

the system to make it change, and I think it is a much more difficult job. And I think the fact that he has reached this point is kind of a star in his crown, because it is not easy, when you are inside the system, to change it.

Senator SIMON. Senator Thurmond.

Senator THURMOND. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

First, I want to welcome you all here today. I want to thank you for coming. This is a very distinguished panel and I doubt if we have any panel that will excel this one, a distinguished State senator of Georgia, the State of the nominee, a distinguished circuit judge, Griffin Bell, who made such a fine record as Attorney General, a distinguished retired Federal judge here, and an outstanding lady distinguished in her own right, Ms. Wilson. We are just delighted to have all of you here.

I just have two questions you can answer in one word. I will start with you, senator. Is it your opinion that Judge Thomas is highly qualified and possesses the necessary integrity, professional competence, and judicial temperament to be an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court?

Mr. ALLEN. Yes, Senator.

Senator THURMOND. Judge Bell?

Mr. BELL. Yes.

Senator THURMOND. Judge Tanner?

Judge TANNER. Senator Thurmond, I am not a retired judge, I am a senior U.S. district court judge on active duty. The answer to your question is amen.

Senator THURMOND. I correct myself in saying you were retired. I had understood you were retired. I thought you looked pretty young. [Laughter.]

Ms. Wilson.

Ms. WILSON. Senator Thurmond, yes, with great enthusiasm.

Senator THURMOND. The second question: Do you know of any reason why he should not be made a member of the Supreme Court, Senator Allen?

Mr. ALLEN. No, Senator.

Senator THURMOND. Judge Bell?

Mr. BELL. Absolutely no.

Senator THURMOND. Judge Tanner?

Judge TANNER. No, Senator.

Senator THURMOND. Ms. Wilson?

Ms. WILSON. Absolutely not.

Senator THURMOND. That is all. As far as I am concerned, you can go home, and if you rush, you might catch that plane.

Senator SIMON. We had better let Senator Specter get a question in here now. Senator Specter.

Senator SPECTER. Mr. Chairman, very briefly, because I know you have a plane to catch. I join my colleagues in thanking you for staying so late.

Judge Bell, would you classify Judge Thomas as well qualified for the Supreme Court, after having heard the ABA's recommendation of qualified?

Mr. BELL. I would classify him as well qualified, yes.

Senator SPECTER. Senator Allen, you are a member of the bar yourself, I understand?