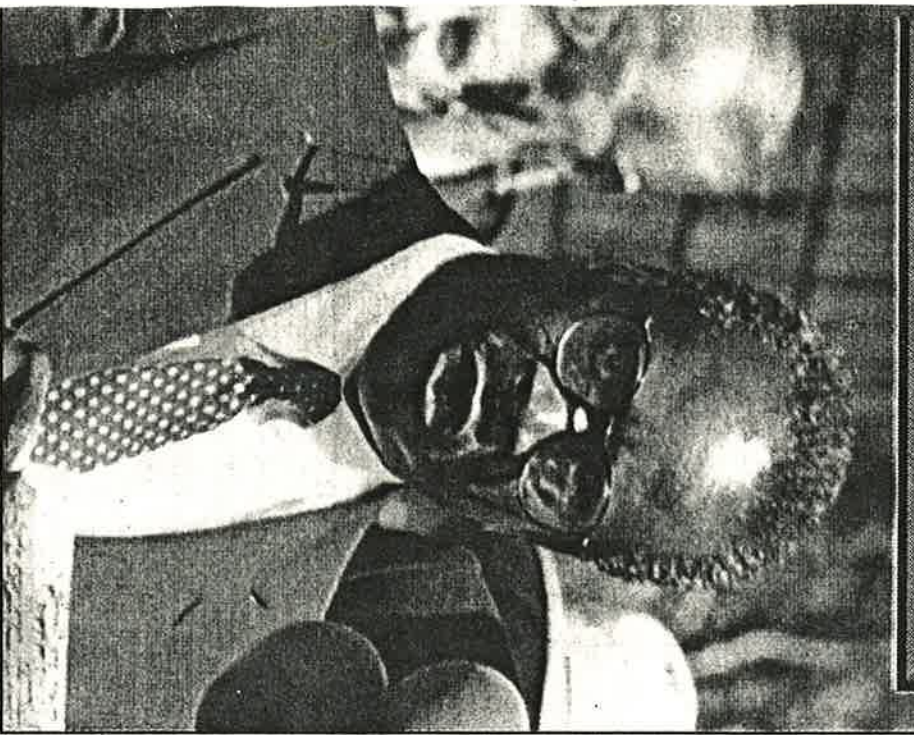


Clarence Thomas 52-48

THE VERDICT'S IN



Associated Press

Clarence Thomas won Senate confirmation to the Supreme Court Tuesday on a 52-48 vote, overcoming explosive accusations of sexual harassment to write the second black justice in United States history.



Associated Press

Law professor Anita Hill returns to class Tuesday at the University of Oklahoma after testifying last week about sexual harassment charges she leveled against Clarence Thomas.

A POST INFO POLL

SHOULD CLARENCE THOMAS BE CONFIRMED FOR THE U.S. SUPREME COURT?

YES (4,505 calls) **56%**

NO (3,601 calls) **44%**

RESULTS

Details: Page A-14

PRO

WHAT THEY SAID

CON

Clarence Thomas is not confirmed, every time we have a controversial nomination, we are going to have a last-minute political charge in the best of dirty political campaigns in America and we are going to repeat this process many times.



"I voted against Judge Thomas because of the contradictions between the strong views he expressed in earlier speeches and articles and his answers to questions during confirmation hearings."

"I believe that Clarence Thomas is what America is all about. He captures in himself the American spirit, the tradition of being able to take the most of your life and apply it to yourself and to contribute something with your life."



"When and if we confirm this or the next nominee... we're talking about 15,000 days, 15,000 days, that that individual will be making decisions that'll affect our lives more than any decision the United States Senate will take in the next one, three, five, years."

—Sen. John C. Danforth, R-Mo.

assment serious enough."

Bradley accused the administration of "colossal insensitivity" to sexual harassment and said conduct will only encourage victims to remain silent. He also harshly criticized Thomas who decreed his treatment by the Senate as a "high-tech lynching for uppity blacks," for raising a specter of race.

Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W. Va., freed, accusing Thomas of bringing up race as "a diversionary tactic to divert both the committee's and American public's attention away from the issue at hand — the issue being which one (Thomas or ill) is telling the truth."

Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., lasted Republicans' attempts to biggest Hill suffers from mental

with it for the next 30 or 40 years. That is too high a price to pay, to great a risk to take," he said.

Reaction from special interest groups for and against Thomas was swift.

Eleanor Smeal, an anti-Thom crusader with The Fund for the Feminist Majority, said the bright side of the vote is that "Anita Hill has provided a nationwide teaching on sexual harassment and the need for women in the Senate."

In contrast, the Eagle Forum Phyllis Schlafly, who lobbied extensively for Thomas, said, "The feminists and other liberals in this country have just gotten the backlash of public and Senate opinion that they deserve."

THE FULL STORY

- Words fly between Kennedy, Specter/A-9
- Senate still uncertain of what's truth, lies/A-9
- Thomas will carry big battle scars/A-9
- Hill says testimony 'was right thing to do'/A-9
- Senate's two women split over vote/A-9
- Thomas' mother celebrates confirmation/A-9

Supreme Court
Judge urges 'healing' in wake of vote

Controversial action largely on party lines

By JOHN CRAVOIS
POST WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — A bitterly divided U.S. Senate confirmed Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas by a 52-48 margin Tuesday, climaxing one of the most strange and salacious episodes in congressional history.

Thomas, 43, who a few days ago was so frustrated by the process that he informed members of the Senate Judiciary Committee they could "take this job and shove it," will become the 106th justice and only the second black ever to serve on the high court.

The staunchly conservative Thomas will replace retired Justice Thurgood Marshall, one of the last true liberals on the court.

Shortly after the vote, standing in the rain under an umbrella with his wife outside their suburban Virginia home, Thomas said it is time to put the divisiveness of his confirmation struggle behind them.

"No matter how difficult or how painful the process has been... we have to go forward... This is a time for healing, not a time for anger or for animosity," said Thomas, who will relinquish his seat on the federal circuit appeals court in Washington and take his seat on the Supreme Court as soon as possible.

Minutes before, President Bush called his nominee — whose confirmation was jeopardized by last-minute allegations of sexual harassment — to offer congratulations.

"You're a wonderful inspiration and you had the overwhelming support of the American people. You have a lifetime of service to your country ahead. Well done," said Bush, who watched the Senate vote on television.

In a prepared statement issued by White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater, Bush said, "Judge Thomas has demonstrated to the Congress and to the nation that he is a man of honesty, dedication and commitment to the Constitution and the rule of law. The nation and the court benefit from having a man of principle who is sensitive to the problems and opportunities facing all Americans."

In Norman, Okla., the woman who accused Thomas of sexually

THOMAS: Confirmed by Senate on 52-48 vote

From A-1

harassing her when she worked for him at the Education Department and then at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in the early 1980s said she was satisfied she had been "able to go out and tell what I knew true."

"What I hope is that none of this will deter others from coming forward. This is an important issue and the dialogue will not stop here," said Anita Hill, 35, now a law professor at Oklahoma University.

Thomas had emphatically denied her charges and complained he was the victim of a "high-tech lynching." The nation was transfixed as the accusations were spelled out in explicit detail and debated in nationally televised hearings this past weekend.

Never before has a Supreme Court nominee been confirmed with so many dissenting votes, although there have been closer ballots. The narrowest margin came in 1881 when Stanley Matthews edged onto the court on a 24-23 tally.

As Sen. Richard Shelby, D-Ala., one of 11 Democrats to back Thomas, said, "He's going to go on the court with a cloud. He's going to have to work it off, but that's his problem."

Tuesday's vote was largely along party lines, but Thomas would have gone down in defeat without the Democrats who sided with 41 Republicans in voting for him. Two Senate Republicans — James Jeffords of Vermont and Robert Packwood of Oregon — jumped the GOP ship on the confirmation vote.

The Senate's two female members were loyal to their parties, Republican Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas voted for Thomas and Democrat Barbara Mikulski of Maryland voted against him.

Texas' senators split on Thomas, with Republican Phil Gramm voting for confirmation and Democrat Lloyd Bentsen against it.

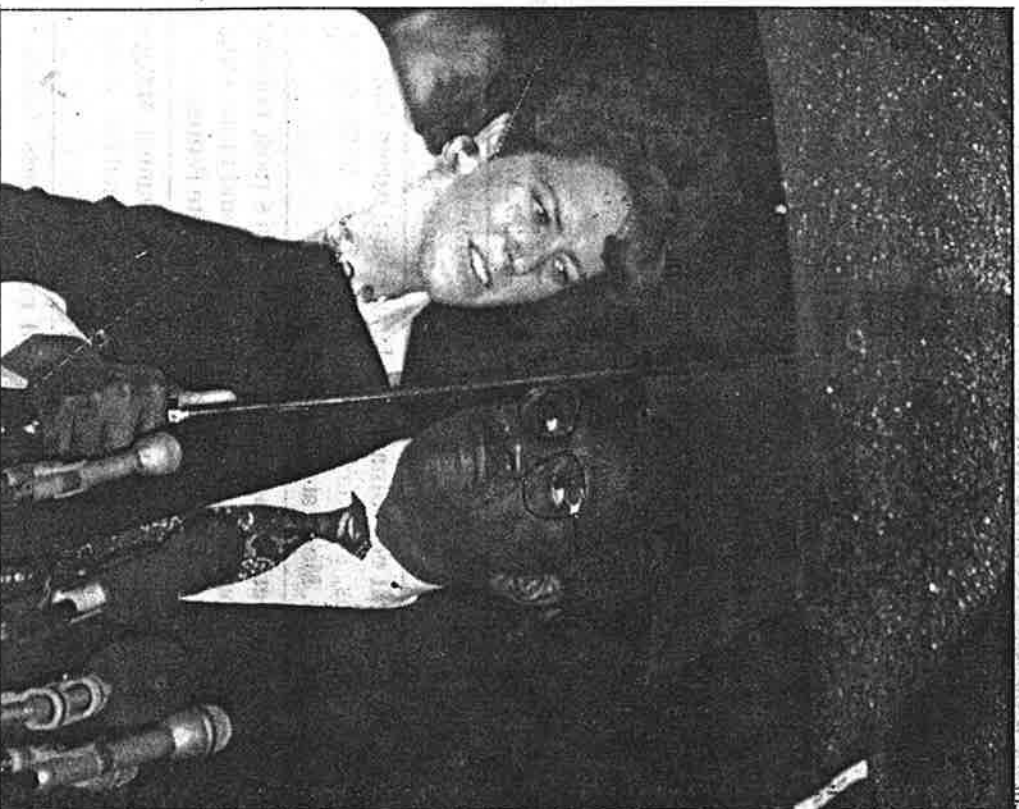
"This whole process has been perverted in an effort to find a reason to derail Clarence Thomas," Gramm said in a fiery floor speech before the 5 p.m. CDT vote.

Bentsen did not participate in the daylong debate, but said in a prepared statement that he voted against Thomas because the nominee "has only minimum qualifications" and during confirmation hearings contradicted many past positions.

Exactly one week before Tuesday's final vote, Thomas was well on his way to being confirmed by a much wider margin. But Hill's eleventh-hour bombshell spurred senators to reopen Judiciary Committee hearings and delay the vote until last night.

As millions of Americans tuned in live on national television over the weekend, Hill and Thomas and their respective supporters engaged in a three-day tempestuous and tawdry duel of credibility. It was gripping political drama, but in the end there was no decisive winner.

The Thomas confirmation finally may have reached its apex with Tuesday's vote, but the book is far from closed on the ordeal as Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell



Associated Press

With a phalanx of media microphones in front of him, an umbrella above him and his wife, Virginia, at his side, Judge Clarence Thomas greets reporters outside his home after the Senate confirmed his nomination Tuesday afternoon.

vowed to investigate the leaking of classified material that led to Hill's allegations going public. She initially sought to keep her claims private.

Several Republican senators have indicated they won't be satisfied with an internal inquiry and have called on Bush to order an FBI investigation. The GOPers argue the results of a Democrat-controlled probe into alleged leaks by Democrats would be suspect.

Such partisan sniping dominated much of Tuesday's debate, as it appeared that not only Thomas was on trial, but also the credibility of the Senate and the Bush administration.

Sen. Bill Bradley, D-N.J., was one of several Democrats accusing Republicans in general and the White House in particular of being unfair to Hill by trying to destroy her credibility and insensitive toward women by not taking sexual harassment serious enough.

Bradley accused the administration of "colossal insensitivity" toward sexual harassment and said such conduct will only encourage victims to remain silent.

He also harshly criticized Thomas, who decried his treatment by the Senate as a "high-tech lynching for uppity blacks," for raising the specter of race.

Sen. Robert Byrd, D-W. Va., agreed, accusing Thomas of bringing up race as "a diversionary tactic to divert both the committee's and American public's attention away from the issue at hand — the issue being which one (Thomas or Hill) is telling the truth."

Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., blasted Republicans' attempts to suggest Hill suffers from mental

problems that led to her fantasizing the harassment she claims she suffered from Thomas.

"They resorted to the meanest and most unfounded cut of all — that this tenured law professor, who testified with such grace and dignity, is delusional... That baseless charge is an insult to Professor Hill and to the millions of American women who have been the victims of sexual harassment," Kennedy said.

"... Calculated slurs of that kind scare other women into silence," he added.

Although Republicans argued long and hard that Thomas should be afforded the benefit of the doubt and be presumed innocent unless proven guilty, Kennedy said a Supreme Court appointment is far too serious a matter to allow any doubt whatsoever.

"If we make a mistake today, the Supreme Court will be living with it and the nation will be living with it for the next 30 or 40 years. That is too high a price to pay, too great a risk to take," he said.

Reaction from special interest groups for and against Thomas was swift.

Eleanor Smeal, an anti-Thomas crusader with The Fund for the Feminist Majority, said the bright side of the vote is that "Anita Hill has provided a nationwide teaching on sexual harassment and the need for women in the Senate."

In contrast, the Eagle Forum's Phyllis Schlafly, who lobbied extensively for Thomas, said, "The feminists and other liberals in this country have just gotten the backlash of public and Senate opinion that they deserve."