DORIS JOHNSON (foreground) leader of the Coldspring-Montebello Project Area Committee, listens attentively.

Finney resigns, way open to Pettit

The path is clear for A. Dwight Pettit to become U.S. Attorney for Maryland now that Jervis Finney, the present U.S. Attorney has resigned.

However Sen. Paul Sarbanes, who is responsible for picking the new U.S. Attorney refuses to say if he is thinking about Pettit as one of the candidates for the position.

"He's made no commitment to anyone," said Pete Marudus, spokesman for Sen. Sarbanes, who admits Pettit is one person they could be considering. "We are going to be looking at people who have expressed an interest but we're also going to look at others."

Support in Maryland and across the nation has been building for Pettit since he expressed an interest in becoming U.S. Attorney.

Recently Baltimore's Monumental Bar Association came out in strong support of Pettit.

Pettit, who is the association's president, has no comment but admits his group supports him.

Sarbanes' office in the past has refused to set a time-table for even considering candidates for the post until it knew Finney's and the Justice Department's position.

Finney submitted his letter of resignation to President Carter Wednesday citing increased bureaucracy and other job strains as the reason. His resignation becomes effective Jan. 31, 1978.

Sarbanes applauded Finney for his fine service and said he plans to consult with the Justice Department on a successor.

Marudus said Sarbanes plans to begin screening candidates sometime in the first or second week in November.

He added the selection should be complete before the Senate reconvenes in mid-January.

—Mitchell explains

(Continued from Page 1)

himself is based on his past harsh condemnations of the racist apartheid system in South Africa. Now, he is being accused of supporting a black firm that would allow white technicians from racist South Africa millions of dollars in minority contract money.

Here is the background on the controversy in which Congressman Mitchell is currently involved.

(1) Amtrak, the federally subsidized railroad system, has appealed for bids on a rail renovation project to upgrade tracks in the Northeast corridor from Boston to Washington.

(2) The project, also intended to aid minority business, has three black-owned companies in the running for the contract: Sherman R. Smoot Company, Inc. Travenca Concrete Constructor Company, and Santa Fe Pomeroy-San Vel Company of California and Massachusetts.

(3) The contract calls for pre-cast cement railroad ties requiring special technological skills the black companies competing do not presently have. All three firms have linked with white firms as a result, but only Smoot sought assistance from South Africa.

Congressman Mitchell released a statement earlier this week stating, "under no circumstances will I support any type of business — minority or non-minority — dealings with South Africa."

Mitchell told the AFRO yesterday that he has directed a letter to (U.S. Transportation Department Secretary) Brock Adams, asking for a thorough investigation of the firm (Smoot) to find out if they are associated with South Africa.

"Obviously, I will support Baltimore firms whenever I can," Mitchell said. "I knew Smoot stood to benefit from the contract and I knew Leon Bridges (a Marylander) was associated with Smoot, but there was no knowledge of South Africa being tied to Smoot."

Mitchell said he knew Leon Bridges but did not know anyone from the Smoot construction firm.

Gary Gayton, special assistant to the Department of Transportation secretary said the department had not taken a stand on whether to allow South African technicians to be a part of a contract because it was not certain whether or not Smoot would win the contract.

It's strange, Gayton told the AFRO that "large firms in this nation like Exxon have ties with South Africa and still get contracts. Here you have a black-owned firm and people want to knock it because it has contacts with South Africa."

To Gayton's comments, Mitchell said "I cannot support that. The argument about jobs is not an argument. I would not support black people doing business with the Ku Klux Klan so I would not support them doing business with South Africa."

According to the New York Times, Lewis Smoot said "I would get in the bed with the devil if I could do something to help our people learn and go to work. But I think, that when you see what's involved you'll see that I'm purchasing a license to make ties.

—Neighborhood

(Continued from Page 1)

Satisfied that the bonds were untouched (confirmed by Lawrence Daley, Baltimore deputy treasurer) and assured by Brodie, in private meetings, that no city-wide projects were to be deleted, Thomas said he is willing to wait for the outcome of HCD's request for emergency federal money before raising his voice again.

The federal government recalled $18 million in loans which the city used to fund old urban rebuilding projects—"some up to 15 years old," Brodie said to the community representatives at the Civic Center Wednesday.

Baltimore paid them off primarily using old bond money intended for "urban renewal purposes," according to HCD's Jim Middleton.

Deputy Treasurer Daley said "generally" it is illegal to use bond money for anything other than what it is intended for.

Brodie said he is optimistically waiting for the Department of Housing and Urban Development's response to his $55 million "Urgent Need" request.

He conceded at the hearing that there will be "no change in project committment," noting, however, that "we will be taking a hard look at the realism of all activities."

Baltimore officials apparently expected more federal grant money but $20 million is the total received this year.

HCD will also use money from "land sales" for project funding, Brodie said. The commissioner noted that with the city's federal debt paid, "new block grant money" will be "freed to do new projects."

Neighborhood protest reached a head at Wednesday's hearing when the Citywide Coalition Against Displacement (CCAD) charged the city with funding "pet" projects such as the Inner Harbor and Cold Spring New Town.

In a prepared release, CCAD also accused the city with rushing into this year's second public hearing (the first was held in August), calling it "the first opportunity" for citizens to "learn what the city intends to do with 1978" money.

However, spokesmen for both HCD and the Mayor's office, said the Coalition has not filed any formal charges with either office.

Harold Young, acting director of Community Planning and Development, for HUD's Hopkins Plaza office (which handles such charges), said his office has not received any protests either.

After his group's meetings with Brodie, when the commissioner indicated he'd be willing to start most new projects Johnson is still skeptical about HCD's methods of budgeting.

A certified public accountant, Thomas said HCD should use the "pert chart" approach.

"With that," he said, "You cost out, to the penny, each project by what you need on the first day, the second day—on down to the end of the year. This shows you what kind of money you really need."

Thomas believes HCD could better distribute its limited money using the Park Heights' method, and "get everything started."

If "he gets Urgent Need, we can continue," Thomas said.

(Photo by Norma Spencer)

PARK HEIGHTS' RONALD THOMAS — Bond Issue resolved.

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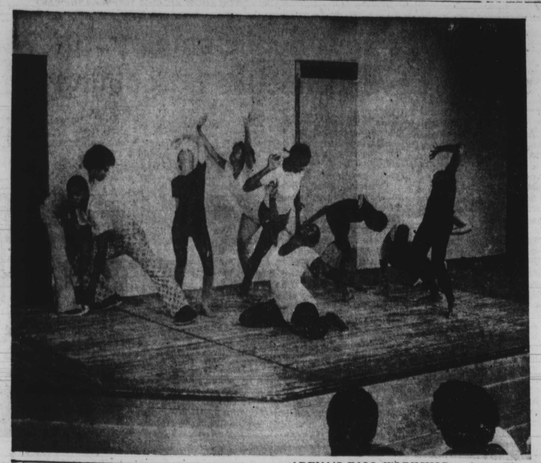

ARENA'S FALL WORKSHOP — Arena Players will open their Fall Workshop for students ages 14 through 21 at the Arena Playhouse, 801 McCulloh St. on Oct. 22. Classes will include drama, stagecraft, singing, mime and acting. The workshop will be directed by Mrs. Gloria Barnes and have a staff of experienced teachers.

Orlinski asks U.S. to support Wilmington 10

City Council President Walter Orlinski, after meeting with local Wilmington 10 supporters, sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Francis B. Burch reemphasizing federal intervention into the infamous North Carolina civil rights case.

Orlinski's letter, signed by 10 other councilmembers, was dated Oct. 5, and sent after he met with a "delegation" from the Baltimore Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (BARPR), Baltimore's Free the Ten spearhead group.

BARPR cochairperson Herb Singleton said the letter was the "most favorable response" to the Wilmington 10 case by a select group of Maryland elected officials his group has talked to so far. The letter was Orlinski's "own response" to BARPR prodding, Singleton said.

The local political organization, an affiliate of the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, has also contacted Burch, who said he'd review the facts of the case before taking any step for or against the Ten.

Singleton said BARPR'S next step, which has been preceded by Free the Ten rallies, is to "ask Orlinski or some other council member to sponsor a resolution to support the movement to free the Wilimington 10," who were convicted in 1971 on firebobing charges despite evidence of perjury by key witnesses.

Orlinski told the AFRO this week, "no" he has no plans to sponsor such a resolution. "I thought it a whole lot more intelligent" to send his councilperson signed letter to Sen J. Glenn Beall, R.-Md., Orlinski, like Burch, a 1978 gubernatorial candidate said.

Orlinski's letter, asked the Carter Administration to:

"Consider the filing" of a Friend of the Court brief with the North Carolina Appeals Court supporting the Ten's position;

Filing a Friend of the Court brief with the U.S. District Court in Raleigh, N.C. "urging a favorable decision" on the Ten's habeas corpus (attempt to get a higher court to review the Ten's imprisonment) petition, which has been pending since February 1976 and

Sending a recommendation to North Carolina governor James Hunt that the Ten be pardoned "or at a minimum, that their sentences be commuted to time served."

The 10 council-persons who signed Orlinski's letter were:

Mary Pat Clarke, Clarence "Du" Burns, Nathan Irby, Michael Mitchell, Victorine Adams, Rochelle Spector, Thomas J.S. Waxter Jr., George W. Dells Jr., William Myers and Joseph Murphy.

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This informative, provocative report will begin in next week's AFRO.

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