Commission warns tenants: read lease before signing

By Bill Rhoden

When was the last time you read the lease to your apartment? Better yet, have you READ the lease to your apartment?

More than likely you haven't so c'mon over and join the club.

That "club" is composed of tenants who have suddenly realized that their leases have thrust them into a "real estate" poker game in which the landlord holds all the cards.

What's worse is the fact that most existing tenant-Landlord laws do little in the way of consumer (tenant) protection.

Under present city law, for instance, a landlord may evict a tenant for any reason or for no reason at all.

This simply means that if a tenant consistently complains to either the landlord or the city about poor services the landlord can say: "Hey, it's easier for me to evict this "trouble maker than to fix the damages."

And guess what: he's right!

Unless the complainant can sight neglected repairs which pose threats to life, i.e. no heat, missing or weak steps, loose guard rails on the balcony etc., the landlord has the legal right to evice him.

* * *

Let's say youur air conditioning system has been on the blink for two months keeping in mind that, an inoperative air conditioning unit does not pose a threat to one's life.

Even though the unit is included in the rent, landlords are not obliged to subtract that amount from the rent if the service (air conditioning in this case) is broken for one or more months.

Do you refuse to pay rent until the service is fixed? Maybe.

But unless you're backed by the entire tenant community you could find yourself tagged with an eviction notice.

* * *

In recent years, landlords have increasingly fond themselves in a position to tell prospective tenants: "Sign this lease or find another apartment."

And since there isn't a practical alternative to the apartment he has just found, it is doubtful that the tenant will engage in apartment negotiations.

Most leases prohibit dogs, "loud" music, playing of an instrument at certain times and some even empower the landlord to inspect the premises at will if his curiosity deems it necessary.

Essentially standard apartment leases permit the landlord to continue collecting rent irrespective of his crookedness, incompetency or complete foolishness while the tenant, in contest is required to live an almot saintly existence.

This article is merely an introduction to the world of tenant-landlord law, a world which affects more than 40 per cent of the people in this metropolitan area.

The next Governor's Commission on Landlord-Tenant Law Revision will be held on Jan. 8 in the State Office Building.

At that time, the 19-man commission will vote on a set of tenant-landlord law revisions which, if passed by the legislature in Annapolis this January, could begin to "even-up" the age old battle between tenants and their lanllords. Next Week: Security Deposits, fact and fiction.

Mr. Rayford retires from Provident post

Maxie E. Rayford, director of Building and Grounds, has retired after nine years service to Provident Hospital.

Mr. Rayford was honored at a luncheon attended by the Hospital's Department directors and at an informal party given by his staff.

Aware that Mr. Rayford's retirement will take him back home to Salem, Va., where he is an avid sportsman, the hospital presented "The Chief" with a fishing rod and reel. In addition, he received a plaque expressing gratitude for his contributions to Provident in the planning, building and maintaining of the new facility.

* * *

Mr. Rayford came to Provident from a similar position at Burrell Memorial Hospital in Roanoke, Va., where he worked closely with its administrator, Henry J. Whyte.

When Mr. Whyte took over as administrator of Provident, Mr. Rayford joined him. Both men were excited by the challenge of helping to build a new hospital.

Hospital work has long been a part of the Rayford family. Mrs. Lee Rayford is a hospital dietician; Mr. Rayford's oldest sister served as a nurse in a Veteran's Hospital, and another sister supervises a clinic in Chicago.

* * *

The best part of his Provident years, Mr. Rayford is quick to point out, is the pleasure he found in his work. "I have always enjoyed to the fullest everything I've done. It was not only a challenge, but a source of pride and pleasure to me to see that things work that Provident becomes established in the Community, that it provides the best care possible."

When asked the reason for his retirement, Mr. Rayford recalls the advice of his father, "old men for counsel, young men for war."

"It was my father's belief and it is mine, that age must step aside and make way for youth."

Sylvan Johnson is acting Director of Building and Grounds.

City cab driver slain Wednesday

A 52-year-old city Royal-West taxi-cab driver was found fatally shot in his cab in the 3700 block W. Franklin St. near Allendale St. Wednesday night.

Homicide investigators report Edward Mintz, 500 block Seagull Ave., Cherry Hill, a father of six was found slumped over the wheel but still clutching the microphone of his radio.

Police investigators who pronounced him dead at about 11:50 p.m. on the scene state the cab's engine was still running, the lights were on and although the vehicle was in gear it was held in place by Mr. Mintz's foot on the break.

Police report they are still looking for suspects believed to be fares picked up by the victim.

At the time the cab was found the meter was running and showed a fare of $2.50. Police said the victim was found by a motorist who wanted to turn off Allendale into Franklin St. shortly before 11:45 p.m. and found the victim's car blocking the way.

Police state the motorist removed the microphone from Mr. Mintz's hand and called the Royal Cab dispatcher to report the shooting.

The victim's cab is described as Royal-West Cab Number 753 with license number 6242-B-A.

Neighborhood residents told police they heard a volley of shots and saw the cab sitting there with the engine running.

Thomas Williams, 700 block Denison St., told the AFRO he was walking up Franklin St. when he heard the shots.

He said, "I came on the side of the cab in the middle of Franklin and Allendale Sts. The doors were opened, both the front and the rear passenger doors. The meters were still running. The man was slumped over the seat. He had on dark trousers, an old military coat and light shirt. He appeared to be dead. A crowd gathered."

Police quoted witnesses as saying when they found that the driver had been shot they called police. The victim was bleeding profusely from the head and the shoulders.

The family refused to comment and the body still remained at the City morgue Thursday noon.

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Who Will Be Hostess At Governor's Annual New Year's Reception?

Following Mrs. Barbara Mandel's announcement that as of Dec. 20 she is no longer officially in residence at the Governor's Mansion, there is no word from the governor's office as to where the annual New Year's reception, a mansion tradition, will be held, or who will be hostess.

After declaring that she would leave the mansion, where she has lived without Gov. Mandel for almost six months, Mrs. Mandel spent Thursday preparing her possessions to be moved to Baltimore, where she will take residence.

A statement was issued Wednesday night and Mrs. Libby Thomas, her secretary, made no further comments. The governor's press staff said Tuesday that Gov. Mandel intends to remain silent on the issue which he still considers personal.

However, press aide Tom Burden says that he is sure the governor will move back into the mansion but isn't sure when the move will be made.

Burden says he does not know, but would check, what arrangements are being made for the reception.

* * *

In July the governor announced his love for and intention to marry Mrs. Jeanne Dorsey, 30-year-old southern Maryland divorcee, and moved from the mansion, where Mrs. Mandel said she would remain, awaiting his return.

"After the governor made his public announcement in July and moved out of the mansion, I continued for a long time to hope and believe that after reflection he would return to the mansion and resume the marriage that gave us two fine children and took us together from a modest beginning in Baltimore 32 years ago to the governorship of the state," her statement says.

A recent poll taken for Gov. Mandel's use in his upcoming bid for reelection, asks among other things: "Do you think Mrs. Mandel should move out of the governor's mansion so that the governor can move back in?"

Mrs. Mandel says that she has decided on her own to make the move.

"Five and a half months have passed and our marriage has not returned to normal. Therefore, with deep regret I am leaving the mansion as of Dec. 20. The governor has not pressured me. This is my statement. This is the way I feel about it."

Mrs. Mandel's Baltimore address was unavailable at AFRO press time, and her secretary declined to say what Mrs. Mandel plans to do in the future.

Mary and the First Lady is still making no comment on whether she will give her husband a divorce.

Mrs. Mandel leaves mansion, Gov. Mandel to move back in

GOV. AND MRS. MANDEL AND MRS. JEANNE DORSEY — The Maryland governor himself made the statement of his intentions to marry Mrs. Dorsey and opened the door to nationwide focus on the triangle, the love affair and the divorce which has not yet been filed.

Fire Dept. ambo drivers learn about new emergency equipment

Since Dec. 8, members of the Baltimore City Fire Department's ambulance division have been in course at City Hospitals on the use and [illegible] of emergency ambulance apparatus.

The 208-hour course is designed to prepare ambulance drivers in Baltimore City and surrounding counties for the new emergency equipment to be installed in emergency vehicles within the coming months.

Baltimore City will receive eight of the vehicles and it is predicted that by the end of 1974, all 96 of the city's ambulance drivers will have completed the course.

Because of the length of classes and due to the number of participating counties, it was necessary to mandate than only [illegible] would enroll in each course.

The courses will take nearly two months to complete so that by May approximately 32 drivers will have finished.

* * *

A group of black drivers (there are 18 in the city Fire Department Ambulance Division) have publicly expressed discontent over the selection process being used by Chief Martin McMahon, saying that it was discriminatory.

During the last Fire Board meeting, a list was posted showing the names of the eight men who will enroll in the special course next month. No blacks were on that list.

In Nov., the first class was held and one participant, John Johnson, was black.

According to Chief McMahon, the system of selection the employs, as designed to include one driver in each of the three shifts from every one of the ambulance companies in the city.

The trouble arose when a white driver from No. 8 Ambulance was selected for next month's course rather than one of his four black co-drivers.

"I had to pick one man from that particular shift in order to make sure each shift was represented. The man I picked was the only one available, it just so happened that there weren't any blacks on at that time," the chief stated.

In March, the third class will contain three black drivers including one from No. 8 ambulance.

According to Chief McMahon, all ambulance drivers in the Baltimore City Fire Department now receive $600 more than firefighters. He emphasized that early completion of the course would not entitle any driver to more money.

* * *

"Every Tom, Dick and Harry isn't going to be able to 'cut the mustard'," McMahon stated.

"There are going to be a lot of whites who won't finish the course and there'll be some blacks who won't finish. The Medical Examiners Board will make that decision, not me, not the instructors.

"I'm trying to do a job and wouldn't care what color the man is, as long as he can do the job."

The chief's explanation regarding the selection process was verified by a black member of the department (who was influential in various anti-discrimination movements against the department) who said the reason no blacks were in the second class was because "there just weren't any available at that particular time.

"In fact," he added, "there are at least 4 ambulance companies with no blacks at all" (which is another problem in itself).

* * *

The new equipment is being purchased at cost of 28,000 each.

It includes methods for intravenous fluid injections, electrocardiographs and equipment for restoring natural heartbeats (via electrical shock).

S.C. Moms Must Use Ga. Medics

COLUMBIA, S.C. The state's welfare agency has been required to send Aiken County Welfare maternity patients to Georgia for treatment since Medicaid payments have been denied an Aiken obstetrician.

The action against Dr. C. H. Pierce followed on the heels of an investigation into complaints that Pierce required patients to agree to sterilization as a condition for treatment.

Commissioner R. Archie Ellis of the South Carolina Department of Social Services has said that Medicaid patients will be transported to Augusta, Ga., at public expense.

He said Dr. Pierce will not be paid for obstetric care of Medicaid patients.

The probe was conducted by the department and the attorney general's office here.

Pierce is one of three obstetricians in Aiken County. The other two do not generally accept welfare recipients as patients and Pierce's elimination from the Medicaid program leaves pregnant welfare women without a doctor.

A list of Augusta obstetricians has been furnished the Aiken County Social Service Department according to Richard T. Pearce, director of the department. Welfare decipients and Medicaid patients will be allowed to choose from the list.

Commissioner Ellis has also said that the state agency must give prior approvel before a voluntary sterilization procedure is done on a welfare recipient.

The committee would have final authority on whether or not a sterilization should be done on a recipient. However, in the case of minors, the approval from a court would be required.

Three Aiken County women who were sterilized by the Dr. Pierce have complained to the U.S. Department of Justice that their civil rights were violated by the obstetrician. The cases are still being probed.

In November, Dennis Dimsey, an attorney with the Department of Justice said the federal agency is waiting to see what action the S.C. attorney general takes on the sterilization complaints before it acts on them.

Several local and national civil rights organizations are also investigating Dr. Pierce's treatment of welfare patients.

Denied bowling rights, sisters awarded $5000

HARRISBURG—The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission ordered payments of $2,500 each to two sisters awarded the right to participate in the lodge's children's bowling league.

* * *

The lodge contended that its bowling league, and ordered has an unwritten policy that the Williamsport Moose Lodge young bowlers must be either the children or grandchildren of Moose members.

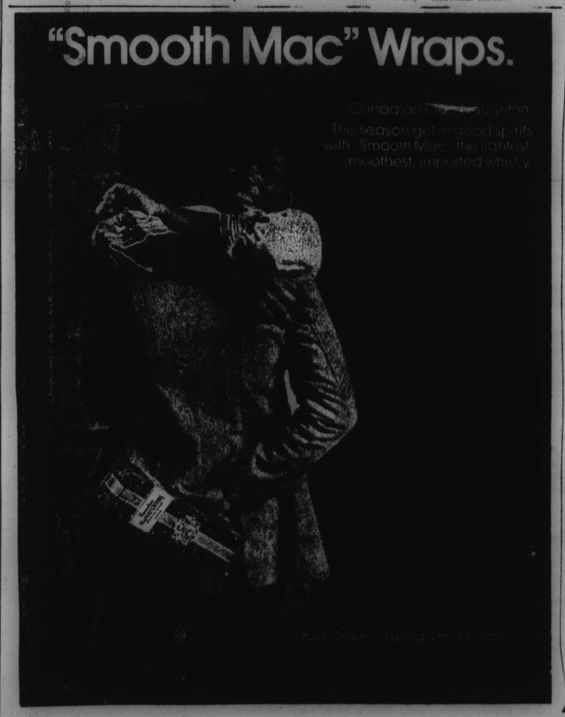
The commission made the cash allowance to make up for that the "unwritten" regulation never was applied until the "mental anguish" suffered by Lyn Hamilton, 4, and her sister Sharon, 6.

The agency found the Loyal Order of Moore Lodge No. 145 guilty of racial discrimination in denying the sisters the right to participate in the lodge's children's bowling league.

But the commission said the Hamilton sisters sought to join the league.

The complaint was filed by Mrs. Donald Hamilton.

"Smooth Mac" Wraps.



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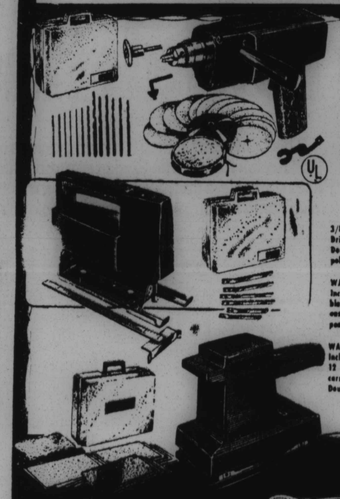

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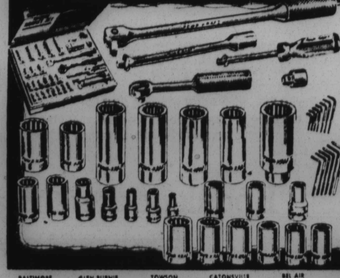

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