

are recently naturalized citizens, I say, welcome. A few of you even work here, and we're proud to have you. I'm proud to have you on our staff and more proud to be your fellow citizen and to know that all of you feel as deeply about this country as I do.

Since President Truman's time it has been customary for the President to sign a proclamation designating June 14th as Flag Day in the United States. I want to do that now, and then make a presentation.

[At this point, the President signed the proclamation.]

Since we teach citizenship at an early age, I want to ask Christopher Williams to come up here and to accept on behalf of his school, Ketcham Elementary, this flag which flew above the United States Capitol this morning. Christopher, I want you to take this flag, along with your schoolmates, back to your school and honor it. It symbolizes both your rights and your responsibilities as an American. You should be very proud of this.

I'd also like any newly naturalized Americans to stand up. Do we have any new citizens here? Let's give them a hand. Look at them. [Applause] Thank you.

Last night when we had the press party here at the White House, perhaps the most moving encounter I had was a couple came through the line; both of them were born in South America. But they had their little child with them who had just been born in the United States, and the child's T-shirt said "Future President" on it. [Laughter] There you are. Look, there he is right there. Give him a hand, the father of the child. [Applause]

This is a special day. The children remind us of it, and so do our new citizens. Thank you all for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of Ruth Bader Ginsburg To Be a Supreme Court Associate Justice

June 14, 1993

The President. Please be seated. I wish you all a good afternoon, and I thank the Members of the Congress and other interested Americans who are here.

In just a few days when the Supreme Court concludes its term, Justice Byron White will begin a new chapter in his long and productive life. He has served the Court as he has lived, with distinction, intelligence, and honor. And he retires from public service with the deep gratitude of all the American people.

Article II, section 2 of the United States Constitution empowers the President to select a nominee to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court of the United States. This responsibility is one of the most significant duties assigned to the President by the Constitution. A Supreme Court Justice has life tenure, unlike the President, and along with his or her colleagues decides the most significant questions of our time and shapes the continuing contours of our liberty.

I care a lot about this responsibility, not only because I am a lawyer but because I used to

teach constitutional law and I served my State as attorney general. I know well how the Supreme Court affects the lives of all Americans personally and deeply. I know clearly that a Supreme Court Justice should have the heart and spirit, the talent and discipline, the knowledge, common sense, and wisdom to translate the hopes of the American people, as presented in the cases before it, into an enduring body of constitutional law, constitutional law that will preserve our most cherished values that are enshrined in that Constitution and, at the same time, enable the American people to move forward.

That is what I promised the American people in a Justice when I ran for President, and I believe it is a promise that I am delivering on today. After careful reflection, I am proud to nominate for Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Co-

lumbia. I will send her name to the Senate to fill the vacancy created by Justice White's retirement.

As I told Judge Ginsburg last night when I called to ask her to accept the nomination, I decided on her for three reasons. First, in her years on the bench she has genuinely distinguished herself as one of our Nation's best judges, progressive in outlook, wise in judgment, balanced and fair in her opinions. Second, over the course of a lifetime, in her pioneering work in behalf of the women of this country, she has compiled a truly historic record of achievement in the finest traditions of American law and citizenship. And finally, I believe that in the years ahead she will be able to be a force for consensus-building on the Supreme Court, just as she has been on the Court of Appeals, so that our judges can become an instrument of our common unity in the expression of their fidelity to the Constitution.

Judge Ginsburg received her undergraduate degree from Cornell. She attended both Harvard and Columbia Law Schools and served on the law reviews of both institutions, the first woman to have earned this distinction. She was a law clerk to a Federal judge, a law professor at Rutgers and Columbia Law Schools. She argued six landmark cases on behalf of women before the United States Supreme Court and, happily, won five out of six. For the past 13 years she has served on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, the second highest court in our country, where her work has brought her national acclaim and on which she was able to amass a record that caused a national legal journal in 1991 to name her as one of the Nation's leading centrist judges.

In the months and years ahead, the country will have the opportunity to get to know much more about Ruth Ginsburg's achievements, decency, humanity, and fairness. People will find, as I have, that this nominee is a person of immense character. Quite simply, what's in her record speaks volumes about what is in her heart. Throughout her life she has repeatedly stood for the individual, the person less well-off, the outsider in society, and has given those people greater hope by telling them that they have a place in our legal system, by giving them a sense that the Constitution and the laws protect all the American people, not simply the powerful. Judge Ginsburg has also proven her-

self to be a healer, what attorneys call a moderate. Time and again, her moral imagination has cooled the fires of her colleagues' discord, ensuring that the right of jurists to dissent ennobles the law without entangling the court.

The announcement of this vacancy brought forth a unique outpouring of support for distinguished Americans on Judge Ginsburg's behalf. What caused that outpouring is the essential quality of the judge herself: her deep respect for others and her willingness to subvert self-interest to the interest of our people and their institutions.

In one of her own writings about what it is like to be a Justice, Judge Ginsburg quotes Justice Louis Brandeis, who once said, "The Supreme Court is not a place for solo performers." If this is a time for consensus-building on the Court, and I believe it is, Judge Ginsburg will be an able and effective architect of that effort.

It is important to me that Judge Ginsburg came to her views and attitudes by doing, not merely by reading and studying. Despite her enormous ability and academic achievements, she could not get a job with a law firm in the early 1960's because she was a woman and the mother of a small child. Having experienced discrimination, she devoted the next 20 years of her career to fighting it and making this country a better place for our wives, our mothers, our sisters, and our daughters. She herself argued and won many of the women's rights cases before the Supreme Court in the 1970's. Many admirers of her work say that she is to the women's movement what former Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall was to the movement for the rights of African-Americans. I can think of no greater compliment to bestow on an American lawyer. And she has done all of this and a lot of other things as well by raising a family with her husband, Marty, whom she married 39 years ago as a very young woman. Together they had two children, Jane and James, and they now have two grandchildren. Hers is a remarkable record of distinction and achievement, both professional and personal.

During the selection process, we reviewed the qualifications of more than 40 potential nominees. It was a long, exhaustive search. And during that time we identified several wonderful Americans whom I think could be outstanding nominees to the Supreme Court in the future. Among the best were the Secretary of the Inte-

rior, Bruce Babbitt, whose strong legal background as Arizona's attorney general and recent work balancing the competing interests of environmentalists and others in the very difficult issues affecting the American West made him a highly qualified candidate for the Court. And I had the unusual experience, something unique to me, of being flooded with calls all across America from Babbitt admirers who pleaded with me not to put him on the Court and take him away from the Interior Department. I also carefully considered the chief judge of the first circuit, Judge Stephen Breyer of Boston, a man whose character, confidence, and legal scholarship impressed me very greatly. I believe he has a very major role to play in public life. I believe he is superbly qualified to be on the Court. And I think either one of these candidates, as well as the handful of others whom I closely considered, may well find themselves in that position someday in the future.

Let me say in closing that Ruth Bader Ginsburg cannot be called a liberal or a conservative; she has proved herself too thoughtful for such labels. As she herself put it in one of her articles, and I quote, "The greatest figures of the American judiciary have been independent thinking individuals with open but not empty minds; individuals willing to listen and to learn. They have exhibited a readiness to reexamine their own premises, liberal or conservative, as thoroughly as those of others." That, I believe,

describes Judge Ginsburg. And those, I too believe, are the qualities of a great Justice.

If, as I believe, the measure of a person's values can best be measured by examining the life the person lives, then Judge Ginsburg's values are the very ones that represent the best in America. I am proud to nominate this path-breaking attorney, advocate, and judge to be the 107th Justice to the United States Supreme Court.

[At this point, Judge Ginsburg expressed her appreciation to the President and discussed her background and her view of the position.]

Q. The withdrawal of the Guinier nomination, sir, and your apparent focus on Judge Breyer and your turn, late, it seems, to Judge Ginsburg may have created an impression, perhaps unfair, of a certain zig-zag quality in the decision-making process here. I wonder, sir, if you could kind of walk us through it and perhaps disabuse us of any notion we might have along those lines. Thank you.

The President. I have long since given up the thought that I could disabuse some of you of turning any substantive decision into anything but political process. How you could ask a question like that after the statement she just made is beyond me.

Goodbye. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:07 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks on the President's Council on Sustainable Development

June 14, 1993

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for being here. It has been a year since the Earth summit in Rio. I think you might be interested to know that a year ago at the Earth summit in Rio I placed a call to Senator Al Gore of Tennessee to get a report on the goings-on there from him and from Senator Wirth of Colorado and to begin the process by which we came together as a team. Not very long after that I asked Al Gore to join the Democratic ticket, and the rest was history.

I don't want to make any bones about it. When we had our first very long meeting, one

thing that then-Senator Gore said was that he wanted to be part of a ticket that, if elected, could put the environment back on the front burner in American public life and do it in a way that would be good for the economy, not bad for the economy, do it in a way that would bring the American people together, not divide them. All the policy positions that the Vice President just announced that we have taken to change the direction of the previous administrations and, more importantly, to go beyond politics to embrace a new philosophy of uniting our goals of preserving the environment