

lieved in, and I would reaffirm what I said yesterday and I have said consistently, and that is that at no time did I adopt or endorse the substance of the article itself.

My interest in that one sentence, I believe, was to get a conservative audience that was skeptical of a concept to be more receptive to that concept in the area that I wanted to use, in the area of civil rights. That speech is on the treatment of blacks by conservatives, treatment of minority issues in the Reagan administration, and a sort of request and a push or a tug to them to be more receptive in this area and to be aggressive in this area. It was not an endorsement of that article.

Senator LEAHY. Do you feel that your answer today is in any way inconsistent with what you said then?

Judge THOMAS. What I said?

Senator LEAHY. At that time?

Judge THOMAS. Yes.

Senator LEAHY. Thank you. And you understand my confusion in the two answers, but you explain that confusion in that the statement then and your answer today are consistent?

Judge THOMAS. I said that they were consistent.

Senator LEAHY. OK. Then you feel your answer today is consistent with what you said back at the time you spoke in the Lewis Lehrman Auditorium?

Judge THOMAS. Senator, my statement today is consistent with what I intended to do and what I did in the Lew Lehrman Auditorium. My interest, as I indicated to you, and I think I repeated a number of times here, it was in civil rights and finding unifying principles in the area of civil rights.

Senator LEAHY. Well, let me make sure that I understand. Is it your testimony here today and yesterday that you do not endorse the Lewis Lehrman article to the extent that it argues under the natural law principles of the Declaration of Independence that a fetus has an inalienable right to life at the moment of conception? Is that your testimony?

Judge THOMAS. I do not—my testimony is that, with respect to those issues, the issues involved or implicated in the issue of abortion, I do not believe that Mr. Lehrman's application of natural law is appropriate.

Senator LEAHY. Had you read that article before you praised it?

Judge THOMAS. I think I skimmed it, Senator. My interest, again, was in the fact that he used the notion or the concept of natural law, and my idea was to import that notion to something that I was very interested in.

Senator LEAHY. Now, you certainly—

The CHAIRMAN. Excuse me, would the Senator yield? I did not understand one answer.

Did you say that you do not believe that Mr. Lehrman's application of natural law in that article was appropriate?

Judge THOMAS. That's right.

The CHAIRMAN. You do not believe it is appropriate?

Judge THOMAS. That's right.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Judge THOMAS. I said that my testimony has been that that difficult issue is to be resolved as a matter of constitutional law.