—Hilda Ford

(Continued from Page 25)

name, so I called her by her first name. I was about twelve, and she became enraged and told me that I had to call her Ms. "So and So," and I said that's fine with me and you call me Ms. Ford. She said that that was outrageous and I quit."

When Hilda Ford digs into her past employment experiences, one gets the feeling that though she can easily talk about them today, they were not lived as simply as they can be related. "When I got to be 16, 17, 18, and 19 years old and was in college, and even high school, the jobs that were available during the summer — part time or full time — to white students in the academic tract were not available to me."

Urban America has been the training ground for many blacks who have shown the strength to survive the swirling economic peril, and seemingly continually decaying life styles, and the lack of encouragement for academic excellence that black children so desperately need. Elder black people have openly criticized the current generation for not accepting whatever job available until the "right one comes along."

There can be much discussion on the subject, but Hilda Ford offered what can only be considered a heeding of advice. "Until I started to work for New York State, when I was 21 years old, I accepted and sought any kind of job I could do that was legal." "I was 21 years old when I left college and went to work for New York state in a temporary job paying fifty cents an hour."

"By this time I was an adult, and I felt very strongly that there was something called fairness, and something called doing the right thing — so, I integrated that into my work style," she said.

As she talked, Hilda Ford made it perfectly clear that, while she is an administrator who is part of the bureaucracy, she is also very concerned with the clients that her agency represents. "It's important to understand programmings, and it's important to do a good job, but it's also important that anyone I supervise meet my standards for providing good quality service." And, one gets the feeling that this kind of quality will surely filter down through her agency.

In today's world, it is indeed difficult to talk about delivering quality service, much less talk about providing direction for an entire agency. But, Hilda Ford is at the head of an agency that directly impacts the lives of approximately 20,000 persons, and Hilda Ford does not think of anyone of them as a number, but rather, she thinks of each as a person.

Hilda Ford had many job offers to consider, and they ranged all the way from north to south, from east to west. It must have been a difficult decision for her to make — to come to Baltimore — to decline offers from Florida to California. "I am a northeasterner," she says. "My heart lies in the northeast, I love the northeast, and I love cities."

"The reason I finally decided to come to Baltimore beside the social life, was when I talked to the mayor. I was impressed by two things: his commitment to quality service on the level that an administrator can produce it was something that I understood and his approach toward bureaucracy." He said, "You are responsible for getting this job done in his kind of hands on approach." "The clincher was that he would support me in my efforts."

When a new administrator of any type of city agency is appointed, he or she is thought to be the cure all for problems that have, in many cases lingered for the long periods of time. This makes the Initial task, and the day of any new administrator the type that one would have in any industrial complex, only more grueling for it is mental, responsible and often never ending.

"I am literally working ten, eleven, twelve hours a day ... trying to turn the Commission around, trying to establish standards where they do not exist, and improve standards where they are inadequate."

One of the most important tasks that an administrator in a position such as Hilda Ford has is to attempt to see to it that entire communities can take advantage of the services of the agency. And since the primary thrust of the Civil Service Commission is to provide for and ensure the proper administration of jobs, the commission must make the testing process one that avails itself to all.

"We give exams for civil service jobs from 9 a.m. tp 4 p.m. five days a week, so that people who are working have to take time off from their jobs — time for which in many cases they will not be paid, to take a civil service test for that they may or not pass for a job they may or may not get. So, one of the things I have done is to institute evening and Saturday testing so that we can truly reach more people."

Traditionally, the examination process has been used to screen people out. Of this, and the changes that she hopes to institute Ford says, "Our approach is to screen people in, and, this can be done by developing exams based on solid job related criteria."

There are five divisions of the civil service commission: the division, examination division, the administrative division, the medical division and the executive division. Hilda Ford has been looking at each with a watchful eye.

"I would like city employees to know that we are raising standards in the Civil Service Commission, and that we are looking into areas where I have identified a need — such as a need for executive development, and supervisory training.

By this time, the afternoon had come to a close — the sun had stopped peeking inside of the fortress that Hilda Ford calls home for many of her waking hours. The busses that run regularly during the rush hour had stopped providing their necessary interruption at noisy but regular intervals. Looking a bit weary, Hilda Ford commented on her much publicized "Five Year Plan." "The priorities are: to establish internal standards which means changing traditional practices, staff development and organizational restructuring, and the development of an adequate classification system."

Of her role as a black woman and as an administrator she says, "As a black woman, my role in society has been defined because I am black. My roles in the women's movement is based on the fact that black women suffer dual oppression — we suffer oppression in our society because of racism and sexism. Enough said.

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AFRO Bridal Register

Miss Sanders, Mr. Brinkley

Miss Theresa Sanders became the wife of Michael Steven Brinkley recently in services at the Berea Temple Seventh Day Adventist.

Attendants were Cordelia Duncan, Patricia Sanders, Audrey Sanders, Vernia Saunders, Gayle Mitchell, Karen Hickerson, Joanett Pittman, Linda Hardy, Catherine Johnson, Catherine Huggins, Janice Maxwell, Vanessa Brinkley, Ann Brinkley, Judy Brinkley, Shirley Kasey and Mary Hicklin.

The couple honeymooned in Central Florida and will make their home in Newport News, Va.

The bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Walter Sanders Sr.

(Perskie photo)

MRS. MICHAEL BRINKLEY (former Miss Theresa Sanders

Miss Davis Mr. Pullum

Mr. and Mrs. Willie Roger Davis of Baltimore announce the engagement of their daughter, Miss Vashti Davis to Conrad Randolph Pullum.

The future bride and bridegroom are both graduates of Frederick Douglass High School. Miss Davis is also a graduate of Community College of Baltimore. She is employed with the Social Security Administration.

Mr. Pullum is a graduate of Howard University, Washington, D.C. He is employed with the Chessie System.

A late August wedding is planned at the St. Timothy Christian Baptist Church, Baltimore.

MISS VASHTI DAVIS To wed in August

Miss Stanton, Mr. Beckett

Mr. and Mrs. James A. Stanton announce the marriage of their granddaughter, Miss Valerie Marie Stanton, to Melvin Lewis Beckett.

The ceremony was held at 3313 Kerry Rd. with a reception following the service.

Maid of honor was Miss Joyce Elaine Stackhouse along with bridesmaids, Lynice Stanton, sister of the bride.

Best man was Bryan Simms and usher Marvin Simms.

The bride is the daughter of Mrs. Shirley Stanton, a graduate of Northwestern High School and a sophomore of the Community College of Baltimore.

The bridegroom is the grandson of Mrs. Margaret Drummond. He is a graduate of Edmondson High School and employed at Bethlehem Steel.

The couple honeymooned in Bermuda.

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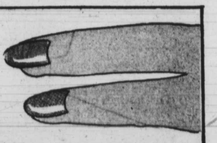

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