

Fairness also means that Judge Thomas must be given a full and fair opportunity to confront these charges against him, to respond fully, to tell us his side of the story and to be given the benefit of the doubt.

In the end, this hearing may resolve much or it may resolve little, but there are two things that cannot remain in doubt after this hearing is over: First, that the members of this committee are fair and have been fair to all witnesses; and, second, that we take sexual harassment as a very serious concern in this hearing and overall.

So, let us perform our duties with a full understanding of what I have said and of our responsibilities to the Senate, to the Nation and to the truth.

I yield now to my colleague from South Carolina.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. STROM THURMOND, A U.S.
SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

Senator THURMOND. Mr. Chairman, we have taken the unusual step of reconvening this committee in order to consider further testimony regarding the nomination of Judge Clarence Thomas to be a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States.

We are here this morning to attempt to discern the truth in some rather extraordinary allegations made against this nominee, and because Judge THomas has requested an opportunity to refute these allegations and restore his good name.

Mr. Chairman, before we begin, I want to emphasize that the charge of sexual harassment is a grave one and one that each Senator on this committee takes with the utmost seriousness. This is an issue of great sensitivity and there is no doubt in my mind that this is difficult for everyone involved.

Both Judge Thomas and Professor Hill find themselves in the unenviable position of having to discuss very personal matters in a very public forum. I want to assure them at the outset that they will be dealt with fairly. This will be an exceedingly uncomfortable process for us all, but a great deal hangs in the balance and our duty is clear, we must find the truth.

I would like to commend Chairman Biden, who worked with me to ensure that this hearing would be conducted fairly. After consulting with each Member on my side, I have decided that Senator Hatch will conduct the questioning of Judge Thomas. I have also decided, after consultation, that Senator Specter will undertake the questioning of Professor Hill and the other witnesses. I reserve the privilege of propounding questions myself.

I want to make it clear that every Republican member of this committee has been deeply involved in this process from the day Judge Thomas was nominated by President Bush. However, in the interest of time and fairness to all the witnesses, I believe the procedures that have been outlined will work best for everyone involved.

Over 100 days ago, when President Bush nominated Judge Thomas, this committee undertook a thorough and far-reaching investigation of his background. That investigation turned up noth-

ing questionable about the Judge, but, rather, showed him to be an individual of great character and accomplishment.

During the original confirmation hearings, this committee heard testimony from over 100 witnesses, both for and against the nomination. Not one of these witnesses, even those most bitterly opposed to this nomination, had one disparaging comment to make about Clarence Thomas' moral character. On the contrary, witness after witness spoke of the impeccable character, abiding honesty and consummate professionalism which Judge Thomas has shown throughout his career.

In conclusion, I want to comment briefly about the allegations that have been raised by Professor Hill. The alleged harassment she describes took place some 10 years ago. During that time, she continued to initiate contact with Judge Thomas in an apparently friendly manner. In addition, Professor Hill chose to publicize her allegations the day before the full Senate would have voted to confirm Judge Thomas.

While I fully intend to maintain an open mind during today's testimony, I must say that the timing of these statements raises a tremendous number of questions which must be dealt with, and I can assure all the witnesses that we shall be unstinting in our efforts to ascertain the truth.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Now, before I swear Judge Thomas, I ask that the police officer to go to the front of that door while Judge Thomas is speaking, and prevent anyone from going in or out. He is entitled to absolute quiet in this room, no matter who wishes to enter.

Judge would you stand to be sworn? Judge, do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you, God?

Judge THOMAS. I do.

The CHAIRMAN. Judge, do you have an opening statement? Please proceed.

TESTIMONY OF HON. CLARENCE THOMAS, OF GEORGIA, TO BE ASSOCIATE JUSTICE OF THE U.S. SUPREME COURT

Judge THOMAS. Mr. Chairman, Senator Thurmond, members of the committee: as excruciatingly difficult as the last 2 weeks have been, I welcome the opportunity to clear my name today. No one other than my wife and Senator Danforth, to whom I read this statement at 6:30 a.m., has seen or heard the statement, no handlers, no advisers.

The first I learned of the allegations by Prof. Anita Hill was on September 25, 1991, when the FBI came to my home to investigate her allegations. When informed by the FBI agent of the nature of the allegations and the person making them, I was shocked, surprised, hurt, and enormously saddened.

I have not been the same since that day. For almost a decade my responsibilities included enforcing the rights of victims of sexual harassment. As a boss, as a friend, and as a human being I was proud that I have never had such an allegation leveled against me,