

# BLACKS IN GOVERNMENT

(Continued from Page 5) mobilize its chapters in support of the August 28 march on Washington which commemorates the 30th Anniversary of the 1963 march on which Dr. Martin Luther King made his famous "I Have A Dream" speech.

William H. Gray, III, former Congressional Budget whip, and now director of the United Negro College Fund, was keynote speaker for the opening plenary session. He referred to the theme of the conference, "Creating a Climate of Change." "The first

thing that you have got to do is to get rid of myths that have been penetrated and are perpetrated — and some of us have got to stand up with coworkers and with policy makers and say, 'that's bull.'"

While acknowledging the

impact of drugs and crime on the black community, Gray said that the statistics describing black youth were misleading to the extent that were used to define the black community. "We are more than that," he said. "Did you know that in 1991, 77 per-

cent of all African American young men and women graduated from high school, an all time record — compared to 81 percent for whites. Do you know that in 1991, 33 percent of all blacks who graduated from high school were enrolled in a college somewhere, an all time record, compared with 38 percent for whites. So that concept that all black kids are going to hell in a handbasket on drugs, dope, and killing one another is statistically not true. And what we end up doing is building communities are viewed as powerless."

Dr. Robert Bullard, a sociology professor at University of California, Riverside, cited environmental literature showing "that for at least 40 years, American children have been poisoned by lead, but African American children of all income groups are three times more likely to be lead poisoned than middle-class white children. "Lead poisoning adversely affects learning and health...and we know that affects wealth," charged Dr. Bul-

lard, who is also the author of "Dumping in Dixie."

The panel on Law Enforcement and Community demonstrated some of the ways the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Dept. and LAPD have modified their hiring and promotion processes to incorporate more officers who have cultural and community sensitivity. Commander Helena Ashby, the highest ranking African American in the Sheriff's Dept. emphasized that they are not interested in anyone with a "hook the book" mentality...rather, those with a desire to be accountable to the communities they work in.

United Methodist minister, Rev. Charles Edward Presberry, who also has the distinction of being a Deputy Sheriff in Fulton County, Georgia was the featured precentor. He challenged participants to "stop using education to screen people out rather than bring people in." He has succeeded in matching seminarians from Atlanta's Interdenominational Theological Center with deputies who need help to complete a college degree.

# NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

(Continued from Page 11) of daily life, joblessness has become a part of everyday reality and people are losing hope," she said. "I intend for the Commission for Racial Justice to be a vital, visible and vibrant presence in our communities, and re-kindler of hope in our churches and in our country," she pledged.

One of Jackson's goals will be working in coalition with civil rights organizations and other denominations to tackle the problems of the communities across the nation. In addition, she underscored the importance of working side by side with our sisters and brothers in the Hispanic, Native American, Pacific Island and Asian American

communities. "Together, we can accomplish much to help each other and help this country move forward into the Twenty-First Century," she said.

Commenting on Ms. Jackson's election, Dr. Chavis, who now is the National Executive Director of the NAACP, stated, "Bernice Powell Jackson is an invaluable asset not only to the United Church of Christ, but to the entire civil rights movement. Her election to be the new leader of the Commission for Racial Justice is good news for the future of the freedom struggle." Ms. Jackson had served as Deputy Director of the Commission from 1987-89.

Indeed, Bernice Powell

Jackson, 44, has devoted much of her life to working for racial justice around the world. She was the first Director of the Bishop Tutu Southern African Refugee Scholarship Program and served as the Archbishop's principal representative in the United States from 1984-87. She served as the President of the New York Coalition of 100 Black Women from 1981-85, and from 1975-77 worked on the staff of the National Urban League in New York.

Most recently, Ms. Jackson has served as the Executive Associate to the President of the United Church of Christ, where she acts as chief of staff to the President and as his principal

liaison. She holds a Masters of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York and a masters in journalism from Columbia University.

Speaking of Rev. Jackson's election to his critical post in life of the United Church of Christ, President Paul H. Sherry said, "We celebrate the new leadership that Bernice Powell Jackson will bring to the Commission, which has been such a prophetic voice to our church and to the larger society." Dr. Edwin R. Edmonds, chairperson of the Commission for Racial Justice, added, "The United Church of Christ, and yes, the whole world has been extremely blessed with the great leadership of those who have served as Executive Director to the Commission for Racial Justice; Rev. Dr. Charles E. Cobb and Rev. Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr. Now we have a new, most qualified and dynamic leader in Rev. Ms. Bernice Powell Jackson. Praise be to God."

The mandate of the Commission for Racial Justice is to provide leadership in mobilizing the membership of the Church to work for justice and reconciliation among persons and groups both within the Church and society in general. It is well known for its pioneering work on the issue of environmental racism, as well as for work in criminal justice and the anti-apartheid movement in the United States.

# PERFORMING ARTS

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portion of their repertoire to the masterworks of Mozart, Vivaldi, Handel and Bach, the ensemble proudly includes more than 300 works in their repertoire from all the different musical epochs.

Tickets are available at the Performing Arts Center. UNLV and group discounts are available. The box office is open Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For ticket information call 895-3801. (TDD 597-4717).

The Performing Arts Center at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas was founded in 1984. In the spring of 1988, it moved to its expanded offices in the Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall. It serves an audience of over 150,000. It is the home of the Charles Vanda Master Series which has offered the community outstanding classical music for 18 years. Renowned international artists that have appeared at the center include Andre Previn, Eugene Ormandy, Isaac Stern and Itzhak Perlman.

# CLINTON TO ADDRESS

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Christian witness to the local community. Local churches have extended an open invitation for visitors to fellowship in Sunday worship on September 5. That evening, area churches will also worship together at a special Outdoor Worship Service at 5 p.m. in Colonel Young Park in Harlem.

Meeting sessions and several special events will also highlight the Convention. A President's Banquet will be held on Monday, September 6. An uplifting Gospel Concert at Madison Square Garden on

Tuesday, Sept. 7 will feature a 1,000-voice choir.

Thousands of tickets have already been sold for the concert. A special luncheon for Mrs. Jemison on Wednesday at noon is expected to be especially enjoyable.

Dr. T.J. Jemison will give the "President's Annual Address" on Thursday, Sept. 9. New York State Governor Mario Cuomo will address the Convention on Friday, Sept. 10.

NBC, USA held its 1992 Annual Convention in Atlanta, GA and its 1991 Convention in Washington, D.C.

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