

# County crime strike force clears 1st hurdle

By TOM LONERGAN

Oakland County's organized crime strike force will probably be refunded by the Board of Commissioners.

Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson's controversial 12-man investigation unit passed its first hurdle Friday. The strike force's estimated \$350,000 budget for next year easily passed the Republican-dominated county board finance committee despite Democrats' objections.

They say the strike force hasn't done much but engulf itself in a battle with the Pontiac Police Department over investigation of gambling in that city.

Commissioner Alexander Perinoff, D-Southfield, a persistent critic of the

strike force during last week's budget hearing, voted against refunding. The county board's Democratic Caucus leader, Lawrence Pernick, of Southfield, and Betty Fortino, D-Pontiac, abstained.

Area commissioners, who voted with the 6-1 majority recommending refunding, included Birmingham Republicans Ralph Moxley, Lillian Moffitt and Robert Page and John Peterson, R-Rochester.

The only county-wide elected Democrat, Sheriff Johannes Spreen, recently said his department will not participate in the strike force.

Neither Spreen nor Patterson, a Republican, attended the budget hearing last week.

*'Numbers — that happens everyday. People are betting nickels and dimes. To me that's nothing.'*

— Alexander Perinoff,  
Southfield Democrat

"IT'S TOO bad this has become a partisan issue," said Commissioner Anne Hobart, R-Pontiac.

"Whatever little money we put in here will not solve the problem, but at least we're taking a step and keeping these people who are involved in organized crime on their toes."

Pernick responded that Democrats have "supported effective efforts to deal with crime."

"We're unwilling to say the most important crime in Oakland County is the numbers racket."

Perinoff asked chief assistant prosecutor, Richard Thompson, what orga-

nized crime the strike force has discovered in its three years of operation.

Besides the numbers operation in Pontiac, Thompson listed a stolen car ring, narcotics trafficking, insurance fraud and breaking up the "wrecking crew," a group of 12 that he said had been "ripping off homes" for a decade.

"The things you mentioned are individual things," Perinoff said.

"Have you seen any highly organized, disciplined organization? Numbers — that happens everyday. People are betting nickels and dimes. To me that's nothing."

Perinoff said the strike force money should be spent on increased investigation of arson or the county's police academy.

His was the only vote received by his motion to delete the strike force's funding from the budget.

THE STRIKE force investigation of Pontiac gambling led to the creation of the county's one-man grand jury, Circuit Judge Steven Andrews, to investigate both the Pontiac Police Department and the strike force.

Andrews indicted the city's police chief, William Hanger, for obstruction of justice and perjury, and Lt. Orville Johnston for perjury. Both were cleared.

Thompson said after the hearing that "we've been trying to depoliticize the strike force . . . so it becomes a stable unit."

## County seeks foster parents

An appeal for children's foster homes was issued by the Oakland County branch of the Michigan Department of Social Services.

"We urgently need foster parents who are willing to provide a loving family atmosphere and environment for children of all ages ranging from tots through teens."

"A critical shortage exists in Oakland county right now for foster homes for black children and for teenagers of all races," said Loretta Bruton, Supervisor Foster Home Licensing.

Foster parents provide care for youngsters for periods ranging from a few days to several months. The majority of the children are returned to their natural parents. Others await adoption

or placement into a permanent home.

Prospective foster parents, she said, are no longer limited to couples.

"A single person can qualify too. We require that the person be of good reputation and financially secure with a stable income source of their own."

Mrs. Bruton said the State provides an allowance for the care and living expenses for each child, but the actual amounts do not leave room for profits. Medical and dental expenses are covered by the State's Medicaid program or other resources.

Contact Mrs. Bruton at her Pontiac office by telephone at 858-1619 to arrange for additional information regarding foster home programs and family home licensing.

## Interest rates force home buyers out

By TIM RICHARD

Guy VanderJagt, often called the "best orator in the House," was doing more than charming 17th Congressional District Republicans as an after-dinner speaker last week.

He was studying them. VanderJagt is more than a seventh-term congressman from Michigan's northern lower peninsula. He is chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee — the group which helps Republican candidates, especially in "target" areas.

WILL THE 17TH — which includes northwest Detroit, Redford Township, Farmington and Southfield — be targeted in 1980 as it was (unsuccessfully) in 1976?

"One of the reasons I'm here is to look it over," he answered. "The 17th has not been ruled out."

"There are three or so which will be targeted in Michigan. A lot will depend on who the nominee is and whether the Democratic presidential nominee is Kennedy or Carter."

He didn't elaborate. When VanderJagt was elected, he was part of then-Gov. George Romney's "class of '66" — a Michigan congressional delegation that was 12-7 Republican. Today it is 13-6 Democratic.

THE 17TH has been Democratic since it was drastically reorganized in 1972 following the census. For one-term veteran Martha Griffiths and for the next three terms, young William

Brodhead have been elected.

After Brodhead coasted in 1974 over the slender campaign of the late Kenneth C. Gallagher, Republicans targeted the district in 1976. They poured \$250,000 — about double the amount it usually takes to win — behind the effort of James Burdick, a young attorney with a political "name."

They hardly denied Brodhead. Compared to Gallagher's 29 percent of the vote in 1974, Burdick got less than 35 percent in 1976.

In 1978 Brodhead was unopposed. Another easy run in 1980 would allow him to build up a bankroll and a reputation for a run for governor in 1982. Brodhead is known to be thinking about it.

THE OCCASION at which VanderJagt spoke was the ninth annual Eisenhower dinner in the Red Oaks clubhouse, Farmington Hills.

Winston T. Churchill, treasurer of the 17th, said attendance was about 200, some 50 percent better than in even 1978, which was an election year.

VanderJagt said in an interview there's a "good grass roots feeling" in Michigan GOP circles. He attributed it to the leadership of State Chairman Mel Larsen, who is committed to winning back legislative and congressional seats that have been chipped off by Democrats since 1968.

"I found Mel Larsen at a Republican picnic in Kaleva in my district. You know where that is? That's way out of the way. I hardly get there myself," said VanderJagt, referring to a backwoods village in Manistee County.

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