

Black Caucus opposes Thomas

By LARRY A. STILL
Capitol News Service

Washington, D.C. — (CNS) — As major civil rights organizations and black community leaders debated the next move in blocking President George Bush's apparent "Turn Back The Clock" conservative agenda, the political Congressional Black Caucus assumed leadership by "pledging to vigorously fight the confirmation" of Federal Appeals Court Judge Clarence Thomas to the United States Supreme Court and still seek passage of a 1991 Civil Rights Bill.

The 27 predominantly Democratic Party House of Representatives members "went on record to make clear to the people of this nation and those we serve . . . our irrevocable stand on this matter. . . We will not shrink from our responsibility to challenge this president to bring before the American people, and the Congress, a fit and appropriate nominee who will do justice to the legacy of (retiring Supreme Court Justice) Thurgood Marshall" said CBC statement released by Rep. Edolphus Towns (D-NY), CBC chairman.

"Our preliminary finding shows that Clarence Thomas does not meet this (Justice Marshall's) standard. We are completing an exhaustive review of the Thomas record for testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, and for presentation to a national meeting of African-American leaders which we will convene

in the nation's capital," Towns declared following the 26-1 vote at which lone Republican member, Rep. Gary Franks of Waterbury, Conn. cast the single dissenting ballot.

Thus, the CBC prepared to put its projected influence and partisan weight among its constituents on the national line as the members moved ahead of other black and white membership organizations in calling for direct action against Judge Thomas before the capital hill hearings on the nomination expected to begin by October. The annual CBC legislative weekend in late September promises to be more than a political celebration, but an unusually significant session affecting African-Americans and all African-Americans.

Meanwhile, after a week-long convention of some 8,000 NAACP members and supporters in Houston, Executive Director Benjamin L. Hooks called for a joint meeting of leaders and officials with Thomas before deciding whether to oppose the nomination. "We will not be stampeded into making a decision affecting our constituency without seeking all information available," Hooks told the community representatives and delegates.

The National Urban League is expected to take action at its annual convention in Atlanta this month (July) but is not a mass membership organization.

Back in Washington, Ralph Neas, executive director of the Leadership Conference on Civil

Rights, a coalition of some 200 religious, labor, ethnic, and human rights groups, was the first to express opposition to the Thomas nomination when it was announced.



Clarence Thomas

rights, but he later announced the LCCR's executive committee must meet to discuss their position because many groups must first consult with their boards and members. "We urge the Senate not to rush to judgment," said Neas.

Also, in Washington, over 1,000 delegates to the liberal "bipartisan" National Women Political Caucus convention, founded by such feminists as former Reps. Bella Abzug and Shirley Chisholm, supported a resolution opposing the nomination of Thomas because "it would be hostile to the fundamental rights of privacy and

to the Supreme Court decision in Roe vs Wade, (on abortion)." Commenting later on her position, Chisholm said "We respect him for his qualifications and ability, but we cannot go backwards. . ."

Although a variety of media polls and speculation indicate that a majority of African-Americans disagree with the reportedly conservative views of Thomas, most respondents say they consider him qualified for the post. The federal judge and former chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission reportedly objects to preferential treatment based upon race according to previous statements, but he appears to be moderating his position to give credit to civil rights efforts for helping him overcome poverty and racism in achieving individual success as a lawyer, government administrator and federal judge.

Amidst all the furor, Judge Thomas publicly smiles and makes no comment while visiting members of the Senate Judiciary Committee headed by Sen. Joseph Biden (D-DE) and John C. Danforth (R-MO), a former employer and sponsor before the committee.

Even with the Bush administration's well orchestrated campaign to take over the court, the question remains whether Thomas can survive the intense scrutiny of congressional investigations and media "research" into his public record, private life and business activity even before the proposed CBC session and required senate hearing.

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Trans-Aid division of the city's Transit Authority receives grant for buses

July 11, 1991 — The Trans-Aid division of the Winston-Salem Transit Authority (WSTA) received a \$161,301 grant from the Kate B. Reynolds Poor and Needy Trust for the purchase of three new mini-buses. With the addition of these buses, the Trans-Aid fleet will consist of 17 vehicles serving 152,000 passengers a year. The buses will be used for the transportation of the disadvantaged elderly and handicapped citizens in Winston-Salem.

The Kate B. Reynolds Poor and Needy Trust is a private foundation created in 1946 through provisions in the will of Mrs. William N. Reynolds for the purpose of improving the welfare of Forsyth County's disadvantaged people. Approximately \$3 million is awarded annually to non-profit organizations for programs which provide the economically disadvantaged with basic necessities as well as for services which improve their quality of life.

City offers parking ticket moratorium

People with unpaid parking tickets have a one-time chance to save big bucks and clear their record. The City of Winston-Salem is going to drop all penalties on parking tickets that are past due as of July 16, 1991.

By paying the actual amount of the violation — the amount stated on the ticket — between July 16 and Aug. 29, anyone will avoid having to pay previously added penalties.

But anyone who doesn't pay tickets in full by the Aug. 29 cutoff date will find a \$25 penalty added to each ticket. Anyone who fails to pay by Sept. 30 will find another

\$25 added — making \$50 the amount owed in penalties for each ticket.

The 45 days between July 16 and Aug. 29 is considered the moratorium period. After this period, the city will take violators to court where they will be forced to pay court costs in addition to the amount of the ticket and all penalties.

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