

Constitution fairly and apply the laws equally. These qualities, coupled with his education and experience, make him highly qualified for the position of Associate Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

For these reasons, the governing body of IACP, meeting on August 10, in New York City, voted to endorse his nomination. I am pleased to add IACP's endorsement of Judge Thomas to his long list of endorsements. We give him our unqualified support during these confirmation hearings. We urge you gentlemen and Members of the Senate to speedily confirm his nomination.

I want to say personally, as I conclude, that I have been a policeman since 1954. I started as a trooper in the Virginia State Police. I worked up through the ranks and I was appointed as superintendent of the State police, and now serve in the cabinet as the secretary of public safety.

I sincerely believe that the Supreme Court Justices, each of them, are as important to us being able to do a proper job to protect the people as anything else. I have followed the system, I have read a lot about Judge Thomas, and I just feel that he is a very qualified person to serve on the Supreme Court.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Collins.

STATEMENT OF JOHN COLLINS

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is very nice to be back here and see you all again. My name is Jack Collins, and I am the eastern regional representative and director of Citizens for Law and Order, CLO.

Our grass roots organization of citizen activists was founded more than 21 years ago in Oakland, CA, by four concerned citizens who felt very deeply about the growth of violent crime in their city and in their Nation. For the past two decades, our organization has successfully encouraged ordinary citizens to become more directly involved in the criminal justice system and to support law enforcement agencies and other organs of justice.

We are committed, gentlemen, to the reduction of violent crime in America and to ensuring a balanced and fair criminal justice system, and we want to root out inequities in the judicial process. We also hold a very special concern for victims and survivors of violent crime and we try to ensure for them a position of centrality in the criminal justice system.

I speak from experience; I am a victim; I am a survivor. Our 19-year-old lovely daughter Susanne was viciously and brutally murdered 6 years ago, in July 1985, and since that date I and my wife, Trudy, and our son, Steven, have become all too familiar with the criminal justice system.

It is against this backdrop of concern and commitment that we look at the U.S. Supreme Court as a very, very telling instrument in bringing about a healthy, fair, and just criminal justice system. Its decisions on criminal law impact not only on individual litigants, but also they resonate forcefully throughout the Federal court system and the State court system.

Given this key role of the Court, CLO and our members wanted to know more about Judge Thomas and his views and his philosophy. Given that face, we commissioned Barbara Bracher, a litigation attorney with one of the major D.C. law firms, to prepare a report on the judicial philosophy of Judge Thomas, particularly as it is reflected in his criminal law decisions on the D.C. circuit court.

Our own reflection, gentleman, combined with our reading of Ms. Bracher's report, leads us to the conviction that Judge Thomas will bring to the Court a voice of reason, fairness, and equity in the area of criminal justice. He is a thoughtful jurist. He possesses a keen intellect and a restrained judicial temperament. With these qualities, he will very likely help to bring much needed certainty and predictability in this area of the law to the Court.

Judge Thomas has demonstrated a commonsense approach to questions of criminal law, and he is very sensitive to the needs of those law enforcement officials actually out on the beat, on the street. He has shown throughout all of his opinions a firm commitment to established rules of law. He is scrupulous in his observance of controlling precedent and the proper jurisdiction of the court. He complies with accepted principles of statutory construction.

Throughout all his opinions, it is evident that he sees his charter as one of construing and interpreting the law, and not shaping the law to suit his own predilections or any private agenda. But even beyond his legal opinions, it is evident that Judge Thomas has thought deeply and carefully about the scourge of violent crime in this country.

In 1985, at one symposium, he was asked about ways to help the inner cities. He responded, "The first priority is to control the crime."

Another element which argues for Judge Thomas' sensitivity towards victims of crime is his own history of victimization in a segregated society, where the pain and hurt of discrimination was a daily feature of life. Judge Thomas knows what it is like to be a victim. We are convinced that he will carry these memories with him to the Supreme Court, along with the sense of injustice they engendered.

It is our expectation that Judge Thomas, for him, victims will no longer be forgotten and invisible players relegated to the margins of the criminal justice system, but, rather, figures central to the process, whose legitimate rights, needs, and concerns must be heeded and honored.

Noticing all of these attributes and facts, Citizens for Law and Order is proud to endorse Judge Thomas' nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court. Joining us in this endorsement are four victim groups who have joined us for this purpose: Justice for Murder Victims, San Francisco; Survivor on Call, Inc., Saltillo, MS; Memory of Victims Everywhere, Irvine, CA; and Citizens Against Violent Crime, Charleston, SC. CLO, together with these 4 organizations, represent more than 40,000 citizens committed to the cause of good criminal justice.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, members of the committee.

[The prepared statement follows:]