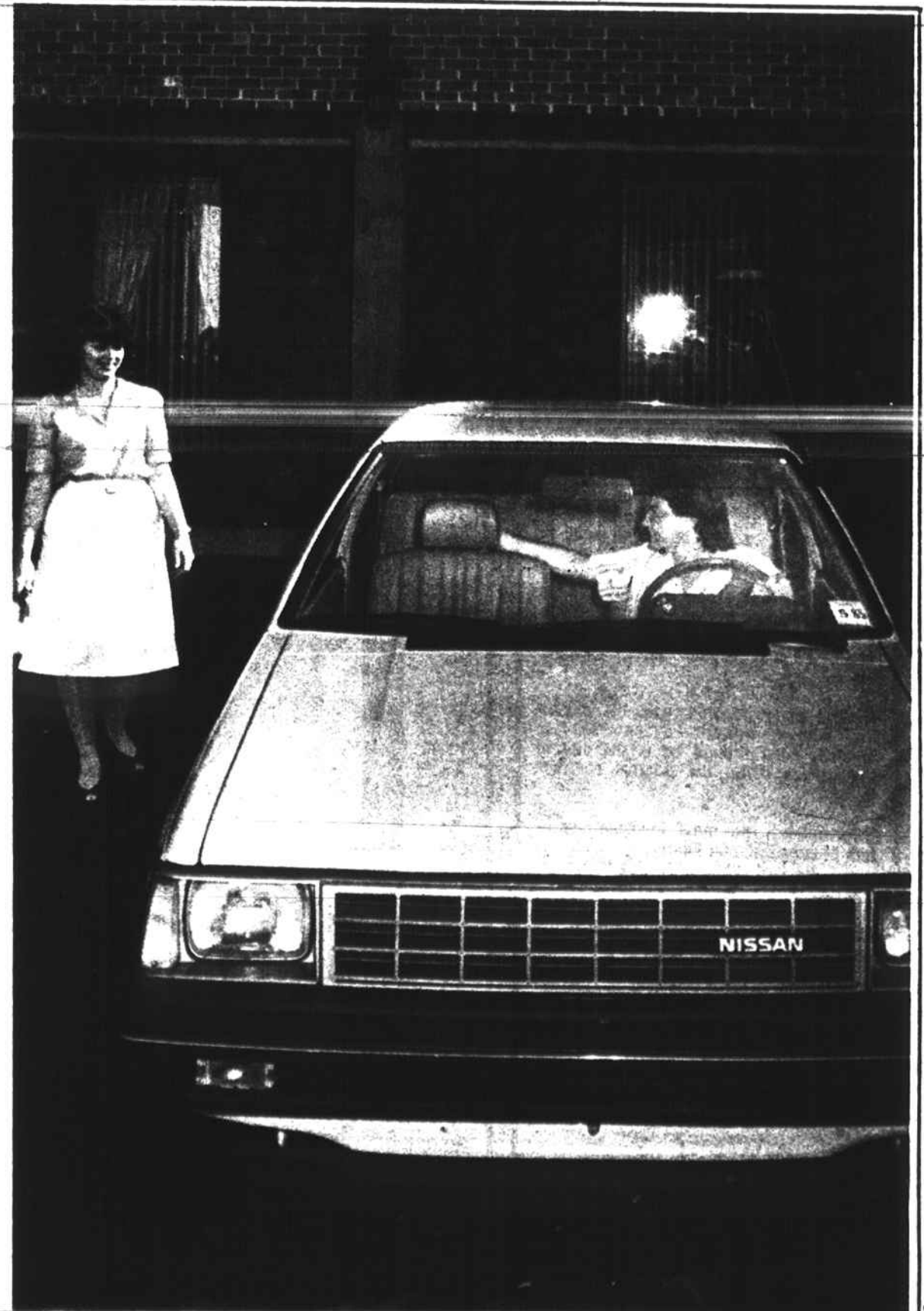
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