

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
Reverend Taylor.

STATEMENT OF REV. BERNARD TAYLOR

Reverend TAYLOR. My name is Rev. Bernard Taylor and I am chairman of the Black Expo of Chicago, an Illinois-based corporation involved in a host of activities to support the development of black business enterprises, including an annual exhibit that brings together black-owned businesses of all types to display their products to black consumers.

The most recent of these was held this past July in which over 400 businesses exhibited to hundreds of thousands of consumers.

I am also an ordained minister in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the oldest black church denomination in America, a church that was organized because of discrimination. I also serve as assistant pastor, Grant Memorial AME Church in Chicago.

I am a graduate of Roosevelt University with a BA degree in sociology and the Chicago Theological Seminary with an MA in theology. Senators, I am here in opposition to the nomination of Judge Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Clarence Thomas' personal history is not unique. Most African-Americans who have grown up in this country have experienced poverty, disrespect and hostility by whites who have called our women, girls; our men, boys; and niggers and worse. African-Americans have been victimized by vicious expressions of racism. We can identify with and are still pained by the descriptions of Judge Thomas on last week.

The notion of self-help and self-reliance are not concepts that are foreign to African-Americans. Booker T. Washington, the founder of Tuskegee Institute wrote extensively on the need of self-help, which others have called passive resistance.

On the contrary, W.E.B. DuBois, professor at Atlanta University wrote for the need for progression through via the talented tenth paving the way for the rest of the race. We contend that a blend of these views must carry the day. While we need self-help we also need access to the avenues that will prepare our talented tenth and others to provide guidance to our people.

It is undisputed that self-help alone will not propel disadvantaged people into the mainstream of American society. No person who presently enjoys the position of power or authority has attained that position without assistance—be it governmental or otherwise. And that type of assistance has been and remains necessary if persons are to succeed in our society.

Judge Clarence Thomas, a man who has received some theological training, should be able to demonstrate human compassion, yet, we see him condemning those who would take advantage of well-earned benefits of Government. African-Americans are, and have been long-standing and faithful taxpayers and deserve to participate in every existing governmental benefit.

Affirmative action is an attempt to bring numbers of unrepresented groups into the mainstream of American life who have traditionally suffered discrimination and racism as a group.

Three of our past presidents recognized that African-Americans were severely discriminated against and signed executive orders to ease this situation. President Roosevelt's Executive Order 8802 ordered defense contractors to practice nondiscrimination in the awarding of contracts. President Kennedy's Executive Order 10925 provides contract termination as a penalty for noncompliance with equal employment practices. And President Johnson issued Executive Order 11246 which established the Office of Federal Contract Compliance within the Department of Labor.

These Executive orders were issued because of discrimination in employment and the awarding of contracts. But Judge Thomas has stated that he believes that affirmative action creates dependency. And he has made several references to that kind of affirmative action, alluding to quotas.

As Chairman of the EEOC, Thomas should have recognized quotas have never been part of the statutory affirmative action. Affirmative action with its timetables and goals has offered security for the status quo and potential benefit for others through attrition. The benefits of affirmative action are not hand-outs, but well-deserved rewards for the labors of ourselves and our forbearers.

In 1989, the *Richmond* decision and other Court rulings damaged affirmative action. When the courts ruled that race-based affirmative action was unconstitutional, the courts seemed to favor individual rights over group rights in the area of adjudication of discrimination claims.

African-American people need someone on the Court who is sensitive to the fact that they have been discriminated against as a group, and not just individually. By being in opposition to providing full affirmative action rights to African-Americans and others, Judge Thomas is contributing to the decline of affirmative action. He espouses self-help instead of affirmative action.

When a people are being denied, self-help at best is inadequate to affirmative action. Judge Thomas claims no agenda. But I would like to tell him that his agenda should be included in being a champion for those who have been systematically discriminated against. We need someone on the Supreme Courts who understands that African-Americans have been discriminated as a group. We need a voice on the Court who will be a champion for those who have been locked out of our society. Someone who is fully aware that his agenda should be inclusion of all citizens of these United States.

We say no to Clarence Thomas.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Reverend.

[The prepared statement of Rev. Bernard Taylor follows:]