—$500,000 stolen

(Continued from Page 1)

A federal prosecutor, David Queen said Mrs. Blair did not act alone and "the investigation will continue." He added, "There might be a possible involvement of the Biladians, a splinoff of the Black Muslims."

At AFRO presstime, Mrs. Blair was confined to City Jail on $100,000 bond. An arraignment date has been set for Feb., 27, 9:30 a.m. in Federal Court.

Court records state that from January 1978 until November 1979 Mrs. Blair, Ms. Abrams and Blair did "conspire confederate and agree with each other to gain access to the Social Security Administration System of monetary disbursement and to cause the Social Security to issue sums of money to fictitious payees in the form of U. S. Treasury disability checks."

The computer in Woodlawn sends out $1.1 billion in disability checks to 4.8 million workers and their dependents each month.

A spokesman for the Secret Service stated if there had not been a bank official in Philadelphia alerted to a discrepancy in an account opened there, "We would still be operating in the land of the unknown."

The Secret Service spent 18 months trying to trace the stolen money through false disability claims and called the theft scheme "very sophisticated."

Court records state Blair and Ms. Abrams would acquire identification in names other than their own. With that identification they would open bank accounts in the assumed names. Then the assumed names and addresses were transmitted to Mrs. Blair and she would select a social security account number.

Mrs. Blair, prosecutors charged, would then cause the social security system computer at Woodlawn to receive the fictitious data by submitting to it forms containing the information. Since the Social Security administration computer system operates on the basis of the Social Security account numbers and not beneficiary names, the computer failed to detect the fictitious payees.

Court records state the computer tapes thus created were shipped routinely from Social Security headquarters at Woodlawn to the U. S. Treasury Bureau of Disbursement, Philadelphia. Once there, the computer tapes were then used to create seemingly authentic treasury checks which were thereafter mailed to the fictitious payees at the designated addresses.

Blair and Ms. Abrams are charged with taking the checks to various banks in Philadelphia for deposit. Eventually, the accounts were depleted and the funds disbursed to unknown locations.

According to court records, on March 1978 Ms. Abrams posed as Ms. Shirley Singleton withdrew $9,000 in cash from a bank, using the proceeds to purchase $4,000 travelers checks.

None of the money allegedly obtained from the Scheme has been retained. When Mrs. Blair was arrested at her Rosedale Street home, the AFRO learned she had called in sick to her office.

—Md. trooper

(Continued from Page 1)

said he has been separated from his wife for six years.

Porter first outlined the department's minority hiring history for the AFRO in October 1979. The first black trooper was not hired until 1967. Porter stated in October there were only 108 black troopers on the state-wide police force of approximately 1,500 sworn personnel. He still argues that few blacks hold positions of responsibility in the agency.

Col. Thomas Smith, superintendent of the state troopers, admitted that there were not many high ranking blacks in the department but he denied that discrimination was the reason.

—Breakfast

(Continued from Page 1)

Delegate Troy Brailey a member of the House Ways and Means committee which will hear testimony next week on the bill said, "I cannot understand why the Baltimore city public school officials are opposed to the free hot breakfast program since it would be federally funded."

He added that he would work to get a favorable recommendation in his committee.

However, a similar bill was introduced [illegible] received recommendation but had [illegible] tended to come up [illegible] floor of

—World falls

(Continued from Page 1)

there, and now I'm in a real situation. Now I have to worry about my life."

The family of Johnson is also upset. They say that Johnson had come to see Little about some money Little owed the youth, and that Johnson was not attempting to break into the Little residence.

But Little disagrees.

"I didn't owe him any money, and why would he come through a second floor window at 4:00 in the morning to collect it if I did?"

The Johnson youth had a previous record of breaking and entering, according to family members, but had been participating in a special counseling and education program at Morgan State University. He was 16.

—Fuel fund thefts

(Continued from Page 1)

—Eight employees who met the qualifications and received assistance will not be disciplined.

Mrs. Edwards said no decision has been made on whether to give the results of the investigation to the state's attorney's office for possible prosecution.

The program provides up to $250 in utility payments and $400 for heating oil to low-income residents.

To date, some 31,000 people in Baltimore have received aid from the program and about 600 applications are taken each day.

—Park Heights

(Continued from Page 1)

One member of the delegation, Percy Pair, a senior at Morgan State University, had a special grievance he wanted to air with Jackson.

Pair had been participating in a college field project PHCC, but was informed Tuesday, Feb. 19 that he had been dropped from the program. He will lose seven credits, or half a semster's work, unless the decision is reversed. Pair feels that he was fired from his project because of his support of Leo Burroughs, who is currently on suspension from the PHCC pending a grievance hearing.

However, Jackson contends that there was no ulterior motive for the firing.

"The director of community organizing, (Leo Burroughs), is on suspension with pay, and he has the responsibility for overseeing the students involved in the practicum," said Jackson. "The responsibility of supervising the students is an added burden on the temporary director of community organizing. Since this is supposed to be a learning experience, I felt it would be in the best interests of the students to terminate the project."

Jackson added that he would try to find another organization so that students can complete their work and, when asked why Pair was the only student notified, stated that "maybe the other students haven't received the news yet."

The Park Heights Community Corporation has been in turmoil since late December, when Leo Burroughs, a popular community organizer, was fired from his position for ostensibly failing to drum up community attendance at two area meetings termed "crucial" by Melvin Jackson.

Burroughs, however, regained his job after a bitter public hearing in mid-January, but was given administrative leave with pay a week after the hearing.

He was placed on suspension after he had submitted a grievance to the personel committee of the PHCC, which charged that Jackson harassed him since his reinstatement.

Burroughs has since been denied the use of his office, and, in response, has contacted the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development in an attempt to seek federal intervention.

Joseph O'Conner, an official with the Baltimore office of HUD, stated that Burroughs' letter had been forwarded to M.J. Brodie, head of the city Department of Housing and Community Development.

BALTIMORE AFRO-AMERICAN
(Registered U.S. Patent Office)
Second Class postage paid at Baltimore, Md.
Circulation audited by Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC)
Published every Tuesday and Saturday by the AFRO-AMERICAN Company, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201 Phone (301) 728-8200
John H. Murphy 3rd, Chairman of Board; John J. Oliver Sr., President; Mae E. Dyson, Secretary; George C. Lottier, Treasurer; Frederick A. Howard, Vice President-Production; Raymond Boone, Editor; Vice President-Kenneth O. Wilson, Vice President-Advertising; Ralph Matthews, Jr., Managing Editor; Elizabeth M. Oliver, City Editor
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National Adv. Representative
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Supreme Court acts on abortion funding

ANNAPOLIS

This week's Supreme Court decision on medicaid abortions could clear the way for less restrictive regulations on statefunded abortions in Maryland, a House Appropriations Subcommittee member said Wednesday.

Delegate John W. Douglass, D-45th, said he would ask other members of the subcommittee on Health and the Enviornment later this week to adopt new, broader language concerning the use of state funds for abortions than the compromise language agreed to a year ago.

Douglass said he would ask that the state regulation regarding abortions be consistent with the ruling of U.S. District Judge John F. Dooling Jr. of New York. Dooling struck down a congressional restriction on federal funds that may be used to pay for abortions under the medicaid program.

Dooling's ruling was upheld by the Supreme Court Tuesday, and federal officials immediately began disbursing funds to pay for abortions for medicaid-eligible women on welfare.

State Assistant Attorney General Stephen H. Sfekas told the subcommittee he had been unable to obtain a copy of the Supreme Court decision and could therefore not comment on its precise effect on Maryland.

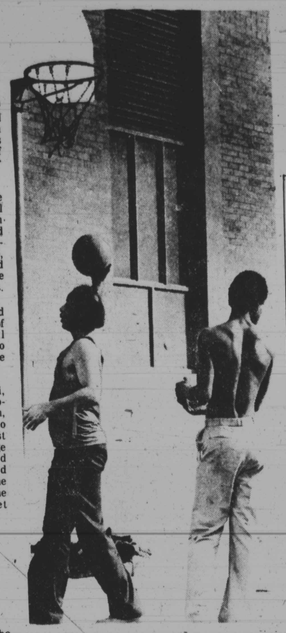
But Douglass, one of the four members on the six-member subcommittee who has voted in the past with the prochoice faction on the abortion issue, said the current restrictions on who may receive state funds for abortion are too strict.

They permit state money to be used when an abortion is deemed necessary because the life or physical or mental health of the woman is in danger, when the child might be subject to a genetic defect or serious deformity, or in cases of rape, sexual offense or incest.

Under the separate state and federal restrictions, 125 women in Maryland received federal funds for abortions during fiscal 1980, while 5,645 received abortions under the broader state guidelines.

Both figures, supplied by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, amounted to decreases from the previous year.

Delegate Frank Pesci, D-23rd, the subcommittee chairman, said he had hoped to simply readopt last year's abortion language this year, in part to avoid a new, bitter and emotional fight on the subject. But he said the dooling ruling upset those plans.


AFRO Photo by Romand Hankewycz

FEBRUARY 1 — Donald Smith (L) and Anthony Thomas peeled off coats and shirts for an outdoor basketball game this week when balmy, 55 degree temperatures had Baltimoreans reminding themselves that it is still February, not April.

Bill would double funeral $ from state

ANNAPOLIS - Recepients of welfare benefits may receive additional money for funeral expenses should the General Assembly adopt a bill requiring that the maximum allowance be increased.

Families receiving social security or supplemental security income benefits are allowed up to $400 to cover funeral expenses. A bill introduced by Delegate Troy Brailey, D-40th would increase the allowance to $800.

"With the high cost of inflation, $400 doesn't give people a decent burial," said the delegate who in 1974 was successful in getting the $250 allowance raised to $400.

Representatives from the Funeral Directors and Morticians Association of Maryland, a black organization, spoke in favor of the bill at a recent hearing held by the House Ways and Means committee.

Marshall Jones, president of the organization told the commitee "a typical welfare family desires the same services that all other families receive in a standard funeral."

He pointed out that if a family chooses the allotment, they cannot supplement the expenses out of their own pockets if the funeral exceeds $400.

Joseph Locks, chairman of the funeral directors organization added, "This is not just more money for the funeral directors. People want decent burials with a display. They don't want to just throw their relatives in the ground."

Also speaking before the committee was Rev. St. George Crosse who spoke on behalf of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance. Crosse said, "In 1974 when Delegate Brailey introduced the $400 benefit it was a reasonable amount. But an increase is needed to meet rising funeral costs."

Use correct state tax envelope

Suit filed against TV firm

Maryland State Comptroller Louis L. Goidstein said several thousand state income taxpayers have used the wrong envelope to send in their Maryland tax return, resulting in delays in processing and mailing refund checks.

Two envelopes are included in the Marvland tax packet. The gray envelope is preaddressed to the State Income Tax Division, and should be used to send in tax returns.

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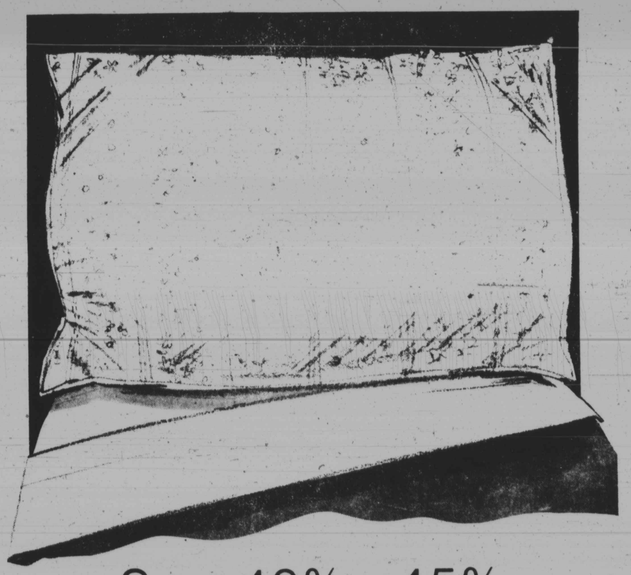
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