

State & Local

Tuesday, September 10, 1991

The Battalion

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Bush supports Thomas; Texans don't

AUSTIN (AP) — A coalition of Texas civil rights groups Monday followed their national organizations and denounced Clarence Thomas' nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Senate Judiciary Committee opens its hearings Tuesday on President Bush's nomination of Thomas, a federal appeals court judge and former chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Bush has defended Thomas and said he is confident he will be confirmed to the bench.

But at a news conference at the state Capitol, black, Hispanic, elderly and women's groups said Thomas' philosophy and record shows he is insensitive to the rights of minorities and women.

"Freedom as we know it in

Groups see nominee as a threat to minorities, women

America and Texas today will be greatly jeopardized if Judge Thomas is confirmed," said Gary Bledsoe, president of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Persons.

Bledsoe wore a sticker depicting a Ku Klux Klansman pulling puppet strings attached to Thomas. Bledsoe said that represented the praise that Louisiana state representative David Duke, a former Klan leader, had given Thomas.

Phyllis Dunham, executive director of the Texas Abortion

Rights Action League, said Thomas has criticized a landmark Supreme Court decision that recognized the right of married couples to use birth control.

"Clarence Thomas' extremist and intrusive viewpoints on abortion and birth control would place government smack in the middle of Americans' most private and personal decisions," she said.

Bledsoe said Thomas' belief in the dominance of "natural law" over man-made law is dangerous because it is not spelled out in the Constitution, and would depend entirely on the jurist's individual

beliefs.

Charlotte Flynn, of the elderly rights group Gray Panthers, criticized Thomas, saying he refused to act on 13,000 age discrimination complaints as chairman of the EEOC during the Reagan administration.

Guadalupe Luna, an attorney with the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, said, "Our review of Thomas' record reveals a stubborn mischaracterization of the reality of the poor, minorities, and women in this country."

The groups planned a letter-writing campaign to urge Texas citizens to write to Texas' U.S. Sens. Lloyd Bentsen and Phil Gramm, and members of the Judiciary Committee to vote against Thomas.

Pollution endangers Mexican gulf

ATLANTA (AP) — An environmental program aimed at raising awareness of the growing environmental threat facing the Gulf of Mexico will be launched later this year.

The program will include a presidential proclamation and a congressional resolution about the pollution, garbage and neglect that threaten the Gulf of Mexico.

"It's basically a P.R., public education, environmental outreach effort," said Lloyd Wise, who is working on the program for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regional office in Atlanta.

Those who study the Gulf's vast expanse — its 615,000 square miles of water, the beaches that stretch from Key West to Brownsville, Texas — say Americans take one of their great natural resources for granted.

"The Gulf of Mexico is not in great shape, and that's an understatement," Barbara Sheen Todd, chairwoman of the Pinellas County Commission, told the Sun-Sentinel in Fort Lauderdale. "It's been abused."

Ships discard tons of trash, which washes ashore and endangers the Gulf's \$20-billion-a-year tourism trade. Red tides and fish kills this summer have closed beaches on Florida's Gulf Coast near St. Petersburg. Excess nutrients caused an explosion of seaweed that clogged the cooling systems of two Florida power plants, forcing them to shut down.

Further, scientists have documented a 3,000-square-mile "dead zone" in the Gulf — an area spreading westward from the mouth of the Mississippi River where there is so little oxygen in the bottom waters.

Jet carrying Conoco execs found

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP) — Searchers today found the main wreckage of the Grumman Gulfstream II executive jet on a slope near the Tinatudon Peak of Mount Marta in the Crocker Range on Borneo island.

A Department of Civil Aviation Statement said operations to salvage the main wreckage was carried out, but it was not known if there were any bodies inside.

There were 12 people aboard. Nine were oil executives from Conoco Inc. of Houston and their wives, and three were crew members.

Police said mist, low clouds, rain, thick jungle and the sloping terrain was hampering operations.

Search was called off at nightfall and will resume Tuesday. The officials said more than 32 men were now in the wreckage site and they were looking for evidence of the crash and the black box as well.

Police said a temporary helipad had been blasted with explosives out of a slope of a mountain on Sunday and was ready Monday, but because of bad weather it could be put to only limited use.

Shamsuri Arshad, Commissioner of Police for Sabah state, where the jet crashed with 10 Americans and two Britons, told reporters more than 32 para military police field force men had already been winched down from helicopters into the crash area the past two days.

WARD



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DEADLINE

ANNUAL COMPETITION FOR FULBRIGHT GRANTS TO CLOSE SOON
The 1992-93 competition for Fulbright Grants for graduate study abroad will close on October 7, 1991. Only a few more weeks remain in which to submit your draft proposal and meet with the Study Abroad Director. Qualified graduate students must meet with the Study Abroad Director before September 25 to allow ample time for proposal revision.

Most of the grants offered provide round-trip transportation, tuition and maintenance for one academic year; a few provide international travel only, or a stipend intended as a partial grant-in-aid.

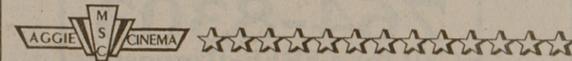
Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- be a U.S. citizen at the time of application;
- hold a bachelor's degree or its equivalent before the beginning date of the grant;
- be proficient in the language of the host country;
- must not hold a Ph.D at the time of application.

Application forms and further information for students currently enrolled in Texas A&M University may be obtained from the TAMU Study Abroad Office, which is located at 161 Bizzell Hall West, 845-0544.

Note: The deadline for interviews is September 25, 1991. The deadline for application is Monday, October 7, 1991.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION COME BY
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