

You have an opportunity to confirm an individual who will be a great Justice, a person who will contribute immensely to the collegiality, intellectual quality, and wisdom of the Court.

I fully expect to criticize Justice Ginsburg's opinions on the Court—after all, that is my professional task. I am confident, however, I will never have reason to doubt her integrity, her judicial temperament, and her analytical abilities. I know that I, like many of my fellow academics, look forward to evaluating the work of a court with Ruth Bader Ginsburg on it.

The CHAIRMAN. Dean Kay.

STATEMENT OF HERMA HILL KAY

Ms. KAY. Thank you, Chairman Biden. I want to say before I start that I do not yield to my colleague, Professor Gunther, in his admiration for our Senator from California, Senator Feinstein. It is a pleasure to see her here today on this committee.

It gives me great pleasure to be here and to participate in your deliberations as you prepare to recommend to the Senate the advice it should give to President Clinton on his nomination of Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the U.S. Supreme Court.

President Clinton's choice of Judge Ginsburg is wise and inspired, sound and practical. In Judge Ginsburg, President Clinton has found a constitutional scholar who knows from her own experience what it means to be excluded despite outstanding credentials solely because of sex. In the early 1970's, she brought that experience—and her flawless logic—to the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court, where she will soon take her seat. In case after case, she hammered home the point that for the law to assign preexisting roles to men and women is limiting to both sexes and is forbidden by the equal protection clause.

It is a point that, 20 years later, many regard as self-evident. But the High Court seemed unable to grasp that point prior to Judge Ginsburg's advocacy, instead taking as its starting position the belief that a legislative distinction drawn on the basis of sex was a rational classification that passed constitutional muster.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg's strategy of written and oral advocacy to help the nine men then sitting on the Supreme Court understand the irrationality of sex-based classification was one of patient instruction. She chose cases, as Judge Hufstедler said, in which the law's unequal treatment of men and women was evident and the consequent need for a broader interpretation of the equal protection clause could be clearly established and readily accepted. The result is that her cases are now constitutional classics: *Reed v. Reed*, 1971: A mother can administer a deceased child's estate as capably as a father. *Frontiero v. Richardson*, 1973: A service-woman's Air Force pay earns the same fringe benefits for her dependent spouse that a serviceman's pay provides for his. *Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld*, 1975: A widowed father is entitled to the same insurance benefits available to a widowed mother to help him care for his infant son after his wife's death. *Califano v. Goldfarb*, 1977: A deceased wife's earned income provides the same survivor's benefits to her widowed husband that a deceased husband's widow would receive.

These are some of the legal propositions that Judge Ginsburg established as an advocate, and she used them to help the Court forge a new understanding of the equal protection of the laws. It

was Ruth Bader Ginsburg's voice, raised in oral argument before the U.S. Supreme Court, that opened new opportunities for the women of this country. She was in the forefront of the creation of the legal precedents that advocates who have followed her have used, time and time again, to build a strong edifice against discrimination that now protects many groups. She left her enduring mark on the Constitution even before taking her place on the Supreme Court.

I speak today not only as an academic observer of Judge Ginsburg's works, but also as her co-author and friend. I have had the privilege of working with her on our casebook on "Sex-Based Discrimination," published in 1974. She and I are both among the first 20 full-time women law professors in the country. We continue to serve together on the Council of the American Law Institute. From those vantage points, I can say that hers is a courageous intellect, and that she is as steadfast and loyal a colleague and friend as anyone could wish. Her standards are exacting. She produces the best and most precise work, and she expects the same from others.

As this confirmation process has shown the Nation, she thinks deeply and chooses her words with care. But I can tell you that her compassion is as deep as her mind is brilliant. In Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the President has offered the country a Justice worthy of the title. I urge this committee to recommend that the Senate give its enthusiastic consent to her appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Kay follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HERMA HILL KAY

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