THE NUMBERS MAN - supplementary notes

1.   As an alternative, the series could begin with Richard already in business as a troubleshooting accountant with a nose for fraud. His background can be sketched in incidentally over several episodes.

Musical Shares, which was to be episode one, would then be altered so that Richard is hired by the prospective buyer, instead of being the auditor; and this story would not need to be the first.

2.   A change of emphasis. Most episodes end with the exposure of a fraud. However, instead of focussing on the villain who is jailed (or forced to resign or whatever), we can achieve a more upbeat finish by emphasizing the client who is rescued. Examples:

In Musical Shares Richard saves his client from the error of buying a near-bankrupt company.

In Peanut Blancmange the musicians finally get their money.

In Prophet and Loss Maurice Caple could be a victim of, rather than a conspirator with, the extortionist Tony Singer; then Richard's detection of the extortion would enable Caple to carry on in business.

3.   The following characters could be semi-regulars:

MISS MONKTON? 50, Richard's grim-faced secretary, an iron lady who disapproves of most of his clients and is none too sure about Richard himself. As well as being prim and sour, she is quite shrewd, and can spot a con-man in seconds flat. At some point we may be surprised to learn that there is a man in her life.

PETER and CAROLINE SQUIRES, our link with Richard's and Nutsy's social life. They are sociologically similar, as it were, to Richard and Nutsy - youngish, affluent, educated, childless - but in other ways a contrast: Peter is passionately ambitious, Caroline is a bored housewife, and the marriage is on the rocks. Peter is a stockbroker.

GEORGE GOUGH is an old flame of Nutsy's, a Londoner now a Detective-Inspector with the CID. A conventionally rugged male, all hair and shoulders, he makes Richard jealous, but is nevertheless a useful contact.

Also NEIL RILEY - see format.

KMF 25/6/78