

the nation

Postal worker firings don't stop walkouts

United Press International
The firing of almost 100 postal workers in New Jersey and California has failed to quell wildcat walkouts threatening to spread into a full-scale strike in the New York City area.

Union leaders said they thought a New York City strike would mean a nationwide walkout.

The effect of wildcat walkouts so far has been minimal — a one-day backlog of bulk mail — parcels, "junk mail" and other low-priority items at bulk mail centers in New Jersey and California. But the leader of the New York City union local said Monday night he was recommending the 23,000 mail handlers, clerks and drivers in the union vote to strike.

Union President Moe Biller said a strike

authorization vote would be held later this week and if the union members approve a strike — no matter what the margin of the vote — there would be an immediate walkout.

He said a New York strike probably would start a national postal strike.

"I really do believe if New York votes to strike, the rest of the country will follow," said Biller.

Asked about the legal ramifications, since postal workers are barred from striking, Biller said, "You'll have to see my lawyer." The wildcat strikes began last Friday at the New York Bulk and Foreign Mail Center in Jersey City, N.J., and the San Francisco Bulk Mail Center in Richmond, Calif., after a nationwide contract proposal was agreed on in Washington.

Mail balloting on the national contract proposal is expected to be complete in about two weeks, but postal workers in many areas of the country wasted no time in condemning the proposed contract.

The proposal would give postal workers an average 19.5 percent wage and cost-of-living increase over three years, a raise scorned by most workers, particularly those in cities with high costs of living.

"We need the strike, we have to have it to get a decent contract," said James Nolan, a mail handler from Elizabeth, N.J.

A U.S. Postal Service spokesman said Monday the service had fired 40 people at the Jersey City center, 42 at the Richmond center and another 14 who walked out of the Los Angeles bulk mail center Saturday. "All these firings can be appealed through

the normal grievance process," said Harry Nigro, a Postal Service spokesman in New York. "But if these guys are on the picket line when they're supposed to be at work, they're breaking the law. We have no other choice but to send them letters of removal."

New York-area Postal Service officials also got a temporary injunction against the strike. It banned any picketing at any postal facility anywhere in the country.

But pickets still marched Monday night outside the Jersey City center where 37 percent of the scheduled employees did not report for the night shift.

The 42 strikers at the Richmond center were ordered to appear in federal court Tuesday to explain why they failed to obey an injunction against the strike.

Georgia governor to reward inmates

United Press International
ATLANTA — Gov. George Busbee plans to reward some prison inmates for saving the lives of two guards in the weekend riot that left three men dead, and he promised the killers would be swiftly prosecuted.

Busbee, an advocate of capital punishment, told reporters Monday night he wants to make sure the men involved in the mutilation murder of guard Dan Harrison and the fatal stabbings of two prisoners are never again a threat.

He said a group of prisoners — no names were released — had been identified as assailants responsible for the killings and the wounding of guard Preston Foskey, who was stabbed repeatedly during the Sunday afternoon violence.

Five prisoners were put in isolation Monday following an investigation of the killings, but Busbee declined to say how many suspects had been linked to the killings. He did say, however, that "we do expect early prosecution of the people involved."

Busbee praised most of the inmates of two black dormitories where a black guard and a white officer were protected by inmates after Harrison was killed and Foskey was wounded. The two uninjured guards initially had been described by prison authorities as hostages.

"Had it not been for these prisoners, then we would have had further killings of guards, so that's earned time — they've earned some time, good time," Busbee said.

"But also, we have some people we've identified who've killed a guard — mutilated him — we also have some earned time for them. We're going to try and do everything we can to see that they never injure anybody in society or any guard in the prison."

Senator asks to revise nuclear waste disposal

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Sen. Charles Percy, R-Ill., saying more than 20 years of neglect must be reversed, called Tuesday for a major revision of the government's policy for disposing of dangerous nuclear waste.

Percy's comments came as two Senate subcommittees held hearings on bills providing for management and disposal of the radioactive waste material.

"We can no longer afford the growing risks of a federal nuclear waste policy that has no direction," Percy said. "The future safety of millions of Americans depends on immediate action to reverse more than 20 years of neglect."

Under a bill introduced by Percy Tuesday, all costs of non-military nuclear waste disposal would be paid by a new Nuclear Waste Management Fund supported by commercial users.

"Taxpayers should not be stuck with the bill for nuclear waste facilities," he said, adding that commercial users also should pay for research and development of the waste facilities.

On Monday, Sen. Floyd Haskell, D-Colo., chairman of a Senate energy subcommittee on the subject, called for immediate federal action to protect Americans from radioactive waste found at abandoned uranium mills.

Carter warns White House against marijuana, drug use

United Press International
WASHINGTON — President Carter is making it clear "in no uncertain terms" that marijuana smokers and drug users have no place on the White House staff.

Describing himself as deeply concerned over recent reports that some of his staff used illegal drugs, the president served notice in a memorandum circulated Monday that he expects every member of the White House staff to obey the law.

Carter acted to stop any drug use

among his staff after a flurry of reports were published about drug use by White House workers.

Some of the reports came from interviews with Dr. Peter Bourne, who said after resigning under fire last week as the president's adviser on drug abuse problems that he knew of White House staff members who had smoked marijuana and snuffed cocaine.

Bourne is under police investigation for prescribing Quaalude, a powerful and frequently abused

sedative, under a phony name for an assistant in his office.

"Whether you agree with the law or whether or not others obey the law is totally irrelevant," Carter said. "You will obey it, or you will seek employment elsewhere."

On another front, Carter planned an appeal to Democratic congressional leaders Tuesday for support of one amendment repealing the Turkish arms embargo and defeat of another lifting U.N. trade sanctions against Rhodesia.

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