

TESTIMONY OF  
JOHN E. PALMER  
BEFORE THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE  
IN SUPPORT OF THE NOMINATION OF  
JUDGE CLARENCE THOMAS TO THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT

Good Evening. To the distinguished Chairman Biden and to all of the esteemed members of this U.S. Senate Judiciary committee. My name is John E. Palmer. I was born in Kansas and reared in Missouri the heartland of this wonderful country. I am the President and CEO of EDP Enterprises, Inc. a full food service management company which specializes in feeding military troops. I currently feed our courageous military troops at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri and Ft. Riley, Kansas.

I have traveled to our nation's capital this day to represent and raise the collective voice of a Group named the Heartland Coalition for the Confirmation of Judge Clarence Thomas. This group is comprised of men and women --- blacks and Hispanics --- Kansans and Missourians --- liberals and conservatives --- businessmen and women --- elected officials -- and of particular note --- prominent democrats and republicans.

The common thread which bonded this diverse group of independent minds was a willingness to step forward --- and boldly call attention to the fact that there exists a consensus within the minority community of our country which supports --- the confirmation of Judge Thomas to the Supreme Court of the

United States. We firmly believe that we embody the true essence of mainstream America, defined.

The coalition formed to demonstrate the bi-partisan, culturally diverse support --- which this nomination has throughout America. We --- are reflective of the 54% who supported Judge Thomas' confirmation prior to the beginning of these hearings --- as illustrated in a USA Today newspaper poll. We are representative of the 62% --- who currently back the confirmation of Judge Clarence Thomas.

We find Judge Thomas to be a man of integrity --- of compassion --- of principle --- of strong moral fiber --- of ability and a man who is fiercely independent.

Although some views of Judge Thomas may differ from those held by Justice Thurgood Marshall --- he --- like Judge Marshall, has overcome hardships, discrimination and deprivation to prepare himself for the challenge of our country's highest court.

It is important that you know --- the Heartland Coalition is not a professional lobbying group. There is no organizational structure --- there are no officers --- there exist no committees.

Not one single solitary dollar --- of the millions of dollars --- which have changed hands fueling campaigns both for

and against the confirmation --- found its way into this Heartland Coalition.

You see --- this Coalition evolved as a result of a conversation between two people --- about the onslaught of unyielding and uncompromising denunciations of Judge Thomas --- by national civil rights and legislative organizations. The participants in this conversation strongly disagreed. Neither believed these positions to be representative of a consensus of working class minority America.

While the motives of these groups were never at issue nor questioned --- one participant in this conversation, Linda Hunter of Jefferson City, Missouri, the State Capital said --- Let's call some of our friends --- both Republican and particularly Democrats, known respected leaders throughout the Heartland --- and see how they feel. Phone calls were made --- schedules were coordinated --- consensus on a press release was reached --- a date and time was decided --- a press conference was held, and thusly the HEARTLAND COALITION WAS BORN.

The U.S. Supreme Court needs not ~~444~~ a man who knows all.  
We believe that our highest court needs:

- the diversity of youth, vitality and the promise of growth;
- representation of leadership of the future;

- one who~~s~~ has dedicated his life to the attainment of a color-blind society;
- one who has demonstrated the courage to travel the road --- less traveled by;
- one whose very life is characterized by an insatiable appetite for knowledge -- and punctuated by a willingness to work hard --- tempered by an openness to listen and learn --- as no man nor woman has come to the court fully formed.
- one who has dared to awaken, arouse and stir the soul and consensus of minority America by boldly stating that it's broken and in desperate need of repair --- while solutions of the past --- have not worked --- it is now time to wake up that sleeping giant called --- HEARTLAND AMERICA --- and enroll us into the solution driven debate.

We from the Heartland of America respectfully urge you --- U.S. Senators, elected members of the most prestigious, distinguished, powerful body in this world --- to vote yes --- to confirm Judge Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Thank you very much for this opportunity.