

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Now, we will move west of the Mississippi, to a State in which our distinguished nominee has worked and has friends, and one of his friends is the junior Senator from the State of Missouri, Senator Bond.

Senator Bond, welcome. We are very anxious to hear what you have to say.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER S. BOND, A U.S. SENATOR
FROM THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

Senator BOND. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.

It is a great honor and a pleasure for me to come before this committee today to join in the multifaceted presentation of Judge Clarence Thomas, the President's nominee for Associate Justice to the United States Supreme Court.

Coming from Missouri, I have to make a major effort to claim him for the State of Missouri, but we do so with a great deal of pride.

I had the real pleasure first of meeting Judge Thomas when we both worked in Jefferson City, MO, in the early 1970's. Both of us began our career in State government as assistants attorney general under Jack Danforth. It was an exciting and intellectually challenging place for a young lawyer to work. The outstanding caliber of the other people that Jack Danforth brought to that office is best illustrated by the jobs that some of them now hold—Federal judges, Chairman of the FCC, and we hope soon a Supreme Court Justice.

Even among a cast of stars like that, Clarence Thomas shone as a lawyer. He was not content simply to move cases through the office, but, instead, worked to use his position to accomplish change and to improve the lives of people in our State.

His legal work and his intellect were noticed, not just by Jack Danforth, but by many others, as well. When Jack was elected to the Senate, Clarence Thomas came to Washington and applied his skills to a series of jobs, ranging from corporate lawyer to the Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, giving him the opportunity to learn firsthand about a wider range of legal areas than most recent nominees to the Court.

I say, Mr. Chairman, that if you look at the group of people who know Clarence Thomas best, you will find his most ardent supporters. I only hope that those who do not know him as well as we do may have the opportunity during the course of these hearings to gain the knowledge and the respect that we have.

Though his skills as a lawyer and a judge are obvious, they are not, in my view, the only reason that this committee should vote to approve Judge Thomas' nomination. Just as important is his compassion and understanding of the impact that the Supreme Court has on the lives of average Americans.

We are all familiar with Judge Thomas' background as outlined by our distinguished colleague from Georgia. It is an inspiring story. There is no doubt that he can be proud of his achievements.

But it is also important to focus on his continuing efforts throughout his life to live up to the values and principles that his

grandfather instilled in him, which I know were strengthened by the many years he spent living in Missouri. The strength of character is every bit as important as his professional qualifications, and I urge you to consider it as you proceed with these hearings.

Mr. Chairman, there have been many accusations and straw men raised over the course of the past few months. Unfortunately, that has become a part of the nomination process. Though we cannot stop people from voicing their opinion or attacking a nominee or even members of the committee, unfair or groundless as the attacks may be, we can disregard those charges and focus on the important details, the nominee's fitness for the job.

I urge the members of the committee to do just that. I know that when they do, they will find Judge Thomas to be well qualified to serve as the newest member of the United States Supreme Court.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Bond follows:]