over a period of more than 5 years, involving the work of several attorneys, the $89,400 figure is in no way surprising. More significantly, Mr. Olson at all times distinguished between the firm’s legal fees, and the separate, comparatively modest amounts he received personally for writing articles for the magazine. It is, again, a factual mistake to suggest that he ever sought to confuse those two amounts.

Fourth, some have criticized Mr. Olson for allegedly refusing to respond to an allegation about American Spectator dinner parties. I question whether the Senate should ever get into this issue of who attended what dinner parties, given the absence of any serious issue here, and the freedom of speech and press values inherent in a magazine’s activities. But this particular allegation is contradicted by the Senate Judiciary Committee. More than almost any other person, he knows that facts of the Clinton matters. During an interview with Wolf Blitzer on CNN on May 22, Mr. Bennett stated: “I have recently read [Mr. Olson’s] responses to the Senate, and I have looked at a lot of the material, and if I were voting, I would say that Ted Olson was more than candid with the Senate.” Mr. Bennett is independent; he had no partisan axe to grind in favor of Mr. Olson in connection with this nomination; he, in fact, was a lead counsel for President Clinton for several years; he was not maneuvering for advantage in future nominations; he is a lawyer experienced in weighing evidence and cross-examining witnesses; he looked at the evidence; and his conclusion that these allegations are ill-founded is worthy of our respect.

I agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Bennett. I too have read Mr. Olson’s statements before the committee regarding his role in the “Arkansas Project,” and I find Mr. Olson’s statements to be clear and accurate.

The Washington Post editorial board also shares this view. On May 18, after all of the questions regarding the “Arkansas Project” had been raised, the Washington Post endorsed Mr. Olson’s nomination to be Solicitor General, noting “Mr. Olson is one of Washington’s most talented and successful appellate lawyers, a man who served with distinction in the Justice Department during the 1980s and whose work is widely admired across party lines.” According to the Washington Post, “Mr. Olson’s prior service at the Justice Department indicates that he understands the difference between the roles of private citizen and public servant.” As for Mr. Olson’s testimony regarding his role in the “Arkansas Project,” the Washington Post concluded that “there’s no evidence that his testimony was inaccurate in any significant way,” and that “the Democrats would be wrong to block Mr. Olson.” (Emphasis added.)

The Senate thus far has not done a good job of reviewing President Bush’s nominees, and in many cases has made upstanding individuals the victims of partisan attacks. The deeply partisan vote over the Solicitor Generalship was a low point. I strongly believe that every nominee deserves fairness in this process and a full chance to get his or her position into the record and considered. It is not right to leave the record incomplete. I hope that, by setting the record straight, the Senate can move on and treat future nominees more fairly.