

RETIREMENT OF JUSTICE WHITE

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

MONDAY, JUNE 28, 1993

Present: CHIEF JUSTICE REHNQUIST, JUSTICE WHITE, JUSTICE BLACKMUN, JUSTICE STEVENS, JUSTICE O'CONNOR, JUSTICE SCALIA, JUSTICE KENNEDY, JUSTICE SOUTER, and JUSTICE THOMAS.

THE CHIEF JUSTICE said:

As most of you know, our esteemed colleague, Justice White, is retiring from this bench and his colleagues have sent him this letter on this occasion which I will now read.

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES,
CHAMBERS OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE,
Washington, D. C., June 23, 1993.

Dear Byron:

Your decision to retire from the Court has brought to each of us a profound sense of sadness. You came here more than thirty-one years ago, and have played a pivotal part in the deliberations and decisions of this institution with three different Chief Justices during the administration of eight different Presidents.

You brought to the Court a reputation for excellence in many fields—scholar-athlete, combat intelligence officer in the South Pacific during World War II, successful private lawyer, Deputy Attorney General. Your long service here has greatly enhanced that reputation, as you have exhibited

a firm resolve not to be classified in any one doctrinal pigeon-hole. The important opinions which you have authored for the Court in virtually every field of law with which we deal will remain as a testament to your years of service here.

Every cloud, they say, has a silver lining; for us the silver lining to your retirement is that you leave in good health, and plan to remain here in the Washington area, at least for the time being. You will be missed at our Conferences, but we will continue to enjoy your friendship which means so much to each of us.

Affectionately,

WILLIAM H. REHNQUIST
HARRY A. BLACKMUN
JOHN PAUL STEVENS
SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR
ANTONIN SCALIA
ANTHONY M. KENNEDY
DAVID H. SOUTER
CLARENCE THOMAS

JUSTICE WHITE replied as follows:

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
CHAMBERS OF JUSTICE BYRON R. WHITE (*Retired*),
Washington, D. C., June 28, 1993.

Dear Colleagues,

I am grateful for your very generous letter on the occasion of my retirement, which is now upon me. There is no doubt that I shall miss the Court very much, primarily because I shall no longer have the pleasure and excitement of working in a small group of nine Justices, all of whom day after day and year after year are together dealing with the same issues and cases in an attempt to arrive at satisfactory decisions. I have sat with 20 Justices in my time here and have had great respect for the ability and integrity of each of them. I have treasured their friendship. Of course, Jus-

tices differ with one another on all sorts of issues, but we have not held grudges and have gotten along remarkably well. That is how it should be.

This Court is a very small organization for the freight it carries, and its work is made possible only by the competent and dedicated service of those who work here. I shall always be grateful to all of them for their willing, friendly and reliable help down through the years.

Since I remain a federal judge and will likely sit on Courts of Appeals from time to time, it will be necessary for me to follow the Court's work. No longer will I be able to agree with or dissent from a Court's opinion. Hence, like any other Court of Appeals judge, I hope the Court's mandates will be clear, crisp, and leave those of us below with as little room as possible for disagreement about their meaning.

The Court is a great institution, and I wish it well. It has been good to me.

Cheers,
BYRON