

Judge GINSBURG. And Christine, au pair from Belgium, who has been taking such wonderful care of the children.

Then, on behalf of my cousins who I reckon by the dozen, Stephen Hess.

The CHAIRMAN. Stephen, welcome.

You have quite a family and we welcome you all here today. It is obviously a very proud moment for you, and this is a proud moment for the photographers, because they get to stand and be seen on television as they walk out of the well. [Laughter.]

Thank you all. While they are moving, I want those listening to understand I have not banished them from the hearing. They will recede into the various places for which this room was designed to be able to take their photographs, so they will continue to be able to do their job.

One of our colleagues who has just arrived has a statement, and I will ask him whether or not he would prefer to deliver it before or after the nominee makes her statement.

Senator PRESSLER. I apologize, Mr. Chairman. I was in the Commerce Committee where I am the ranking member. We had an air safety hearing, and I went through a long morning. I will greatly summarize my statement. What do you prefer? What does the chairman prefer?

The CHAIRMAN. That is fine, Senator, you go right ahead, and then we will go to your statement.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR PRESSLER

Senator PRESSLER. Welcome, Judge Ginsburg.

You and I share something in common. This is our first U.S. Supreme Court confirmation hearing. I am very much impressed with your legal background. You are a pioneer in the field of gender discrimination, and your long line of legal victories has secured fundamental rights for both women and men.

As stated in my conversation with you in my office several weeks ago, I am very interested in how you would approach cases of particular interest to those of us living in the West. In my part of the country, many legal controversies arise over how the law of the land is applied to the use of the land. Environmental law, water law, hunting and fishing rights, mineral rights, access to public lands, private property rights, and cases and controversies arising in Indian country—these are everyday issues that affect everyday people living in the West. The Court's treatment of these issues dramatically affects the way of life of the people of the West, including my home State of South Dakota.

I certainly am not looking for your position on these issues. After all, you are not campaigning for an elected office. Nor are you a political appointee. You have been nominated to be a Justice on the highest court in the land.

We on this committee and our colleagues in the Senate are charged with the responsibility to confirm or not confirm you for this high office. Some writers have commented that the Senate is the last opportunity for the people to have a voice in determining who shall sit on the Nation's highest Court.

Supreme Court Justices are appointed for life. Once you are seated on the Court, the American people will have to coexist with Jus-

tice Ginsburg for as long as you choose to stay, or God chooses to keep you there.

Before I cast my vote on your confirmation, I would like to know how familiar you are with the issues I referenced, your inclination to learn more about them, and how you intend to go about deciding cases involving these issues. Indeed, on Indian country issues, I note in the papers that even the State of Connecticut has a dispute over Indian lands and Indian jurisdiction.

Both Indians and non-Indians on or near reservations are eager to resolve some of these issues, and many of them go to the Supreme Court. Through these specific issues, I hope to learn more about your general approach to the basic principles of judging, principles such as fairness and objectivity.

There also are many issues that go to the Supreme Court regarding hunting and fishing rights, such as on the Missouri River. There are cases that go to the Supreme Court about the tribal courts, which are quite different from the U.S. Federal district courts. Indian cases significantly contribute to the work overload of Federal judges in my State.

In the course of the next few days, I hope we can have a dialogue on issues of concern to the people in the West, but not only in the West, but throughout the United States, because everyone is concerned about these issues. And the Supreme Court ends up deciding more of them than Congress, perhaps because Congress is unwilling. Maybe I should criticize our own institution.

In the interest of time, I ask unanimous consent to be able to submit the remainder of my statement for the record. I shall be asking many questions on Indian country jurisdiction.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, it will be entered in the record. I thank you, Senator.

[The prepared statement of Senator Pressler follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR PRESSLER

Welcome, Judge Ginsburg. You and I share something in common—this is our first U.S. Supreme Court confirmation hearing. I look forward to them very much, as I'm sure you do.

Judge Ginsburg, you have a most impressive legal background. You are a pioneer in the field of gender discrimination. Your long line of legal victories has secured fundamental rights for both women and men. Your distinguished place in the annals of American law already is secure.

The volume of your writings is astounding. My staff has filled nearly three dozen large three-ring binders to contain them. In reading your articles and decisions, one receives an education on a wide range of legal subjects. I commend you for the prolific contributions you have made to the law.

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