

For immediate release  
Friday, Oct. 3, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

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Mrs. Ford has selected Maria Downs of Washington, D.C. as White House Social Secretary effective Monday, October 6.

Mrs. Downs has been executive assistant in the White House Office of Bicentennial Liaison since February, 1975. In this capacity, she has served as liaison to the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration and related organizations and has coordinated Presidential involvement in Bicentennial events.

Mrs. Downs, originally from Chicago, has been in Washington, D.C. since 1963. Prior to her work with the Bicentennial, she was Special Assistant to the Counsellor to the President Anne Armstrong. She served as senior staff aide to Mrs. Armstrong from January, 1973 to January, 1975, with responsibility for a staff of 25.

In that capacity, Mrs. Downs planned, coordinated, and oversaw all social functions as well as all meetings, conferences, and seminars. She also handled congressional liaison and press inquiries.

Prior to her job at the White House, Mrs. Downs had been special assistant to Mrs. Armstrong when she was co-chairman of the Republican National Committee. During the period from April, 1971 to January, 1973, she was responsible for women's activities at the RNC and organized and directed conferences with attendance as high as 4,000. Included in specific projects during this time was responsibility for a brunch for 1,000 women, numerous receptions and seminars, and the planning and coordination of all aspects of a 3,000 mile cross-country bus tour.

Jobs prior to April, 1971, included a year as Executive Secretary for the Women's National Press Club (now Washington Press Club), in which she assisted in all social functions, including the Editors Dinner and the Congressional Dinner; director of Women's programs at the Republican National Committee, where she arranged social events and conferences; and secretary-receptionist in the Presidential campaign of Senator Barry Goldwater.

Prior to coming to Washington in 1963, Mrs. Downs lived in Chicago and worked as a professional model registered with the Model's Bureau and the Patricia Steven's Agency.

She is 43 and is married to John Downs, who has a public relations firm, John E. Downs, Inc., in Washington. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Anthony, both deceased, ran a small Greek-American restaurant in Chicago.

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