

# Forum

## Leadership summit set for Oct. 24-27

African-American, Native-American, Hispanic-American, and Asian-American delegates from every state in the nation will attend the historic "First National People of Color Leadership Summit" on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., October 24-27. These sisters and brothers will be joined by other delegates from Puerto Rico, Central

national and regional organizations have joined in the support of the summit.

For the first time in the history of this nation, grassroots and national leaders from the Native-American, African-American, Hispanic-American, and Asian-American communities, who are actively involved in the struggle for environ-

mental justice, will have the opportunity to be together in the same place to discuss, debate, reach consensus, and to agree on a national plan of action.

The successful convening of the "Leadership Summit" comes in the wake of many attempts to "divide and conquer" people of color communities in the United States. A racial injustice anywhere is a threat to racial injustice everywhere. The issue of the "environment" may be the one issue that allows for the broadest possible multiracial approach to building a renewed national social justice movement.

The major goals of The First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit are: (1) To facilitate an ongoing process for people of color leaders to strengthen their national, regional, and local organizations and communities

which are involved in challenging environmental injustice; (2) To provide an opportunity to initiate dialogue between people of color leaders and the heads of the national environmental organizations; (3) to identify key environmental policy questions from the perspective of people of color leadership; and (4) to impact the decision-making process in public policy in the interests of environmental justice at the federal, state, and municipal levels.

The "Leadership Summit" will also adopt a set of "Principles of Environmental Justice" which will help guide the strengthening of the future movement. The draft of one of the principles states, "Environmental policy must be based on justice for all without discrimination due to race, ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, or culture."

Dr. Robert Bullard of the University of California at Riverside stated, "Persons of color who live in waste site areas are often victims of a 'double whammy' in that they are exposed to elevated risks associated with living in polluted environments at the same time they have problems getting access to health and medical facilities."

Environmental racism is racial discrimination in environmental policy making. It is an institutionalized form of racism that seeks to camouflage itself while causing untold destruction and severe risks for people of color communities.

It is our hope that the results of the Summit will make a positive difference for environmental justice for all.

## CIVIL RIGHTS JOURNAL

By BENJAMIN F. CHAVIS JR.

and South America, Africa and South Pacific.

The problem of environmental racism is both a national and an international crisis. People of color communities are deliberately being targeted for toxic pollution, dumping, and a vast array of different types of environmental injustices.

As a direct response and challenge to this growing problem, the Commission for Racial Justice of the United Church of Christ is sponsoring this important leadership gathering.

The process to plan and develop the coordination of the "Summit" is itself a testimony to the viability of multiracial and multicultural struggle and "movement-building" forums as effective future strategies to confront institutional racism. The Gulf Coast Tenants Association, the Southwest Organizing Project and a host of other

mental justice, will have the opportunity to be together in the same place to discuss, debate, reach consensus, and to agree on a national plan of action.

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## Thomas vs. Hill more than harassment

I watched spellbound and with sadness as University of Oklahoma law professor Anita Hill painfully detailed to the world accounts of encounters with Clarence Thomas in the workplace where she says he displayed improper, unwanted,

at the same time, members wondered aloud why Hill, who said she was harassed at the Department of Education, followed Thomas to the EEOC.

On the surface the question seems to have some merit, but the

woman who dares to file a complaint.

Despite strong rules at the Department of Education and EEOC against harassment, the enforcement of anti-harassment laws during the early 1980s when Hill said she was harassed, hardly encouraged women to step forward. Further, many women, still conditioned to believe that it is their fault if they are mistreated by men, are condemning Anita Hill for reporting what she says happened.

Did Clarence Thomas harass Anita Hill? Perhaps no one other than the two of them will ever know the real truth.

The real issue, however, is an atmosphere of intimidation and a mentality men have created in women that make women tolerate harassment, rape, brutality and other forms of abuse...and a mentality in men that they, the perpetrators, not women, the victims can best define harassment.

I'm not making a case against Clarence Thomas but I am trying to make one for Anita Hill and all other women who have to suffer at the hands of uncaring and insensitive men.

... And I guess I'm trying to make the biggest case for those women who need it most — the ones who are being mistreated and don't know it, or who know it and deplore it, yet accept it because "that's just the way men are."



## AGAINST THE GRAIN

By ROOSEVELT WILSON

embarrassing and disgusting sexual behavior toward her when she worked for him at the U.S. Department of Education and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

It was just as painful watching Thomas vehemently deny every allegation by Hill and say such allegations have robbed him of everything he has worked for for all his 43 years.

Thomas said his confirmation as an associate justice to the U.S. Supreme Court became secondary to salvaging his name and reputation. Hill said she was a reluctant witness and the last thing she wanted to do was deal with the issue publicly.

U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee members used the public forum to try to score political points and at

reality is that sexual harassment is neither the real issue nor the problem.

The Senate Judiciary Committee itself — not the process as some of the senators and even Thomas say — is the problem. That august body of 14 white men represents what's wrong with America today. While it would not be fair to so label them individually, each is a member of an institution that is part of a system designed by and for affluent white males, a system in which everyone else, including white women, is of less consequence.

It is a system in which women are subservient, despite the laws, and in which claims of sexual harassment, even rape, suddenly transforms the woman into the defendant by automatically challenging the credibility of any

## Census Bureau reports poverty rising

What we've all known is now official. The Census Bureau reports a sharp rise in poverty in 1990, along with a drop in median household income.

more and more Americans are finding it hard to hold a job and raise a family.

Some say not to worry; that things are always worse during

There is every indication that what is happening today is not a cyclical downturn with short-term pain, but part of a long-term phenomenon.

While poverty has been slowly moving downward slowly since 1984, it has remained at historically high level throughout the decade. In 1978 there were about nine million fewer poor people than in 1990.

Black poverty is about where it was in 1982 and a lot worse than it was in the 1970s.

And the poor are poorer, too. Time was when more of the poor were bunched near the poverty line; today, they are likely to be far below that line.

The poverty line itself is unrealistically low. First designed to estimate the minimum income needed by a family in an emergency.

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## TO BE EQUAL

By JOHN E. JACOB

Since those figures reflect a recession that didn't get under way until midyear and still continues, it's safe to predict that the 1991 figures will show more of the same.

While our leaders boast of America's number one status and its leadership of a "new world order,"

recessions, and they'll get better once the economy picks up later this year... or next... or the year after.

Yes, recessions always mean an uptick in the poverty rate and in unemployment. But this one's different.



## The attempted assassination of Judge Clarence Thomas

America has just witnessed the attempted assassination of an Associate Supreme Court Justice. This attempt was not the work of a lone gunman, but was a conspiracy. The conspirators were the modern American Left, its lunatic fringe (welfare state "civil rights" groups, femi-nazis, homosexual lobbyists), corrupt labor union leaders and corrupt big city Democratic machine bosses. That's right, those who control the modern national Democratic party.

Every conspiracy has its patsy. Although Ms. Hill was a particularly useful one, she was one nevertheless.



## GUEST COLUMN

By VERNON ROBINSON

The hitmen of the Democratic Party Senators Sanford, Kennedy, and Simon among others shot their best shot against Judge Thomas and failed. Though they failed, I am not in a forgiving or charitable mood.

These assassins must be held to account for their actions.

I am not alone in that demand. It seems, that Black Democrats in Raleigh have been calling the State Republican Headquarters. These Democrats are disgusted by the Democratic Party's complicity and have decided to hold the guilty party to account by switching their voting affiliation to Republican. They no doubt were disgusted by their former party's hypocrisy as they choked watching the Democratic moral leader, Ted Kennedy.

Local left wing preachers and politicians both black and white who distorted and lied about Judge Thomas' record as they lied about Allyson Duncan a

year ago must also be held to account. Their lies created the environment that encouraged the assassination attempt.

These same leaders are the ones who continue to support the victimization of black people to fund the welfare state.

A welfare state slowly but surely squeezing the life out of our community. It is high time that they were removed. Their failure over the last 30 years can be tolerated no longer.

The welfare state and its ally, failed public schools, are the new slavery. Its overseers crawled out of their dark holes during the Thomas nomination hearing for all to see.

Their attempt at making the mere accusation sufficient to convict is a dangerous precedent. How many black Democratic leaders would survive if that were the test. If that were the test, then we could dispense with the trial of Larry Womble and Pat Hairston because the charge of wrong doing is all that is required.

Well, most black Americans, if not black Democrat leadership, were stunned by those above who claim to represent the weak and the helpless but only represent themselves.

It is past time for a great political crusade to remove this failed leadership at the polls. It is time for a Republican offensive in black communities across the nation to bring black America home to the Great Opportunity Party. It is time to beat the welfare state supporters and other political assassins in the 1992 election. Its time to replace the failed policies of those assassins with those that stabilize the black family, empower parents to control their children's education and create real economic development.

It is with great zeal that I pick up a 44 inch broadsword and join who fight for a better America. The battle to defeat the Left and the new slavery begins anew today.

## Fallout of Clarence Thomas nomination . . . far and wide

The Clarence Thomas Supreme Court nomination split the black community into at least two separate camps.

Those in favor of his being on the Supreme Court argue these and other points:

(1) Thomas is opposed to welfare dependency. He pulled himself up "by his own bootstraps" and deserves a chance to "make a name for himself." (Fact: The NAACP along with most blacks oppose welfare dependency and most blacks who have succeeded have pulled themselves up "by their own bootstraps." This includes most of the black professionals who oppose Thomas. The "bootstraps" argument misses the point.)

(2) Thomas is black and for that reason alone black people should support him just as whites have supported whites simply because they were white. (Fact: Look at this Dixiecrat record. Blacks should not support Uncle Toms but officials who want to correct wrongs and develop a world in which black people and their children can develop and prosper. Some blacks — like some whites — are not good.)

(3) Although Thomas "made a few mistakes" that worked against black people, he will "come to his senses" and "see the light." (Fact: Thomas knew what he was doing. The risk is too much to take. Blacks should suspect any black person who was approved by Ronald Reagan and is supported by Senators Thurman, Simpson, Helms and Hatch.)

(4) If Thomas is not approved, Bush will simply appoint another conservative — probably a Latin-American or another white man. (Fact: Probably true. But if Thomas is defeated, blacks will not be "stabbed in the back" by a member of their own race. More important, however, is that a black will not be rewarded for being a Traitor to his Own people. Greedy and self-centered blacks would not see Thomas as a role model — as a person honored because he put personal greed above the well being of his own people.)

(5) Thomas is a Real black man. He looks like

me. (Fact: Shallow thinking. His record and his behavior — not his skin color — are what count. He has sided with people who oppose civil rights laws, equal educational opportunities and equal employment opportunity. He has questioned the 1954 Brown v. Topeka decision.)

Those who oppose Thomas point out that he used affirmative action to help himself get a good education and a good job and then helped the Reagan and Bush people in efforts to destroy these same advantages he used.

His mere questioning of the Brown v. Topeka



## GUEST COLUMN

By JAMES E. ALSBROOK

Decision implies tinkering with and attempting to destroy the foundation of race-based, quality-guaranteeing laws, ideals and goals established since 1954. He has kowtowed to the racists in order to feather his own nest.

One of the tragedies of this affair is that some blacks expressed preference for Thomas over Thurgood Marshall because Thomas is dark-skinned and "looks more like me." Marshall, like these blacks, had no control over his natural skin color. He helped all blacks and never turned against them, as Thomas did.

But regardless of the Thomas decision, the sexual harassment allegations of Law Professor Anita Hill have brought into the spotlight a gigantic factor with national implications.

Bachelors looking for "clean colored girls" as "cooks" and "maids" along with professional men, business tycoons, politicians and others associating with working women must consider anew the possible long-term consequences of dabbling in a titillating but repulsive exercise of sexual harassment.