

Father Brooks, how would you characterize Clarence Thomas as a student?

Father BROOKS. Clarence was an excellent student. He pursued his academic life very, very seriously. He was very deliberative in terms of selecting courses, selecting his major, and he was well known throughout the college community as being very, very serious about his studies and was very successful at them, also.

Senator BROWN. Thank you. We are advised that Holy Cross has sought out through a recruitment program a diversity of ethnic groups to join the student body. If Clarence Thomas was not black, knowing him as you do, would he have been a student, would he have been admitted to Holy Cross?

Father BROOKS. I think he probably would have, for this reason: He was really not the object of our recruitment effort. I was very instrumental in the early days of Holy Cross' involvement in minority recruitment, and he was not among the students whom we identified. In fact, he came to Holy Cross—I think perhaps Sister knows more about it than I do—I think he came as a result of advice he received quite likely from Sister or some other teacher he had earlier in school. His academic record, the seminary he had been attending the previous year was very, very good, and he would have got in any under any set of circumstances, in terms of his academic achievement.

Senator BROWN. Thank you.

Sister, do you have anything you would like to add to that?

Sister VIRGILIUS. Yes. When Clarence was in the seminary in Savannah, our Sister Mary Carman taught him chemistry and physics, I think, but she was the one who encouraged him to go to Holy Cross, as well as Father Dwyer, and several of the high school children are pupils of Savannah, are graduates of Savannah, like William Douglas and Carleton Stewart, who were also graduates of St. Benedict's School, they have gone or were in Holy Cross or have graduated from Holy Cross, so I think it was something like that that attracted him to Holy Cross, where he would meet some more of his former Savannahans.

Senator BROWN. Thank you.

One last question that I would appreciate comments from each of you, if you care to comment: Throughout this last week, the Judge has received intensive questioning, which is obviously the duty of this committee, but many of the observations that have come down from folks who I think could be fairly described as somewhat skeptical of Clarence Thomas, and evolved to a charge that Clarence Thomas simply is not being honest.

I would appreciate knowing, as people how know Clarence Thomas, have seen him in action, your assessments of his integrity and his honesty.

Sister VIRGILIUS. As far as I am concerned, Senator, Clarence Thomas is perfectly honest, and I have watched at home at the convent in Tenafly before I came down here to Washington on Monday, and I have watched and I think he stood up very well under the interrogation, he was very articulate and I think he handled himself very well, and I do not in one instant mistrust his honesty. I think he is perfectly honest, knowing Clarence from a child.

Father BROOKS. In more than 20 years, I do not think I have experienced a shred of evidence of any dishonesty or even lack of candor in Clarence Thomas. I have always found him very forthright, very clear in what he is saying to me and very cooperative. There is not a shred of dishonesty in him, I do not believe.

Mr. GIBBONS. That is my reaction exactly. In less than 20 years, more like 15 years of dealing with him, I have found him to be a completely honorable person in all of his dealings with me and with others. I think, Senator Brown, the suggestion to which you refer is that he has undergone some kind of a conversion to obtain confirmation. I do not believe that for a moment. It is perfectly clear that his lot here would have been a lot simpler, if he had simply said, well, if I am confirmed, I will not vote to overrule *Roe v. Wade*.

The CHAIRMAN. I can assure you that would not be true. You would find an eruption on this side of the table similar to the one you found on that side of the table, and you know that not to be the case, Judge.

Mr. GIBBONS. But then he could count the votes. [Laughter.]

Ms. SUDARKASA. Senator, may I just say that I, unlike my colleagues here, am not a longstanding acquaintance of Judge Thomas. I joined this panel, because I was not able to stay for the afternoon. But I am a person who came to my assessment of the Judge, having read his speeches. I am not a lawyer, so I did not read all of the cases that have been referred to, but I read almost everything I could find about Judge Thomas, and I think that his observation early in the hearing is the appropriate one, namely that, before people knew who he was, they had made up their minds that Judge Thomas fit into one mold or the other. And I think that seeing the real person, who always came across to me as someone groping for answers to very tough questions, seeing the real Clarence Thomas simply put some people off-guard.

I do not think that he was dishonest. I think that where he had reservations about giving his opinions, he expressed those, despite vigorous questioning, and where he felt it was appropriate to give those views, whether they were ones that he held in 1974 or ones that he had come to more recently, he gave them, so I thought that he was very forthcoming.

Senator BROWN. Thank you. I guess I have come to notice this, because or a charge or at least a concern was raised that he had undergone some change of heart with regard to the use of natural law in that he did not now advocate it as a means of interpreting the Constitution. But in reviewing the cases, it appears to me that he has been totally consistent with that view in the cases that he has written, and I think, surprisingly to some members of the committee, the fact is he said exactly the same thing about not using natural law when he was up for confirmation for the Circuit Court of Appeals, in terms of conversion.

I do not know what kind of conversion this committee could induce. I suspect it would be not an angelical conversion, it might be one more akin to the Spanish Inquisition, but I doubt that, with a benign charming chairman as we have, I suspect even that conversion would not be available to this committee.