

I really don't have any questions, but I can certainly understand the anguish and the heavy concern that you have. I have no questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

I am sure that one thing the five Congressmen and I share in common is that if—if—Clarence Thomas is approved by the Senate and goes on the Court, it will be our sincere hope that he does surprise you. You, personally. We hope when you are on the Court you and the President are having lunch someday, and you will say, Oh, my Lord, what have we wrought. [Laughter.]

Senator SIMPSON. Mr. Chairman, you were gone from the chamber off and on for several minutes, and Orrin and I were going to take over this committee. So think how lucky you were. I can assure you that he will surprise me.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sure that day may come again when you all take over the committee. Hopefully—by that time, I will have no hair, but maybe not. It is going rapidly. I am doing my best.

At any rate, I want to thank you. I think it was Congressman Conyers who mentioned his sister. We will enter in the record—but I think I am not mistaken when I say this—I am not making the comment relative to Thomas himself, but relative to his sister who did sit here the whole time. She is a remarkable woman. As I understand, this woman held down two minimum-wage jobs and had an aunt who was taking care of her children while she could hold these two minimum-wage jobs. The aunt became ill. Only when the aunt became ill did Clarence Thomas' sister—again, I don't care what Clarence Thomas said about it. I am not talking about his comment, but just because her name has been mentioned a number of times.

As I understand it, only when the aunt became ill and could no longer take care of her children during the day while she worked her two minimum-wage jobs did she have to quit, get relief for a period of time until she could rectify the situation and then went back to work at a local hospital and has worked since then. Quite a remarkable woman.

Quite frankly, I have no reason to doubt it. I have heard nothing to controvert what I have just said. I may have one of the details off, but that is the essence of it at a minimum. We will put in the record precisely what the situation is. But I kind of always thought that was the reason why we had public assistance, for people who had no choice.

I don't know many Americans who like working at all. A lot of them would work in that circumstance two minimum-wage jobs. Well, that is not true. There are tens of thousands who do it and have to do it. But at any rate, not just because you mentioned it, John, but her name has been mentioned off and on for the last 7 days, and I just think the record should note she is a remarkable person facing the struggle that tens of thousands of Americans have faced in their lives, black and white.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chairman, on behalf of all us here, we want to thank this committee for the unusual amount of time that has been afforded to us to exchange these views. We are very grateful for that.

The CHAIRMAN. Simply stated, you are important. Simply stated. It is a simple fact of life. And I thank you for all coming over. You have lent a great deal to this deliberation and given us all something to think about. I am just delighted in my very short years of practice before coming to the Senate at age 29 that I was not on the other side of a case in the courtroom with you, Congressman Washington. I now know why you were a successful trial lawyer.

Having said that, let me thank you all again for being here, and we will continue to seek your counsel on many other things. And, John, look over the crime bill.

Mr. CONYERS. Thank you. May we be excused?

The CHAIRMAN. You may be excused. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of the Congressional Black Caucus follows:]