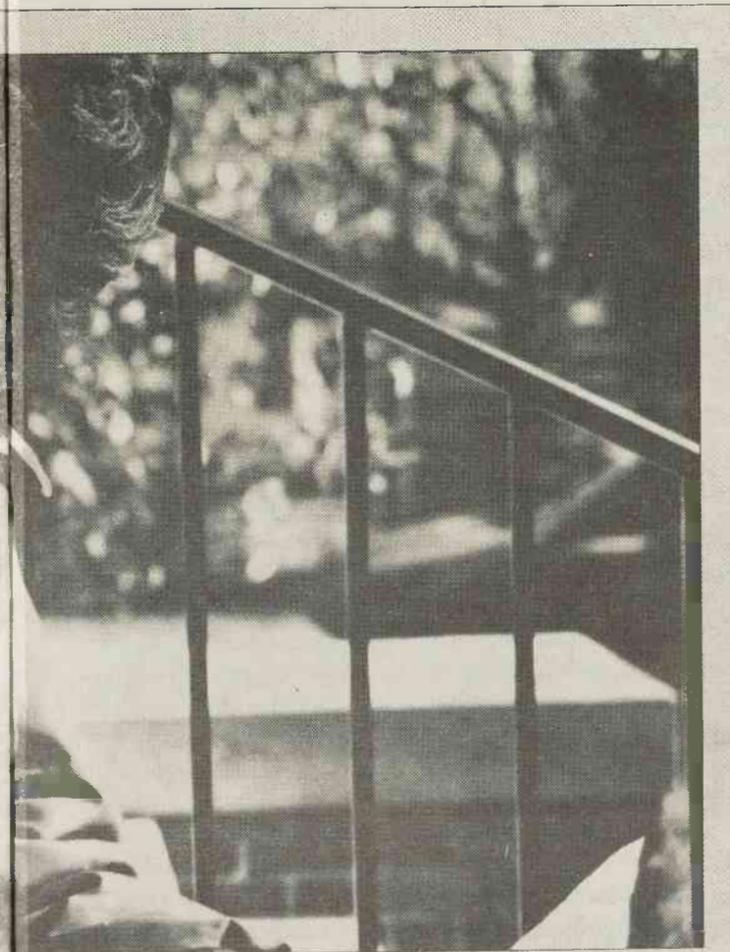


Life of a UNC Housekeeper

Demands for Respect, Higher Wages



Black Ink Photo By: Evan Eile

...wants UNC to offer classes to her colleagues.

...ugh she would like to help make changes, she felt that too many people would abandon the cause. If everybody would pitch in, the housekeepers could make a difference, she said at one point.

Marsha Tinnen, spokesperson for the housekeepers, said the public did not fully understand all their demands, and the effort to lead the word has been hindered by a decreasing number of workers.

"There seems to be a lot of openings for housekeepers (at the University) because a lot of people leave after discovering the bad working conditions," Tinnen said. Unfortunately, some people don't have anywhere to go, so they end up in housekeeping.

"They deserve better treatment, better pay, and courses to better themselves. The housekeepers are always being picked on and

constantly hounded by their supervisors. (Pettiford) tries to show the other housekeepers not to be scared and step forward and fight for their rights."

Tinnen, a housekeeper in the school of social work, thinks the University should start housekeepers at a \$17,000 yearly salary to ease their financial woes. Housekeepers could further benefit from classes offered by the University to enhance their educational skills, she said.

"We are the backbone of this University and without us, the University would be in big trouble," she said. "I am glad the students are helping us because they will help us make a difference.

"That's why we are hoping to get as much student involvement as possible so people will look up and pay attention to us."

Tinnen said University officials have not responded the way she would have liked.

"They talk about getting help for us, but they only put the blame on other people and nothing gets accomplished," she said.

Alan McSurely, the attorney representing the housekeepers, said the state of North Carolina sets the pay scale and the University can not alter it. But the University has not

addressed the problem in a significant way, he said.

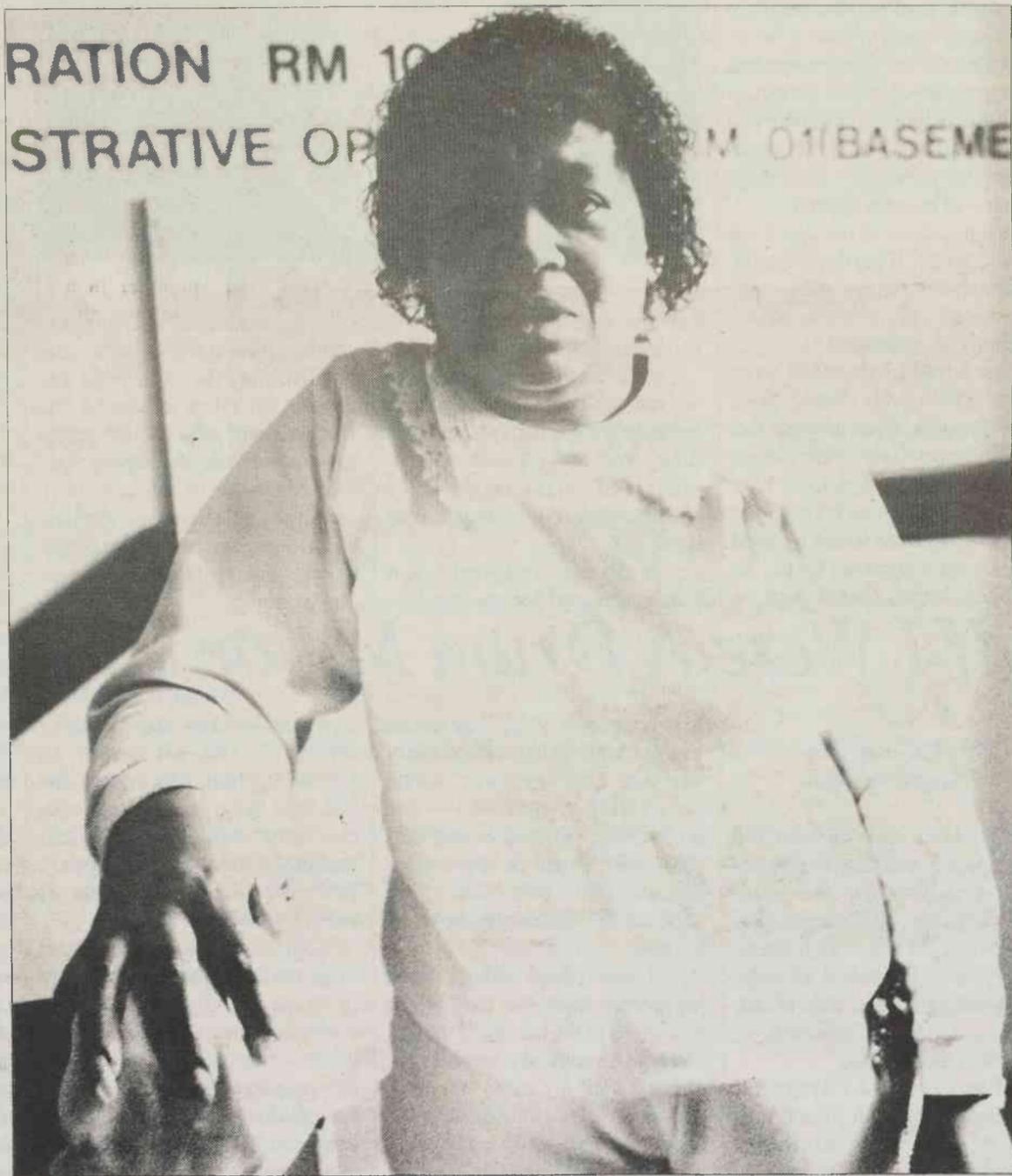
"We are trying to fight for the elimination of the lowest pay classifications and start the minimum salary at \$15,000," he said. "People have to get second jobs to make poverty wages and something has to be done.

"This problem is partly sexual and racial discrimination. Why else would 95 percent of the

housekeepers be just black women?"

Pettiford in the meantime, is working to keep our buildings clean and keep her life together. In addition to her job, she takes care of her mother, who suffers from a crippling arthritis.

"When I get my back against the wall like now, I don't get any sleep, and all I do is worry."



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Sometimes, all Pettiford can do is worry.