Maybe yes, maybe no

Will black postal workers strike?

If the national postal unions carry out their strike threat, the predominantly black National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees might join them.

And then again, they might not.

"We didn't tell our membership to strike and we didn't tell them not to," said John W. White, director of legislation for Alliance.

If a strike was called, White said the Alliance, which is 98 percent black, would contact key union people to decide what action to take.

Three postal unions, representing letter carriers, mailhandlers and clerks, have been negotiating with officials of the U.S. Postal Service to untangle contract issues.

At AFRO presstime, the two sides were in disagreement about several aspects of the contract, including a no - layoff clause which is included in the current contract.

White said the Alliance, as a representative for blacks, is "100 percent sympathetic to the workers. We support the no - layoff clause and almost everything else they are bargaining for."

White said the Alliance, while not participating in the contract talks, supports the issues.

He said the no - layoff clause originated in 1970 when the Postal Service was re - organized, which called on the Postal Service to break even financially by 1984.

White said billions of dollars have been lost by adding automatized equipment designed to streamline mail handling and delivery.

The no - layoff clause says, in effect, that employees cannot be terminated as a result of automation.

"Even though you automate, you cannot tell 50 people they are out of work because you have a machine which has replaced them," White said.

The labor force can only be reduced by attrition — firing, death, or resignation of employees.

White says he believes the provision was being used to harass black postal workers.

"Webster's dictionary says attrition is the 'wearing down by friction.' By saying they can only reduce the labor force through attrition, the postal department is giving black workers Hell," White said.

He said he recently testified before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation and Federal Services on the racial composition of the U.S. Postal Service.

Citing Government Accounting Office statistics, White said he told the subcommittee that the number of postal workers has decreased by 86,000 employees from 1970 to 1977.

In November, 1970, 19.4 percent of postal workers were black. Of some 713,000 employees, 138,000 were black.

However, in November, 1977, the black postal labor force was approximately 107,000.

"These statistics raised an obvious question: Is the Postal Service trying to make its labor force all white?" White asked.

He said he also told the subcommittee that attrition provokes mixed reactions.

"Attrition has many faces, some of which are ugly. Attrition may nullify the no - layoff clause in a union contract. Supervisors can demoralize employees through transfers, demotions and harassment and they can intensify racial and sex discrimination," White said.

As far as the recent contract negotiations and the no - layoffs clause are concerned, White said the Alliance will support the clause because "It's a good union position to take.

"But attrition becomes the substitute for layoffs when it is in the hands of a predominantly white Postal System," he said.

MSU forming orchestra

Dr. Kenneth A. Keeling, chairman of the Department of Music at Morgan State University, announced that Morgan will have a University - Community Orchestra this year beginning in September.

The plan is to organize a full symphony orchestra of strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion with the membership open to persons on campus and in the larger Baltimore area.

Rehearsals are tentatively scheduled to be held weekly on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 9:30 p.m.

Anyone interested in auditions should contact the Music Department Office at 444-3286 or 444-3287 Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Mrs. Mandel wants back alimony$

Mrs. Barbara Mandel has filed the $28,295 judgment for back alimony due her from suspended Gov. Marvin Mandel in several county courthouses.

Mrs. Mandel's lawyer filed the judgment with the court clerks in Harford, Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties.

"I have judgments against the governor," Mrs. Mandel said Tuesday. "I haven't gotten any alimony since May 1977. This is an attempt to start collecting the money that is due me."

Mrs. Mandel obtained the judgment for back alimony last month from Baltimore Circuit Court Judge James A. Perrott.

Maryland law permits judgments filed in one county to act a lien on "real or leasehold" property in another county, provided the judgment is recorded in the second county.

Mrs. Mandel said she didn't know if her former husband owned property in any of the counties where the judgments were filed.

Mandel has acknowledged that he owes his former wife the alimony, but said he was $500,000 in debt and had no income to pay the monthly award.

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Free school meals easier to obtain

Children of low income families will have a greater opportunity to eat free or reduced price meals in public schools under new family income guidelines adopted by the state Department of Education.

Entitlement to free or reduced price meals, or free milk, under the program is determined by both the family's size and income.

Under the revised policy, a family of four may have an income no greater than $8,110 to be eligible for free meals and free milk in public schools. The previous income cutoff was $7,610.

Similarly, to obtain reduced price meals at the schools — 10 cents for lunch, five cents for breakfast — the income level of a family of four must not be more than $12,660, an increase over the old figure of $11,880.

Other factors considered in determining children who are eligible include unusual expense for medical bills, shelter, special education expense, or casualty losses by the family, a department official said.

Foreign students visit Walbrook

Families in the Walbrook community opened their homes this week to 50 American Field Service foregin exchange students as they began the final weeks of their stay in the United States.

The 50 students representing many countries have spent the past school year studying in schools around the country.

The students arrived at Walbrook Senior High School and were greeted by the hosting families and the Walbrook High School staff. They remained here for three days.

"We tried to get a mixture of times with the host families and time together as a whole group," said Mrs. Fairlean E. Holcombe, who helped to coordinate the program.

Various events planned were touring Baltimore City and meeting School Board Representatives, a picnic, swimming and a talent show.

Free time was left for the families and students to decide what they wanted to do.

Several students said they felt like celebrities in Baltimore and enjoyed the free time. They also commented on the friendliness of the people in Baltimore and were surprised there was much interest in their staying here.

Sandtown-Winchester Festival to be held

The Sandtown - Winchester Festival will be held Saturday, July 22 at the schoolyard of the Gilmor Elementary School number 107 in the 1300 block of Gilmor St. at the corner of Laurens Street.

The festival will begin at noon and continue until 7 p.m.

Entertainment will be provided by the Arena Players, Gaye Street One, the Olu Fummilayo African Dance Troupe, a fashion show and a karate demonstration.

The festival will also feature booths manned by various social service agencies which will supply information on where people can obtain assistance for various problems.

There will also be booths from community organizations and churches, arts and crafts and food.

The festival is sponsored by the Sandtown - Winchester Imrpovement Association.

For more information call 728 - 2660.

Howard Murphy backs Orlinsky

Howard H. Murphy added his name to the growing list of endorsements for the gubernatorial candidacy of Walter S. Orlinsky.

Murphy, controller of the Baltimore - based AFRO - AMERICAN Newspapers chain, is also a veteran member, past president and current honorary president of the Baltimore Chapter of Americans for Democratic Action (ADA).

"He has been a good friend of long standing," Murphy said of Orlinsky. "He is the only person I would think of endorsing."

Orlinsky welcomed the endorsement, saying "I have known and respected Howard Murphy for a long time, and I am honored by the faith in our mutual ideals his backing signifies."

In addition to his other activities, Murphy has been a member and president of the Maryland Social Srvices Board, president of the Provident Hospital Board of Directors and a member of SANE.

The team of Walter Orlinsky and Ron Young, mayor of Frederick, last week gained the endorsement for governor and Lieuenanf governor of Howard County's Alliance Toward an Active Community.

Report flowing fire hydrants

Francis W. Kuchta, Director of Public Works, Baltimore City, asked citizens to report any flowing fire hydrants they see by telephoning Customer Service at 539 - 5151.

"This office is manned 24 hours a day. Customer Service personnel will advise proper authorities of any unauthorized use of fire hydrants reports. It is not necessary for the caller to identify himself," Mr. Kuchta emphasized.

Wasting water can have serious consequences by reducing water pressure for residents, hospitals and fire - fighting equipment.

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