Judge Howard moves to Federal bench

AFRO photo by Mark Gail

NEW FEDERAL COURT Judge Joseph P. Howard, 3, is congratulated by Attorney Cleota Wilbekin of Cincinnati. Ms. Wilbekin says she was born in Des Moines, Iowa, Judge's Howard's home town.

JUDGE JOSEPH HOWARD's family at the investiture ceremonies this week. From L, a cousin. Charles P. Howard, III, Mrs. Gwendolyn Howard, Judge's wife, and his son, Joseph P. Howard Jr.

Judge Joseph C. Howard became the first black to serve on the federal bench in Maryland after he and Shirley B. Jones, the first woman, were sworn in during investiture ceremonies this week.

More than 400 persons crowded the first floor courtroom at the Edward S. Garmatz Federal Building for the two-hour ceremony.

This ceremony follows the official swearing in held Oct. 23 when the former judges on the Baltimore Supreme Bench, officially accepted the oath of office in Chief Judge Edward S. Northrop's chambers.

Judges Howard and Jones were named to the bench after President Jimmy Carter approved a judiciary reform bill that gave Maryland two additional federal judges.

U.S. Senator Paul S. Sarbanes after meeting with a panel of lawyers and other citizens, recommended the two judges last January for the presidential appointments which were confirmed by the Senate in October.

Judge Howard, often viewed as a very controversial judge concerned with the rights of minorities, has served on the supreme bench since 1968.

Prior to that time, in 1964 he worked on the state's attorney's staff and in 1966 became the chief of trial section. He was appointed assistant city solicitor in 1967.

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Telephone rate hike won't effect residential customers

A $16.3 million rate increase granted Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Co. won't affect the rate residential customers pay for their monthly service, a company spokesman said this week.

C&P spokesman Walter Haschert said the increase, which was granted Tuesday by the state Public Service Commission, will be collected through increases in special service charges.

He said C&P will raise its charge for changes in residential and business service that require a visit by repairmen and for inter-office service.

The utility also will charge more for use of private lines between two points and for putting extensions in homes or offices.

The PSC rejected C&P's request to begin charging customers who make more than a certain number of directory assistance calls each month.

Haschert said C GP wanted to allow residential customers 12 free directory assistance calls veach month and charge 20 cents per call thereafter.

Businesses would have been allotted only three free calls.

He said the commission also denied the utility's request to time business calls on special lines in the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas. C&P wanted timed calls so it could charge those who use the service most with the brunt of the costs, Haschert said.

At present, use of a special line costs eight cents per call, regardless of how long the call lasts. Haschert said many firms link telephones to special computer systems for an entire day at a cost of only eight cents.

Hair dryer warning issued

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has announced that an independent analysis confirms that asbestos fibers emitted from hair dryers may pose a significant health threat to consumers.

This analysis, said the Federal agency, indicates that the majority of the hair dryers tested were found to be emitting asbestos fiber levels comparable to or greater than other serious levels of asbestos in the general environment, such as those found in certain school buildings and near construction sites.

A test survey of 30 hair dryers manufactured with asbestos was conducted by the National Institute for Occupational Safety andHealth (NIOSH).

Persons who wish to determine if their dryer is one of those which may contain asbestos and pose a health threat are urged to call The Division of Product Safety at 383-2757 or 383-2388 during normal business hours.

Persons outside the Baltimore area may call the Federal toll-free hot line 1-800-492-8363.

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—Rent Control

—Forgotten man

(Continued from page 1)

"This is the first time in the nation that a group of poor and black people were able to get together and beat the moneyed and the powerful, yet it isn't being played up. It seems that there is a gentlemen's agreement to keep this thing hushed up."

Cheeks also feels that the local media is presenting a falsified image of the campaign to establish rent control, and has decided to make certain people heroes while minimizing the importance of poor and black voters and organizers.

"The media is trying to paint a picture which states that the Keep Baltimore Best Committee lost the election through their heavy-handedness, when in reality the poor and black vote — made the difference. The issue was not specifically rent control, but whether people were going to continue allowing themselves to be controlled by a minority of people."

According to Cheeks, the reason for this misconstrued picture of the rent control battle is pure and simple.

"It's a case of racism. They would actually have you believe that, out of the goodness of their hearts, a lot of white middle class people got together and decided to come out for rent control. Sure, we had the support of the white working class, but essentially rent control is a race struggle. Most of the landlords are white, and most of the tenants are black."

He also feels that he is being ignored by the media because he is not a "safe" black.

"The media has taken it upon themselves to create the leaders of the black community. Also, both the media and local politicians don't want to acknowledge either myself or the constituency which voted for rent control. These politicians and the media want to deny the existence of this constituency. The only blacks who are being covered are the ones who can be controlled."

Since the Nov. 6 election, most media coverage has been directed toward the Rent Control Campaign, an offshoot of the Baltimore City Tenants Association. Initially, Cheeks' People's Campaign for Rent Control had been part of the Baltimore City Tenant's Association's rent control forces, but split with the organization in July of 1979.

According to Cheeks, the reason for the split was that the BCTA's Rent Control Campaign, "smacks of racism."

"Look at the make-up of the organization. They have two white males on top, and five VISTA workers, who are black females, working beneath them. We split because we were not going to let them control us. I mean you had a case of a small group of people sitting back and making the decisions for a lot of people without giving them a say in the process."

He also credits the Rent Control Campaign with diluting the rent control bill.

"There were several paragraphs in the bill that they just took out, without telling anybody anything. For example, we had a clause in the bill which would have called for an immediate freeze on rents the day after the elections, if the bill passed. They just took that out."

Once the actual split had occurred, Cheeks and his group were systematically excluded, according to Cheeks.

—Postal employees

FRED RAMSEY is a recent appointee in the State Department of Personnel in the Employee Development Division. He will also work in the Division of Recruitment and Examination to help with minority and female recruitment.

(Continued from page 1)

Postal employees also told the AFRO most of the employees who work the night shift are black and there is usually one nurse on duty at night. However, another employee said, "There are more whites on the day shift and one doctor, four nurses, and a paramedic are in the medical center for the day shift."

Henry was working the tour three shift 8:30 to 11 p.m. at the time of his death and operated the stamp canceling machine on the second floor. Employees do not know who the first person was to call for an ambulance, but they say, "When the ambulance arrived, one of the guards at the entrance to the Post Office stopped the ambulance to see where he was going."

Postal employees say the guard at the entrance should have been informed that an ambulance was on the way because each guard has a walkie talkie and he should have let the paramedic come directly to the scene without hesitation.

Fellow postal workers have charged racism and other negative policies but freely admit that they are fearful of going public with their demands because of possible "reprisal."

Turn you at my reproof: Behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.
Proverbs 1:23

But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:
Also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;
Proverbs 1:25-26

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GIVING
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SEE PAGE 2

-Court fight

(Continued from page 1)

The suit charges that the referendum process is unconstitutional, and that the bill's backers used illegal methods of collecting the 30,000 signatures needed to petition the inclusion of the bill in the November 6 ballot.

In arguments presented Tuesday and Wednesday, lawyers for the Cedlair Corporation and the Goodbearts stated that many of the petition signatures were collected improperly. In one case, they said that twelve signatures were forged by one person. The lawyers also stated that many of the signatures were notarized after they were collected, and not during the actual signing.

Lawyers of the pro-rent control forces rebutted the allegations, and claimed that all volunteers who circulated the petitions were properly trained.

The constitutionality of the amendment was also attacked by the lawyers for the anti-rent control group. According to lawyer Edward Smith, the tenant landlord commission, which will be implemented by the bill is unconstitutional because it will not be responsible to either the mayor or the city council.

He also added that the voters of Baltimore do not have the right to establish the committee or invest it with the power to regulate rents or arbitrate landlord-tenant disputes.

But this argument was countered by lawyers for the amendment, who pointed out that city agencies had already been created by the charter amendments.

The trial is expected to continue Friday at 9:30 a.m. at the city courthouse, Judge Joseph H. H. Kaplan presiding.

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