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INDUCTION PROCEEDINGS
FOR
JUDGE SONIA SOTOMAYOR

United States Court House
500 Pearl Street
Ceremonial Courtroom, 9th Floor
New York, New York 10007

Friday, November 6, 1998
5:00 P.M.

PROCEEDINGS HELD ON THE OCCASION
OF THE INDUCTION OF
HONORABLE SONIA SOTOMAYOR
AS UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE
OF THE
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE SECOND CIRCUIT

PRESENT:

HON. RALPH K. WINTER,
Chief Judge,

HON. WILFRED FEINBERG
HON. AMALYA L. KEARSE
HON. RICHARD J. CARDAMONE
HON. JOHN M. WALKER, JR.
HON. DENNIS JACOBS
HON. PIERRE N. LEVAL
HON. GUIDO CALABRESI
HON. JOSE A. CABRANES
HON. CHESTER J. STRAUB
HON. ROSEMARY S. POOLE
HON. ROBERT D. SACK,
Circuit Judges

1 CHIEF JUDGE WINTER: This special session of the
2 Court is convened for the happy occasion of inducting Judge
3 Sonia Sotomayor as a Judge of the United States Court of
4 Appeals for the Second Circuit.

5 I would like to welcome to this gathering the
6 Senior Senator from New York, Senator Daniel Patrick
7 Moynihan, who has been of such great help to us in
8 overcoming our vacancy problem; Representative Charles
9 Schumer, Senator-elect; Mary Jo White, United States
10 Attorney for the Southern District of New York; Zachary
11 Carter, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of
12 New York; and Robert M. Morgenthau, Judge Sotomayor's first
13 employer (laughter).

14 I would also like to welcome Congressman Jose
15 Serrano, Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez; Fernando Ferrer,
16 Bronx Borough President, Roberto Ramirez, Assemblyman and
17 Bronx Democratic leader; the Honorable Carmen Beauchamp
18 Ciparick, Associate Judge of the New York Court of Appeals,
19 and her husband; State Senator Efrain Gonzalez of the 31st
20 District; and Leonard Joy, Chief of the Federal Legal Aid
21 Society.

22 Sonia has asked me to give a brief description of
23 the Court of which she is about to become a member. The
24 United States Court of Appeals was created in 1891 when
25 Congress established a system of regionally-based Courts of

1 Appeals to provide intermediate review between the District
2 Courts and the Supreme Court. The Second Circuit's
3 jurisdiction includes the states of New York, Connecticut,
4 and Vermont. It is today one of twelve regionally-based
5 Courts of Appeals, and, given the small number of cases that
6 can be heard by the Supreme Court, it is, for most federal
7 litigants in the three states, the final avenue for relief.

8 For most of its history, the Court of Appeals for
9 the Second Circuit was the most important and best-known
10 Circuit Court. This was for two reasons. The first reason
11 was that its jurisdiction included New York City. New York
12 was for the greater part of the century easily the leading
13 commercial and financial center of the nation and the world.
14 Litigation in the federal courts arising out of important
15 commercial or financial transactions thus came our way.
16 Moreover, because New York City was a very important port,
17 the Second Circuit also was responsible for making law in
18 the field of admiralty, a very important area that is
19 exclusively federal law. Finally, although unfortunately,
20 New York City was, before Mary Jo White and Zachary Carter,
21 a headquarters for organized crime (laughter) and later
22 narcotics rings.

23 The second reason for the importance of the
24 Second Circuit was the quality of the judges who served on
25 it. The most famous Court of Appeals judge by far is Judge

1 Learned Hand, who served on this Court from 1924 to 1961.
2 Lawyers, however, will also recognize as significant jurists
3 other members of the Court, including Hand's cousin
4 Augustus, Judge Jerome Frank, Judge Thomas Swan, Judge
5 Charles E. Clark, Judge John Marshall Harlan, who later
6 served on the Supreme Court of the United States, Judge
7 Thurgood Marshall, who needs no further description,
8 although I note parenthetically that I am honored to have
9 been his first law clerk when he came on this Court, and
10 finally, our late colleague, Judge Henry J. Friendly.

11 There are many famous cases that have come to the
12 Court such as the Hiss case, the Rosenbergs, the Smith Act
13 cases in the 1950s, the Gotti case, the Agent Orange cases,
14 litigation by the survivors of passengers of Pan Am Flight
15 103 that was destroyed by a terrorist bomb over Lockerbie,
16 Scotland; and, most recently, the World Trade Center bombing
17 cases, which are now on appeal. These are just well-known
18 cases. Lawyers know, however, that this Court has set
19 important precedents in virtually every aspect of federal
20 law and has a tradition of legal craft in its opinions and
21 currency in its docket, both of which have been put at risk
22 by our recent vacancy crisis, which is just now being eased.
23 No one is more delighted than this Chief Judge that these
24 induction ceremonies are finally happening.

25 Sonia Sotomayor becomes the 60th judge of this

1 court. We are extremely fortunate to have her join us.

2 Judge Sotomayor is superbly qualified to serve as
3 a United States Circuit Judge.

4 Judge Sotomayor is a summa cum laude graduate of
5 Princeton University where she was a member of Phi Beta
6 Kappa. She received her J.D. degree from the Yale Law
7 School where she was an editor of the Yale Law Journal and
8 suffered through a course taught by the present speaker.
9 (Laughter) After law school, she served as an Assistant
10 District Attorney in the New York County District Attorney's
11 Office in New York City. She then entered private practice
12 with Pavia & Harcourt where she became a partner in 1988.
13 In 1992, she became a United States District Judge for the
14 Southern District of New York. In that position she became
15 a household name as the judge who rendered a decision ending
16 the famous baseball strike, a decision that, I might add,
17 was affirmed on appeal. (Laughter and applause) The fact
18 that the author of the appellate decision has not become a
19 household name (laughter) does not embitter me at all
20 (laughter) -- most of the time (laughter).

21 Judge Sotomayor has been a member of the
22 Association of Judges of Hispanic Heritage, of the Puerto
23 Rican Bar Association, of the Hispanic Bar Association, and
24 of the American Bar Association. She has served as a member
25 of the board of directors of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense

1 and Education Fund, the board of directors of the State of
2 New York Mortgage Agency, of the New York City Campaign
3 Public Finance Board, and of the Second Circuit Task Force
4 on Gender, Racial and Ethnic Fairness. Finally, she has
5 also served as an adjunct professor at the New York
6 University School of Law.

7 I welcome the first speaker, Daniel Patrick
8 Moynihan. (Applause)

9 SENATOR MOYNIHAN: May it please the Court, and
10 surely it will do, our eminent Chief Judge is used to an
11 occasional dissent, and I do believe I heard you say that,
12 for much of its history, the Court of Appeals for the Second
13 Circuit of the United States was the most important in the
14 nation. I believe it still is. (Laughter) Is there any
15 evidence to the contrary? If so, Mary Jo White, you can
16 bring it forth. (Laughter)

17 MS. MARY JO WHITE: None at all, none at all.
18 Senator.

19 SENATOR MOYNIHAN: This is a happy day for New
20 York, as we can see from this most extraordinary company.
21 It is a happy day for your friends in the Senate, who were
22 so happy to confirm you as a District Court Judge -- what,
23 just six years ago? But then, as a colleague of mine on the
24 staff of the Finance Committee at the time said, Do you
25 realize that she is the winner of the Pyne prize at

1 Princeton University for the best all-around student? What
2 other qualification could there be? (Laughter)

3 Well, there are many, as she has so ably and
4 amply demonstrated in her time on the District Court. We
5 now have the great joy to see you brought still further, and
6 who knows whence from here. Thank you very much.
7 (Applause)

8 CHIEF JUDGE WINTER: Our next speaker, although
9 not on the program, is the Honorable Charles Schumer.
10 (Applause)

11 MR. SCHUMER: Thank you very much. It is an
12 honor for me to be here in so many ways -- to be before this
13 eminent panel, to be sharing some of the great joy of the
14 Sotomayor family and our great judge, to follow a man I have
15 admired for over thirty years, our Senior Senator from the
16 State of New York, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and to be here
17 with all of you.

18 This is, as the Senator said, just a great day
19 for America. When you sit in this beautiful building, when
20 you see the diversity of the group before us, and you see
21 somebody of such great qualification being elevated to the
22 most eminent appellate court that our federal government
23 has, it just reaffirms one's faith in the greatness of this
24 country and the process. I am honored to be here to share
25 it with all of you. Thank you. (Applause)

1 CHIEF JUDGE WINTER: Our next speaker is
2 Margarita Rosa, who went to college with our inductee and
3 has been her friend ever since. She is a former
4 Commissioner of Human Rights under Governor Cuomo and is
5 currently Executive Director of the Grand Street Settlement.
6 (Applause)

7 MS. MARGARITA ROSA: Thank you, Judge, and good
8 afternoon to everyone.

9 It is an honor to be here on this wonderful
10 occasion, as we celebrate a well-earned milestone in the
11 professional life of someone who is near and dear to us all.

12 Sonia asked me to say a few words in part,
13 because we have known each other personally and
14 professionally for many years.

15 Sonia and I first met when she was a freshman and
16 I was a junior at Princeton University. The year was 1972.
17 Princeton, like most other American colleges and
18 universities, was confronting the challenges posed by a
19 period of social upheaval and social transformation. The
20 status quo was under close and critical scrutiny, social
21 norms were being questioned, and cool heads did not always
22 prevail. It was an exciting, and at times, confusing time
23 to be an undergraduate. Odd though it may seem today, one
24 major cause of concern, and in many instances,
25 consternation, at Princeton at the time was the introduction

1 of coeducation. By that I mean, the admission of women as
2 students into a formerly all-male institution. At Princeton
3 that began in 1969. I entered in 1970, and Sonia in 1972.

4 When I unearthed my Princeton yearbook to prepare
5 for today, I was amused to find that in 1974, discussions of
6 the relative benefits and disadvantages of having women as
7 Princeton students occupied the first twenty-two pages of
8 the Nassau Herald. Many alumni lamented the perceived
9 threat that women posed to Princeton's honored traditions.
10 To quote one observer, "[t]o the alums, the new feminine
11 aspect of Princeton has signaled the end of a glorious past,
12 the ignominious demise of that revered institution,
13 Princeton tradition." Just as women were greeted with a
14 little suspicion, other minorities were greeted with a
15 little ambivalence. Into this milieu entered two innocent
16 and unsuspecting young women - girls, some would say - one
17 from Brooklyn, the other from the Bronx, one from the
18 tenements, the other from the projects.

19 Needless to say, neither Sonia nor I was a
20 typical Princetonian. (Laughter) We were women in a
21 predominantly male school, people of modest means in a
22 school in which many of our classmates were affluent, Roman
23 Catholics in a school where most students were not of that
24 faith, and Puerto Rican New Yorkers in a school considered
25 by many the northernmost school for Southern gentlemen.

1 (Laughter) As you can see, there were reasons why Sonia and
2 I were drawn to each other. (Laughter)

3 Our commonalities notwithstanding, Sonia's
4 initial response to my invitations to join our student group
5 was cautious. I'm sure that we appeared to be a rather
6 ragtag, and perhaps even disreputable, bunch at the time.
7 Sonia had to think it over. Even then, her decision-making
8 was measured and methodical. She was not one to jump to
9 rash decisions or conclusions. Fortunately for us, we
10 succeeded in earning her trust. She joined our ranks and
11 quickly rose to a position of leadership.

12 One of my most lasting impressions of Sonia is of
13 a student whose capacity to apply herself and to work hard
14 exceeded that of anyone I knew. She also possessed the
15 ability to envision a future for herself that surpassed the
16 most ambitious dreams of others. She was able to set a
17 career path early, and stay the course through turbulence
18 and headwinds. She set her sights on excellence and worked
19 tirelessly to reach her goals.

20 When Sonia was a senior and I was at Harvard Law
21 School, I returned to Princeton to see her receive the Pyne
22 prize, which Senator Moynihan mentioned earlier. It was the
23 highest honor given to any undergraduate. It was in
24 recognition of academic excellence and involvement in
25 extracurricular activities and overall contributions to the

1 life of the university. Many of us were in awe of Sonia's
2 accomplishments then, and we remain that way today.

3 I am especially grateful to Sonia for remaining
4 accessible to her friends and to her community. She has
5 hosted young women from my agency, the Grand Street
6 Settlement, in her courtroom and her chambers, introducing
7 them to a side of the judicial system that they never would
8 have seen. She has gotten some of her fellow judges to do
9 the same. The youngsters have had a great time, learned
10 something about the legal profession and returned to their
11 families, and us, inspired.

12 Today, we are all here with Sonia and her family
13 and loved ones, because she invited us to join in
14 celebrating her most recent accomplishment, and a wonderful
15 one it is. On behalf of her Princeton colleagues and
16 friends, I wish our dear friend, the Honorable Sonia
17 Sotomayor, a dazzling future. Sonia, you have our profound
18 respect, our undying support and our deep affection.
19 (Applause)

20 CHIEF JUDGE WINTER: Our next speaker is one of
21 Judge Sotomayor's first law clerks, Xavier Romeu-Matta.

22 MR. XAVIER ROMEU-MATTA: May it please the Court.
23 In preparing these remarks, I thought long and hard about
24 what to say about you, Judge, on this special occasion,
25 before such a distinguished audience. I knew I needed to be

1 careful. I learned from my Washington, D.C. experience that
2 you need to be careful what you say and what you don't say.

3 (Laughter)

4 I thought long and hard about what words to use
5 in the hallowed halls of the Second Circuit, about what
6 sweeping statement, Judge, would sum up the meaning to the
7 bench, to the profession, to the Puerto Rican and Latino
8 community, to our larger community, and frankly, to me, of
9 this long-awaited day when you would take your hard-earned,
10 well-deserved position as the first Puertorriquena ever to
11 sit on a Federal Court of Appeals.

12 I thought, perhaps, that I would recount for
13 everyone the improbable wonder, Judge, and the
14 heart-wrenching victory that constitutes your life. Of how
15 your family left the beautiful island of Puerto Rico, where
16 so many of us have left our heart, in search and in pursuit
17 of a dream of a better life. I thought that I would
18 describe your growing up in the Lower East Side and the
19 Bronx, perhaps not in the comfort of material wealth but,
20 certainly, in the warm and nurturing embrace of loving
21 family and friends. Then I thought that for the
22 one-hundredth time I would indulge myself and I would rattle
23 off all of your professional and academic accomplishments:
24 Princeton, Yale Law, Yale Law Journal, Manhattan District
25 Attorney's Office, partner at Pavia & Harcourt, the first

1 woman of Puerto Rican origin to sit on the federal bench in
2 the continental United States.

3 I debated whether I should share with you, the
4 audience, the long, hard road to your confirmation. The
5 promising nomination to the Court of Appeals in July of
6 1997. The short and vitriolic attacks of those who saw fit
7 to ignore your qualifications, your opinions and your
8 judicial temperament. The unexpected but welcome hearings
9 in September of 1997. The long, agonizing six-month wait
10 for a vote out of the Senate's Judiciary Committee. The
11 struggle to obtain a date for a vote on the Senate floor --
12 the hand-twisting, the countless visits and the late-night
13 calls to friends and supporters, by friends and supporters,
14 from coast to coast and from Maine to Puerto Rico. And
15 then, finally, when hope had all but vanished, at the
16 proverbial eleventh hour, the nerve-racking but exhilarating
17 48 hours that preceded your confirmation just one week short
18 of the October 9 adjournment date.

19 But, as I thought about you, Judge, it occurred
20 to me that, although important and, indeed, exceptional,
21 your professional and academic accomplishments and the
22 trials and tribulations of your life and your confirmation
23 simply failed to capture the Judge Sotomayor that I have
24 come to know -- the more important, the not so public, the
25 real side of you, Judge. Your remarkable personal

1 qualities: your deep caring and love for all that surround
2 you -- qualities that only some of us, the lucky few who
3 have spent time with you, Judge, have had a chance to
4 experience.

5 It is always in the small things, the details,
6 that you see the beauty of your persona. I remember how
7 when I clerked for you a mere walk through the courthouse
8 would turn into a seemingly endless progression of smiles,
9 gestures and conversations with every member of the extended
10 family that constitutes this courthouse. Marshals, court
11 reporters, clerks, judges, practitioners and friends would
12 simply come up to talk to you. What never ceases to amaze
13 me, however, is that the conversations always went beyond
14 mere pleasantries, beyond courthouse business, or shallow
15 observations. The conversations were always heartfelt and
16 immediately showed the genuine, deep and caring
17 relationships that existed between you and all that surround
18 you, Judge.

19 Although she is a no-nonsense judge in the
20 courtroom, and God have mercy on the hapless soul that shows
21 up unprepared -- and that, of course, includes the law
22 clerks (laughter) -- your deep caring is readily apparent
23 even in the midst of trial. I remember many times at trial
24 when you would turn around to the jury and inquire whether
25 everything was all right or you would simply thank the jury

1 for their service. Many a time, I remember, jurors would
2 write letters to chambers thanking you for the unexpectedly
3 wonderful experience they had as jurors with you.

4 But I think, Judge, the beauty of your persona is
5 brightest when a friend or family is in need. I remember
6 one instance when a friend, unannounced, walked into your
7 chambers. Unbeknownst to the friend, you were in the middle
8 of a hectic trial. Professional and family issues had
9 prompted the friend to seek advice from you, as many of us
10 have throughout the years. Theresa -- TB for those who,
11 like me, know her and love her as I do -- remarked that you
12 had barely slept for a number of nights, as you often do,
13 but she also knew that the judge would not forgive her if
14 the friend was not announced. Before the friend could say
15 another word, Judge, you had come into chambers, had
16 instinctively recognized the face of a friend in dire need,
17 and were asking - indeed, insisting - that the friend come
18 into your chambers, only after instructing Theresa that you
19 were not to be bothered. I know the story, Judge, because I
20 was that friend.

21 Judge, it is all these apparently small things
22 that speak to the remarkable personal qualities that we most
23 love and admire about you. These "small details" have not
24 gone unnoticed. Just look around you, Judge. We are all
25 witnesses here to those beautiful details. Your mother

1 Celina, your brother Juan, your family and friends, have
2 seen these qualities all their lives. Your colleagues and
3 the New York community recognize them every day. The Puerto
4 Rican community in the continental United States has felt
5 them time and again, and is immensely proud. Even our
6 community in Puerto Rico, albeit separated by a rather broad
7 ocean, the land of your childhood and summer vacations,
8 recognizes them today.

9 Judge, as you take your rightful place as judge
10 of this Court of Appeals, we want you to know that we are
11 proud of your accomplishments and that we are sure that you
12 will continue to make us proud; we want you to know that
13 because of you, your community here and in Puerto Rico
14 stands a bit taller today. But, most important of all, we
15 want you to know that you are very special to all of us and
16 dear to our hearts, and that your love and caring has made
17 each one of us a better person. We love you, Judge, and we
18 thank you. (Applause)

19 CHIEF JUDGE WINTER: Before I introduce our next
20 speaker, who will also administer the oath, as well as make
21 remarks, I will ask George Lange to read the commission.

22 MR. GEORGE LANGE (Circuit Executive):

23 "William Jefferson Clinton.

24 "President of the United States of America.

25 "To all who shall see these presents, greeting:

1 "Know ye: that reposing special trust and
2 confidence in the Wisdom, Uprightness and Learning of Sonia
3 Sotomayor of New York, I have nominated and, by and with the
4 advice and consent of the Senate, do appoint her United
5 States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, and do
6 authorize and empower her to execute and fulfill the duties
7 of that Office according to the Constitution and Laws of the
8 said United States, and to have and to hold the said Office,
9 with all the powers, privileges and emoluments to the same
10 of right appertaining unto her, the said Sonia Sotomayor,
11 during her good behavior.

12 "In testimony whereof, I have caused these
13 letters to be made patent and the seal of the Department of
14 Justice to be hereunto affixed.

15 "Done in the City of Washington, this 7th day of
16 October, in the year of our Lord -- one thousand nine
17 hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the
18 United States of America, the two hundred and twenty-third."

19 Signed: "William J. Clinton."

20 (Applause)

21 CHIEF JUDGE WINTER: Our next speaker has been a
22 friend and mentor of Judge Sotomayor since her first year in
23 law school -- United States Circuit Judge Jose Cabranes.

24 (Applause)

25

1 JUDGE CABRANES: Members of the Court, Senator
2 Moynihan, Senator-elect Schumer, Congressman Serrano,
3 Representative Velazquez, Borough President Ferrer,
4 Assemblyman Ramirez, distinguished guests and friends all:

5 This is a wonderful day here in New York.

6 It is wonderful for the woman whom we are
7 gathered to honor.

8 It is wonderful for the Court which welcomes her.

9 And it is wonderful for the community of which
10 she is a part and the community which she will serve.

11 There is in Spanish a nice word for what we all
12 have in mind today -- enhorabuena. It is translated into
13 English as (merely) "congratulations," but the Spanish has a
14 particular, and more nuanced, meaning: The word enhorabuena
15 is a composite of three words that, idiomatically, convey
16 the sense that a landmark event has taken place "at a happy
17 and opportune time."

18 Sonia Sotomayor's arrival here was (as we all
19 know) delayed, but she is with us at last, "at a happy and
20 opportune time" -- a happy and opportune time for her, for
21 our Court, and for our country.

22 I have been accorded the honor of speaking to you
23 on this happy occasion because, in a professional sense, I
24 was "present at the creation" (laughter) professionally. I
25 was there at the beginning of Sonia's luminous legal career,

1 and I have joined in celebrating her many achievements over
2 the years.

3 Sonia has been my friend for more than twenty
4 years, from the moment she entered my office at Yale in
5 early 1976 (several months before she was due to enter Yale
6 Law School), and I, with unaccustomed intuition and good
7 sense, promptly enlisted her as a research assistant on a
8 book I was writing on the history of the American
9 citizenship of our people, the people of Puerto Rico.

10 This was in the spring of Sonia's senior year at
11 Princeton. She came up to New Haven simply to accompany
12 another Princeton student who was to meet with me to discuss
13 a paper he was writing on Puerto Rico's political history.
14 (I had recently become Yale's general counsel, but before
15 then I had served as counsel to the Governor of Puerto Rico
16 and I was supposed to know something about the island's
17 constitutional development).

18 Sonia had simply come along for the ride. But I
19 immediately realized that she was the New York Puerto Rican
20 undergraduate of whom I had been informed some weeks earlier
21 by a friend on the Princeton faculty, who had told me that
22 this fellow neorican (for the uninitiated, neorican is a New
23 York Puerto Rican) (laughter) was someone I simply had to
24 meet.

25 And so it happened that the scheduled interview

1 on Puerto Rico with Sonia's classmate turned out to be
2 mostly a conversation with Sonia - and about how she and I
3 might work together on this history project I had begun.

4 We remained close friends and collaborators
5 throughout her time at Yale, and after her graduation, I
6 recruited her at a young age for the board of directors of
7 the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund.

8 My memories of Sonia as a student at Yale and
9 thereafter are vivid, and they are completely consistent
10 with the person we know today, and consistent with
11 recollections of other friends from high school, Princeton,
12 Yale, the New York District Attorney's Office and the law
13 firm of Pavia & Harcourt.

14 We all have recognized in Sonia the traits of
15 mind and character that we generally associate with
16 first-rank lawyers and judges. She combines academic
17 accomplishment, personal integrity, and judgment with an
18 understanding of the world as it is.

19 Ken Moy, Sonia's friend at Cardinal Spellman High
20 School in the North Bronx, recalls an analytical mind that
21 "was good at constructing and deconstructing arguments," and
22 a debater who in fifteen minutes could prepare a
23 well-delivered seven-minute speech on virtually any subject.
24 Even in high school, according to Ken, Sonia always applied
25 to a problem "her sense of how things really worked and how

1 people really behaved."

2 Ken, who preceded Sonia to Princeton, spent a
3 good part of his Spellman High School years in the kitchen
4 of the Sotomayor apartment in Co-Op City, and he remembers
5 fondly Sonia's mother - always preparing meals for Sonia's
6 assembled friends, and never sitting (this appears to be a
7 characteristic of Celina Sotomayor, of never sitting) - and
8 the teenaged Sonia "presiding" at the kitchen table,
9 offering advice on a wide range of subjects to friends and
10 members of the extended family.

11 Ken - who is with us today, from California -
12 says that even as a teenager Sonia had the personal
13 attributes of a leader, and of a judge in particular. Even
14 then, he says, Sonia had the bearing of a judge. Even then
15 Ken knew that she "wanted to be a judge."

16 Felix Lopez, Sonia's classmate and friend at Yale
17 Law School and a fellow neorican, who is also here with us
18 today, likewise recognized the traits observed by Ken Moy
19 and by me and others, and he too remembers the harbingers of
20 future judicial greatness. Felix recalls one particularly
21 notable display of Sonia's judicial temperament during law
22 school. At the time, Felix and another classmate, Drew
23 Ryce, were having trouble running regularly scheduled
24 graduate student parties at a campus pub known as the Gypsy
25 Bar. Their troubles came mostly from the continuing efforts

1 of local New Haven toughs to "crash" the parties.

2 Felix Lopez, as some of you may know, is a tall
3 and husky product of East Harlem, of the old (and famously
4 rough) Machine and Metal Trades High School and of the U.S.
5 Army in Vietnam. Drew Ryce is half Mohawk Indian and he is
6 a product of the famous (or infamous) Robert Taylor Houses
7 in Chicago. Two fellows, in sum, who could be expected to
8 know precisely how to cope with this sort of difficult urban
9 problem. (Laughter)

10 And indeed they did know how to deal with this
11 difficult urban problem: they simply asked their friend
12 Sonia Sotomayor to handle the front door. (Laughter and
13 applause)

14 And handle it she did. According to Felix Lopez,
15 Sonia - and only Sonia - could evenhandedly and courteously
16 screen the tumultuous crowd, and turn back the local toughs
17 without ever getting excited and without ever so much as
18 antagonizing any of them.

19 Even then, Felix says, he knew that our friend
20 Sonia was destined for big things.

21 The District Attorney of New York County, Robert
22 Morgenthau, Sonia's first boss after law school, has
23 memories of her that are also quite similar to mine.
24 Recalling Sonia as prosecutor in his office, Bob remembers,
25 quite apart from her great intelligence and talent, Sonia's

1 strength of character. In the face of judges who were
2 preoccupied with their productivity and the need to speedily
3 dispose of pending cases, and who would try to browbeat
4 prosecutors into accepting pleas lower than the prosecutor
5 had expected, Sonia was one Assistant DA who could and would
6 stand her ground. "No one could push her around," Bob says,
7 attributing Sonia's memorable tenacity to her upbringing and
8 her life experience.

9 Not surprisingly, Bob Morgenthau also knew, even
10 then, that Sonia was destined for big things.

11 Sonia will bring other important personal
12 qualities to our Court - notably, a capacity for friendship
13 and for leadership by example. Her friend and former law
14 partner, Cynthia Fischer, recalls that, as a result of a
15 strong sense of friendship and loyalty, Sonia arranged for
16 the firm to hire, in all personnel categories, a fairly
17 substantial percentage of her Brooklyn neighborhood.
18 (Laughter) Sonia earned the title of "the Carroll Gardens
19 Employment Service."

20 Perhaps more importantly, Sonia, in Cynthia
21 Fisher's words, "gathered people up and brought them along,"
22 and in particular, she served as an inspiration and an
23 example to the other women at the firm. It should surprise
24 no one that this strong and remarkable woman has an equally
25 strong and equally remarkable family. Her mother and father

1 came to the continental United States from Puerto Rico
2 during the Second World War. Her parents came here, in the
3 words of the Bard, "bearing their birthrights proudly on
4 their backs, to make a hazard of new fortunes here."

5 Like other Puerto Rican migrants to New York, the
6 Sotomayor family never fully separated from their ancestral
7 land, and their large extended family here and in Puerto
8 Rico was a constant source of strength and support to Sonia
9 and to her younger brother, Juan. Many of those family
10 members from Puerto Rico and from the New York Puerto Rican
11 community are here with us today, and some from the island
12 do not speak English. Sonia's debt to them is incalculable
13 and heartfelt. Perhaps because Sonia would be emotionally
14 overcome if she were to recognize them herself, she has
15 asked me to offer them a few words of welcome in Spanish.
16 So, with the indulgence of those who do not speak Spanish, I
17 would pause briefly to address them:

18 He pedido la venia a los angloparlantes para
19 darles la bienvenida en espanol a todos los familiares
20 boricuas de Sonia Sotomayor. As que, en nombre de Sonia,
21 Celina, Juan y sus amigos, les extiende una calurosa
22 bienvenida a esta ceremonia tan gloriosa, para expresarles
23 el agradecimiento y el afecto, muy en particular, el de
24 Sonia, a los familiares aqui reunidos: Tito, Minita, Evita,
25 Sauro, Papo y Milly. Y las t as Sotomayor de Nueva York:

1 Gloria y Carmen Lydia.

2 (These are wonderful Puerto Rican nicknames. You
3 can't believe how wonderful they are.) (Laughter)

4 Tambien quisiera evocar en este momento a
5 aquellos que lamentablemente ya no se encuentran fisicamente
6 entre nosotros, muy en particular a su papa, Juan Luis
7 Sotomayor, a su abuela Mercedes, y a Titi Agrora y a Tio
8 Mayo, y a los primos Nelson y Tony.

9 Nunca se olvida Sonia, que fue durante su ninez
10 que Evita conocio y se hizo novia de su futuro marido.
11 Sonia esta ademas convencida de que cuidarla a ella de nina
12 no fue sino un buen pretexto de Evita para escaparse del
13 chaperonaje de su muy puertorriquena mama.

14 Sonia's mother Celina -- who, of course, is with
15 us -- is a nurse who became the principal breadwinner in the
16 family following the untimely death of Sonia's father, Juan
17 Luis, in 1963, when Sonia was 9 years of age and her brother
18 Juan was 6. Celina was the force that made the Sotomayor
19 family whole. Sonia's brother, Dr. Juan Sotomayor, an
20 allergist and pulmonary specialist in Syracuse, New York,
21 and her mother, who now lives in retirement in Florida,
22 stand with Sonia today as exemplars of a life of struggle
23 and achievement - a life that is a source of pride to their
24 extended family, to their friends and to their community.
25 Today we join them in honoring their daughter and sister,

1 but also in honoring them.

2 It is right that we say to them, and to
3 ourselves: Enhorabuena. Enhorabuena. Enhorabuena.

4 Thank you. (Applause)

5 I will now administer the oath. Will you raise
6 your right hand, please, and repeat after me:

7 I, Sonia Sotomayor --

8 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: I, Sonia Sotomayor --

9 JUDGE CABRANES: -- do solemnly swear --

10 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- do solemnly swear --

11 JUDGE CABRANES: -- that I will administer

12 justice --

13 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- that I will administer

14 justice --

15 JUDGE CABRANES: -- without respect to persons --

16 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- without respect to

17 persons --

18 JUDGE CABRANES: -- and do equal right --

19 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- and do equal right --

20 JUDGE CABRANES: -- to the poor and to the

21 rich --

22 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- to the poor and to the

23 rich --

24 JUDGE CABRANES: -- and that I will faithfully

25 and impartially discharge and perform --

1 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- and that I will faithfully
2 and impartially discharge and perform --
3 JUDGE CABRANES: -- all the duties incumbent upon
4 me --
5 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- all the duties incumbent
6 upon me --
7 JUDGE CABRANES: -- as a United States Circuit
8 Judge --
9 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- as a United States Circuit
10 Judge --
11 JUDGE CABRANES: -- under the Constitution and
12 Laws of the United States --
13 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- under the Constitution and
14 Laws of the United States --
15 JUDGE CABRANES: -- and that I will support and
16 defend --
17 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- and that I will support and
18 defend --
19 JUDGE CABRANES: -- the Constitution of the
20 United States --
21 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- the Constitution of the
22 United States --
23 JUDGE CABRANES: -- against all enemies foreign
24 and domestic --
25 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- against all enemies foreign

1 and domestic --

2 JUDGE CABRANES: -- and that I will bear true
3 faith and allegiance to the same --

4 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- and that I will bear true
5 faith and allegiance to the same --

6 JUDGE CABRANES: -- and that I take this
7 obligation freely --

8 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- and that I take this
9 obligation freely --

10 JUDGE CABRANES: -- without any mental
11 reservation or purpose of evasion; --

12 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- without any mental
13 reservation or purpose of evasion; --

14 JUDGE CABRANES: -- and that I will well and
15 faithfully discharge --

16 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- and that I will well and
17 faithfully discharge --

18 JUDGE CABRANES: -- the duties of the office --

19 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- the duties of the office --

20 JUDGE CABRANES: -- upon which I am about to

21 enter.

22 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: -- upon which I am about to

23 enter.

24 JUDGE CABRANES: So help me God.

25 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: So help me God.

1 JUDGE CABRANES: Congratulations.

2 (Applause)

3 CHIEF JUDGE WINTER: Celina Sotomayor and Peter
4 White will assist with the robes for Judge Sotomayor.

5 (Applause)

6 CHIEF JUDGE WINTER: Now we will hear from Judge
7 Sotomayor. (Applause)

8 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: Judge Pooler, this is the only
9 time I will ever break a judicial confidence. I was in the
10 jury box next to Judge Pooler when she came up to give her
11 induction speech, and I heard her very softly whisper,
12 "Wow!" Mine is not so soft. I say "Wow!" loudly.

13 During the past several months, many newspaper
14 articles have described me as coming from humble beginnings.
15 That description is woefully misleading. I have never
16 perceived myself as poor because I have been rich in the
17 most important things in life. I have had the love,
18 affection and support of family, friends, and sometimes even
19 strangers. Almost every person in this huge room has
20 influenced my life in an important and meaningful way. To
21 everyone here: thank you for making me the richest person
22 in the world and for sharing this very magical day with me.

23 Another aspect of my life that the newspapers
24 have failed to appreciate is that despite economic hardship,
25 it was not so hard for me to succeed because I had the

1 example and guidance of a truly remarkable woman, my mother.
2 (Applause) You had better stop or she is going to cry all
3 night. (Laughter) My mother is so humble and unassuming
4 that she does not perceive herself as a special person in
5 any sense, and she speaks about the burdens in her life in
6 fragments and only sparingly. A close friend of mine once
7 remarked, however, that the more interesting part of my life
8 is really the story of my mother's life.

9 My friend was right. By leaving my mother's
10 story untold, and by focusing on me, the newspapers and my
11 friends here have failed to publish the real story of
12 lasting importance. Because not even my brother -- the
13 little runt whom I once pushed around as a kid (laughter),
14 and, boy, did I beat you up, but who has now become a caring
15 and accomplished doctor, of whom I am enormously proud --
16 because not even he knows the whole story of my mother's
17 life, I thought that today would be the perfect day to tell
18 everyone here, including my sister-in-law Tracey, my niece
19 Kiley, and the two boys who left, my precious nephews, Corey
20 and Conner -- they wanted to go to F A O Schwarz, by the way
21 (laughter) -- I wanted to tell everyone about my mother.
22 The story has never been told. It is a little bit long. I
23 ask for your patience, because it is truly the most
24 interesting story I know.

25 My mother, Celina Baez, was born in 1927 in

1 Lajas, Puerto Rico, a then tiny agricultural community in
2 the western part of the island. Unlike today, the Puerto
3 Rico of my mother's childhood was completely undeveloped,
4 and was vastly poorer than any state of the Union. The per
5 capita income of the island at that time was \$200 a year,
6 almost four times less than that of the Union's poorest
7 state. Unemployment was chronic and vacillated between 33
8 and 50 percent. The island's literacy rate was only 39
9 percent, and while over 50 percent of the population was
10 infected with tuberculosis, malaria and hookworms, only 2 of
11 the islands 77 districts had doctors.

12 To top all this off, the worst hurricane of that
13 part of the century hit Puerto Rico in 1928, only a year
14 after my mother's birth. For those of you who do not know,
15 until that hurricane, Puerto Rico produced the most
16 sought-after coffee bean in the world, the coffee of the
17 Kings and Queens of Europe. The 1928 hurricane, however,
18 destroyed that industry, which has never again retained its
19 same vitality.

20 In the face of these economic, medical, and
21 social problems, it should come as little surprise that my
22 mother's mother -- my grandmother -- was never able to
23 recover her health after my mother's birth. My grandmother
24 was bedridden from the day my mother was born. When my
25 mother was only nine, my grandmother died, and very soon

1 after her death, my grandfather abandoned my mother.

2 Fortunately, someone who is not with us but who I
3 adored, my aunt, Titi Aurora, and my uncle, Tio Mayo, who is
4 also not with us, took my mother under their protective
5 wings. In a context of poverty that no child in this room
6 will ever have to experience or know, a child was raised by
7 slightly older children, as my aunt and uncle helped my
8 mother survive in the even more depression-blighted Puerto
9 Rico of the thirties.

10 Having grown up in a home filled with poverty and
11 illness, my mother has shared with me very few happy
12 childhood memories. The only happiness she has related
13 involved her limited schooling. Although my mother had no
14 money for books or pencils, she found a way around these
15 problems by memorizing her school lessons. Each day, she
16 would run home after school to spend an hour among the trees
17 behind her home. There, she would line up her towering
18 friends in her imagination and use a stick as a pointer to
19 teach the trees the lessons she had learned for that day.
20 This was her one hour of happiness before she went into the
21 house to work.

22 At seventeen, however, my mother found a way out
23 of her devastating poverty. Like countless other Americans
24 and Puerto Ricans, she joined the Army. Percentagewise,
25 more Puerto Ricans have served and died in American wars as

1 soldiers than Americans from any one state. In an act of
2 courage and survival, my mother, alone and with no family
3 ties to the States, became a WAC - a member of the Women's
4 Army Corps - and was shipped to Georgia for her training.

5 I can only imagine the culture shock she must
6 have felt (laughter) as a youth, somewhere between childhood
7 and womanhood, trying to work in the South with a
8 Spanish-only grammar school education. She has told me that
9 the first time she picked up a telephone and received a call
10 from her sergeant, she thought she had to hang up the
11 receiver to find him. You can imagine the dismay of the
12 sergeant when he arrived only to find a dial tone.

13 During this period, my mother met my father. My
14 father and his family had also emigrated to the States
15 during the war. Shortly after my mother was discharged from
16 the Army, she married my father, and during those early
17 years, my Dad worked in a tool-and-die factory while my
18 mother went to James Monroe High School in the Bronx to
19 obtain her GED. With this degree in hand, my mother found a
20 job as a telephone operator at Prospect Hospital, a small
21 private hospital in the South Bronx, which would become her
22 home for the next 35 years.

23 At that hospital, my mother was always a tireless
24 and energetic worker, and the owner soon recognized her
25 skills and encouraged her to get a practical nurse's

1 license. Shortly after my birth, my mother did just that,
2 and by the time my brother was born, she was working on the
3 hospital floors and was one of the most respected nurses in
4 the hospital.

5 Unfortunately, as you heard, my Dad died at the
6 age of 42, in part from the heart complications that had
7 kept him out of the Army during the war. My mother was left
8 alone, with two very young children and no savings. My
9 mother was then forced to devote even more of her time to
10 work.

11 During most of my childhood, my mother worked six
12 days a week. She struggled to put my brother and me through
13 Catholic school because she believed - as does our current
14 Mayor and others - that it plays a vital role in the
15 education of our City's poor. For my mother, education has
16 always been the top priority in our lives.

17 It was because of her that we were the only kids
18 I knew in the housing projects to have an Encyclopaedia
19 Britannica. (Laughter) Do you know what it is like to open
20 up that wonderful book and stare at those pictures? My
21 brother and I plagiarized many a school report (laughter)
22 from those books but I can remember the enormous financial
23 burden that purchase placed on my mother.

24 In my junior year of high school, my mother sat
25 our family down to talk about the future. She knew that we

1 would leave home in only a few years and that my father's
2 Social Security benefits would end shortly. She asked us
3 whether we could make the sacrifice of her going to college
4 so that she could become a registered nurse. My mother had
5 been watching the pay and prestige difference between
6 practical and registered nurses growing with each passing
7 year. She knew that as a registered nurse she could survive
8 without depending on us, and she wanted to give us the
9 freedom to pursue our own lives.

10 It was no sacrifice at all for my brother and me
11 to help my Mom go to school. Although we worked, she also
12 worked - every Saturday and every Sunday - and she also took
13 out loans to help in the shorter term.

14 To this day, I can remember how devoted she was
15 to getting her degree. My Mom was like no student I knew.
16 She got home from school or work and literally immersed
17 herself in her studies, working until midnight or beyond,
18 only to get up again before all of us. She was a straight-A
19 student who took the nursing test and passed all five parts
20 on her very first try. With an example like that, none of
21 you have to wonder why my brother and I had no choice but to
22 do well in school. (Laughter)

23 After passing her nursing boards, my Mom returned
24 to Prospect Hospital. Within two years she became the
25 hospital's emergency room supervisor, a position she held

1 until the hospital closed. My mother then worked in a
2 methadone clinic in the South Bronx until her retirement six
3 years ago. Two years before that she was finally blessed
4 with her first personal happiness. She met the man, Omar
5 Lopez, who will soon become her husband. (Applause) Omar
6 has provided Mommy with the love and companionship that had
7 been missing so long from her life. Omar, I love you, and I
8 am very grateful for the happiness you have brought my
9 mother.

10 So far, I have only focused on my mother's
11 background and professional accomplishments, but the more
12 important part of her story is her beauty as a human being.
13 My mother is truly the most generous, giving person I have
14 ever known. My mother gives unselfishly, giving what she
15 cannot spare, and always without expecting anything in
16 return. I cannot name all of the people who have relied
17 upon my mother to come to their homes without pay to give
18 them shots, to change their dressings, to incubate them, or
19 simply to bathe them during their illnesses.

20 I remember that once, while she lived in Co-Op
21 City, my mother declined to visit me during a college affair
22 at Princeton because an older gentleman in our building was
23 at his deathbed. Although he was a complete stranger to our
24 family, he needed someone to give him his daily medications.
25 He had heard about my mother through others, and because he

1 had no one else in his life to care for him, he knocked on
2 our door and asked my mother for help. My mother would not
3 leave him in his dying days, not even for a weekend with me.
4 And I know how much she loves me. (Laughter) Similarly, on
5 the day of my confirmation to the Second Circuit, my brother
6 and I, starting at 9 o'clock in the morning, called all day
7 trying to find my mother to tell her the news. She didn't
8 get home until 5 o'clock that night. You can imagine how
9 exasperated I was. As it turned out, she had spent most of
10 the day taking a neighbor to a doctor's visit, and so she
11 was nowhere to be found.

12 Many of my friends here know that there have been
13 plenty of times when my mother has driven me crazy.
14 (Laughter) I am, however, a smaller person for every time I
15 have gotten short or frustrated with her. My mother has
16 always generously forgiven me. I hope she does so because
17 she knows how deeply I love her. Everything I am,
18 everything I have accomplished or can hope to accomplish, is
19 so much a product of my mother's many gifts to me. Mommy, I
20 will measure myself successful in life only if I am half the
21 woman that you are. (Applause) Thank you, Mommy, for all I
22 am.

23 I've made her a wreck for the whole night.

24 (Laughter)

25 I must say, however, that in the most important

1 things, my life has been privileged all the way around.
2 Just as I have had a wonderful role-model in my mother, I
3 have also been blessed with the support of an extensive
4 network of family and friends. You have been told of my
5 choir in heaven, my grandmom Mercedes, my father, my
6 cousins, my aunts and uncles. Here today, however, there
7 are my two surviving aunts, Titi Gloria and Titi Carmen, and
8 all of my first-generation cousins from New York and Puerto
9 Rico, and many of their second-generation children. In this
10 room are also friends whose entire families have adopted me.
11 I name just a few of them to give you the flavor of what I
12 am talking about, and I name them only in the order that
13 they came into my life.

14 My mother's dearest friend, Ana, is here with her
15 daughter, Chique. Ana is the one who baby-sat me as a child
16 and the one my mother trusted to tell me of my father's
17 death. My high school friends, Marguerite and Tom Butler,
18 and Marguerite's mother, Margaret, are all here with my
19 wonderful godchild Tom and his brother John. Margaret made
20 sure I ate well during my very-low budget three years of law
21 school by sending me the contents of her freezer every three
22 months. (Laughter) Before Peter, Marguerite and Tom moved
23 me out of and settled me into every home I have ever had
24 since I moved into the city. You don't know how hard that
25 is.

1 You have already heard about my other high school
2 friend, Ken Moy, and from my college friend, Margarita Rosa,
3 and about my law school friends, Drew Ryce and Felix Lopez.
4 All of their families are integral parts of my life. You
5 also know about the longstanding ties I made with Jose
6 Cabranes while at law school.

7 After law school, on my very first day at the
8 DA's office, I met Nancy Gray, then Nancy Gold. Within
9 three weeks of our being at the office, Nancy heard I was on
10 trial and called to offer me her apartment so I did not have
11 to make the two-hour commute back home to Princeton while
12 the jury deliberated late at night. Nancy didn't know when
13 she made that first offer how much advantage I would take of
14 it. I had a lot of trials when I was in Bob Morgenthau's
15 office.

16 During my second month at the DA's office, I met
17 Dawn Cardi. She tried her very first case against me as a
18 Legal Aid attorney, and I tried only my second case against
19 her. For years, her kids Vanessa, Zachary, and Kyle would
20 ask us who won. I am not going to tell you either.
21 (Laughter) We told them we both won because we became
22 friends. Every night when I came home late from work during
23 the ten years I lived in Brooklyn, I went to visit Dawn to
24 recap our days and would eat at a table setting left warm
25 for me by Dawn's husband, Ken.

1 While at the DA's office, I met my Fire Island
2 family and my friend Mark Serlen, who together gave me three
3 wonderful summers, and a whole set of joyful memories.

4 After leaving the DA's office, I went to Pavia &
5 Harcourt, to be befriended by the most wonderful clients in
6 the world. I have told you I had families all about me. To
7 this day, Peter and I spend Passover with Elaine Litwer and
8 her family, all of whom are back there.

9 At Pavia, I also met Alessandro and Fe Saracino
10 of the Fendi family, who along with their parents have
11 introduced me to the beauty of the international world.
12 Every day for five years I spoke to Marta Fontanesi, Fendi's
13 legal representative. We formed a bond that is so special
14 that she has come from Italy to be here today. Her husband
15 Daniel Valebrega and his parents, who could not be here,
16 have not only given us friendship but they gave Peter and me
17 the opportunity to buy our current home in the Village.

18 I was invited to travel to Israel when I was at
19 Pavia, with a group of Hispanic leaders, including Betty
20 Baca and Alex Rodriguez, and led by Debbie Berger. On this
21 trip I also met Debbie's husband Paul, and was introduced to
22 the wonder of Israel and a group of lifelong friends. Just
23 last year, we all went back to Israel to celebrate our
24 tenth-year visit and anniversary, and we are already
25 planning our next trip together.

1 I get lucky finding friends even when there is no
2 reason to think that I should. My last year at Pavia I
3 found Marta Cortes, a dentist. I only went to her because
4 she was around the corner. Marta introduced me to her
5 husband David, and I am now the proud godmother of their
6 son, Davie, my youngest godchild. I also spend innumerable
7 weekends at the family barbecue held at the home of Marta's
8 parents, Alejandro and Blanca. I am their fifth daughter.

9 In a moment, I will talk more about my extensive
10 District Court family. They have a chapter all by
11 themselves. However, Judge Leo Glasser of the Eastern
12 District and his lovely wife Grace, whom I met through their
13 son David, a colleague from Pavia, are here. David and his
14 family did everything possible to make me feel at home when
15 I first joined the bench. David and his wife, Karla, have
16 brought their children, Joshua, Nate and Julieanne, today to
17 celebrate their Sabbath with me.

18 As you can see, there is a legion of people who
19 have become family to me, and there are many more whom I
20 would like to thank individually.

21 If I went on, however, I fear I would try the
22 patience even of those receiving the thanks. I have
23 mentioned just a few of my many friends in order to give you
24 a taste of the extensive support and acts of kindness that I
25 have received during my life. To all of my treasured

1 friends in this room, whether or not I have named you, I
2 know how important you are in my life and I hope you know
3 how much I prize you.

4 Just as I have been lucky with my family and
5 friends, I have been as fortunate in my professional life.
6 I was born under a star, and I tell people that throughout
7 my entire life I have had the best set of guardian angels in
8 the world. During my first job after law school, I had the
9 pleasure of working with Robert M. Morgenthau, one of the
10 finest district attorneys in the country. Mary Jo, you and
11 Zach are really great, but you can't beat that man.

12 (Laughter)

13 MS. MARY JO WHITE: We won't try.

14 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: Bob, who to me will simply be
15 "the boss," gave me four and a half of the most intense, but
16 also the most rewarding, years of my professional life. His
17 commitment to legal excellence, exercised with compassion
18 and fairness and with an unwavering commitment to public
19 service, left a very deep impression on me. Boss, I thank
20 you for showing me how to integrate these many virtues into
21 one passionate vocation.

22 When I left the DA's office, I was blessed yet
23 again in joining my former law firm, Pavia & Harcourt.
24 Pavia is filled with wonderfully talented lawyers and
25 genuinely caring human beings. You have already heard about

1 my dear friend and former partner, Cynthia Fischer. Pavia
2 was my home for nearly nine years, and I count many of its
3 partners, associates and staff as some of my closest
4 friends. Pavia gave me unconditional support, encouraging
5 me in my development not only as a lawyer but also in giving
6 me tons of time to volunteer for my many pro bono
7 activities. They ultimately helped me achieve becoming a
8 judge.

9 David Botwinik, who was then the managing
10 litigation partner of the firm and who will always be very
11 dear to me, is the person who walked into my office in
12 January of 1990 and placed on my desk an application to the
13 Judicial Selection Committee of Senator Daniel Patrick
14 Moynihan. For three months, David had been trying to
15 convince me to submit my name to the Senator's Committee. I
16 had resisted. Actually, as he says, I ignored him. I had
17 insisted that I had no chance of ever being selected for the
18 most prestigious and respected federal district court in the
19 nation, the mother court, the Southern District of New York.

20 As was his custom when we disagreed and I ignored
21 him, David simply pulled rank on me and overruled me in my
22 decision not to apply. He took my work away from me for a
23 week and gave me not only my time and my secretary's time,
24 but the time of a paralegal and even his own secretary, so
25 that together we could fill out those very burdensome

1 application forms. David's faith in me has been boundless,
2 and I am eternally grateful for his inspiration.

3 Of course, the result of the faith that David and
4 the firm showed in me is, as the saying goes, "all history
5 now." When David came into my office in January of 1990, he
6 changed my life and helped produce six of its happiest
7 years, my six-year tenure as a District Court judge.
8 Everyone here knows about the reputation of the Southern
9 District of New York. Its incredible stature, which
10 initially frightened me from even applying to its ranks, is
11 born of the work of some of the most talented, skilled and
12 dedicated generations of jurists that this country has ever
13 had.

14 During my time on the bench, I have had the
15 privilege of learning firsthand that my colleagues - some of
16 whom are living legends, like Constance Baker Motley, David
17 Edelstein, Milton Pollack, Whitman Knapp and Mary Johnson
18 Lowe - all continue that legacy every day, and I have been
19 honored to have served with this bench.

20 I cannot even begin to tell you how wonderful my
21 Southern District colleagues were to me these last eighteen
22 months. From Miriam Cedarbaum, who walked into my chambers
23 once a week to ask me how I felt, to Shira Scheindlin, who
24 almost every day sent me an E-mail asking me how I was, to
25 Denise Cote and John Koeltl, who would call me every couple

1 of weeks to make sure we had lunch together, to the
2 countless other judges, including Barbara Jones, who
3 expended her own personal capital for me, that helped me,
4 supported me, and gave me love. I can't tell you what your
5 friendship means to me. I will never be as great as you all
6 are. I just hope I live up to your example.

7 I also cannot name all the numerous organizations
8 and people who have helped me on my long road to this
9 confirmation. Over ten thousand people from across the
10 country sent letters to the Senate on my behalf. Hundreds
11 of lawyers, many of whom are in this room today, not only
12 sent letters but called upon their personal contacts to
13 assist in my confirmation process. An extraordinarily long
14 list of bar associations expended their own resources to
15 send letters and representatives to Washington to meet with
16 various Senators on my behalf.

17 The outpouring of affection and support I
18 received from the legal, women's and Hispanic communities in
19 New York, Puerto Rico and nationally has been, quite
20 frankly, overwhelming. Without this combined effort, this
21 day would never have happened, and though I mention none of
22 you by name, I say to each of you, thank you.

23 There are, however, some people whom I simply
24 must mention. Xavier Romeu-Matta, from whom you just heard,
25 along with David Matta and several other representatives of

1 the Puerto Rican Bar Association, were in the very first
2 group of people to go to Washington to speak to the Senate
3 Judiciary Committee on my behalf. Xavier and David also put
4 together the coalition of bar associations that sent
5 representatives to Washington repeatedly during my
6 eighteen-month process to remind the Senators about my
7 nomination.

8 Six months after I was nominated, Xavier became
9 the Executive Director of the Puerto Rican Federal Affairs
10 Administration. From that position, he secured for my
11 nomination the endorsement of Puerto Rico's Governor, the
12 Honorable Pedro Rosello. The Governor committed all of his
13 office's resources to my confirmation, and his staff, many
14 of whom were then strangers to me, worked tirelessly, under
15 Xavier, to make my confirmation happen. The Governor should
16 be proud of the quality of people who represent him. They
17 bring honor not only to him but to his causes.

18 Thank you, Governor. Thank you to your
19 Washington office, and thank you to David Matta, but a very,
20 very special thank you to Xavier and to his wife,
21 Marguerite, who out of love for me gave up much of the
22 precious limited time she had with Xavier when he visited
23 New York from Washington so Xavier could work on my
24 confirmation. I owe many people a great deal of credit for
25 my recent confirmation, but the parts you played were, quite

1 simply, instrumental.

2 Xavier is, however, only one member of my
3 six-year family of law clerks. If you look out at four rows
4 back there, you would see my law clerks and all of their
5 families. My law clerks form a circle of brilliant,
6 hard-working, and dedicated young lawyers, for whom I have
7 great admiration. I care deeply about the legal profession,
8 and I am delighted to know that my law clerks, who are
9 skilled practitioners of its many arts, are also wonderfully
10 good human beings. When I see such extraordinary young men
11 and women joining our legal ranks, it makes me hopeful about
12 the future and the quality of our profession. To my family
13 of law clerks, I thank you for helping me achieve all that I
14 have as a judge, and for continuing to inspire me as a human
15 being.

16 I am also grateful to Susan Scognamillo and John
17 Hagen, my two successive courtroom deputies. Susan and John
18 performed a herculean feat: They organized a courtroom
19 calendar with hundreds of cases, and did it with grace and
20 enormous good humor, despite having to deal with a sometimes
21 difficult and sometimes irrational nuisance, namely, me.
22 Judge Berman, you have no idea how lucky you are in
23 obtaining the services of John Hagen. John is one of the
24 secret weapons of my success. He is a man of integrity and
25 consummate loyalty, and I give him up with the deepest

1 regret, though I know he will work well with you in the
2 coming years.

3 Of course, no judge is an island. We are
4 assisted every day not only by our personal staff but by a
5 vast network of personnel, who are devoted to serving our
6 needs and the needs of the parties who appear before us.
7 Naturally, I speak of the judicial support staff, which has
8 been uniformly wonderful in the Southern District. Xavier,
9 when people are so nice to you, how can you not help being
10 nice to them. I speak of the marshals, the court reporters,
11 the interpreters, the staff in the Pro Se Office led by Lois
12 Bloom, the people in the Clerk's Office.

13 I speak of the administrative office personnel,
14 Fed Cap personnel, the librarians, and the probation
15 officers. I speak of the staff in the mail room, the
16 cafeteria under Caprice's leadership, and the countless
17 others whom I have failed to mention but who help us
18 function as an integrated whole. Recently, however, I have
19 also had the opportunity to begin working with the Second
20 Circuit's courthouse staff in preparation for this event,
21 and have learned that they are in every respect just as
22 wonderful.

23 To all of the Southern District of New York
24 staff, I thank you for your help and for the many ways in
25 which you have eased my life and that of my chambers. To

1 the many sergeants and privates in Colonel George Lange's
2 marines of the Second Circuit -- that is, the Second Circuit
3 staff -- and to the District Court personnel who have also
4 pitched in, I thank all of you for today. I know the
5 logistical nightmare that today has presented and know how
6 hard all of you have worked. For those of you on the staff
7 who don't know this, Karen Milton second-sat me during one
8 of my biggest cases in the DA's office. If you think that
9 she has pushed you hard (laughter), it is part of her
10 personality (laughter), but also it is because she is a very
11 good friend. Your willingness to help me has provided me
12 with a touching exit from the District Court and a very warm
13 welcome to my new home, our Circuit Court.

14 Today was a long time in coming. The support I
15 received from the Hispanic community during this entire
16 process seems to me to reflect a real coming of age for our
17 political Hispanic leadership. Hispanic leaders from across
18 party, partisan, and island status lines not only endorsed
19 my nomination and confirmation but also exerted their
20 influence publicly and privately to make this confirmation
21 happen.

22 Congressman Jose Serrano and the Hispanic
23 Congressional Caucus, Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, our
24 Bronx Borough President, Fernando Ferrer, our Bronx
25 Assemblyman and Bronx Democratic leader Roberto Ramirez, and

1 many others all used their resources to convince Senator
2 D'Amato that my confirmation was important.

3 Others carried the same message, and State
4 Senator Efrain Gonzalez of the 31st District in the Bronx, a
5 man of his word and of action, even withheld his endorsement
6 of Senator D'Amato until the Senator got me a Senate vote.
7 I know this because the Senator told me. It was the first
8 time the Senator called me. I had spoken to his staff on
9 all previous occasions. The fact that our community's
10 voices were heard shows, moreover, just how much the
11 Hispanic community has become a force in modern-day
12 politics. All of the public servants I have just mentioned
13 serve this city well, and I can tell you that they have
14 worked hard to make a dream come true for this kid from the
15 Bronx. I love you all. Thank you. (Applause)

16 I am not through.

17 Everyone in this room also knows, or at least
18 should know, that with regard to my District Court
19 appointment, the single most important person was Senator
20 Daniel Patrick Moynihan. (Applause) Few people remember
21 that my District Court confirmation took 22 months, 4 months
22 longer than even my lengthy Circuit Court confirmation.
23 Because of his modesty, even fewer people know that Senator
24 Moynihan expended enormous political capital to ensure my
25 confirmation, despite some very costly political demands.

1 During my most recent eighteen-month Circuit
2 confirmation process, Senator Moynihan once again used the
3 power of his good name and the efforts of his staff,
4 particularly the efforts of his chief of staff, Tony
5 Bullock -- who I hope is in the room -- to make sure that my
6 confirmation occurred. Senator, I am truly fortunate in
7 having had your support. I am heartbroken, as I told you
8 earlier, for the Senator has just announced that in two
9 years he will not run for election again. It is the only
10 sadness of today. But you have served our state with such
11 distinction and honor, and you will be remembered forever as
12 the finest Senator the Senate has ever had. (Applause)
13 Senator, I am a bit prone to exaggeration, but not on this
14 point.

15 Everyone in this room has probably also read
16 about how important Senator D'Amato's support was to me.
17 Not only did the Senator get me a relatively early committee
18 hearing, but he, along with Senator Orrin Hatch, was
19 absolutely critical in the final push to convince Senator
20 Lott to permit me a vote before Congress adjourned. A
21 recent newspaper article described Senator D'Amato as a man
22 who is fiercely loyal to his friends and deeply committed to
23 the causes he adopts. I know from experience that that
24 description is completely accurate, and I am very grateful
25 to the Senator for the commitment he made to me, and I hope

1 for him the very best in his future endeavors. (Applause)

2 Many of you may know that Senator-elect Charles
3 Schumer during his campaign issued a number of press
4 releases concerning the delay of my confirmation. New York
5 is really blessed. It is blessed because it gets public
6 servants who can put aside their own partisan differences
7 and simply turn their attention to a cause they believe
8 important for the state. Senator Schumer, thank you for
9 your kind words today, and for the help I know your staff
10 gave Xavier Romeu-Matta behind the scenes and the help they
11 gave others during my confirmation process. I am very
12 grateful, sir. (Applause)

13 Although many people have contributed to this
14 day, it is, of course, only with President Clinton's
15 nomination that I would be here at all. I thank the
16 President for the trust and confidence he has placed in me.
17 I also thank the highly talented staff at the White House
18 and Department of Justice who pushed my nomination. Within
19 an hour of the Senate's vote confirming me, I received a
20 bouquet of white roses from the members of the staff who
21 were responsible for my confirmation and with whom I had
22 bonded very closely over my eighteen-month ordeal. Those
23 flowers moved me deeply, and to Sarah Wilson, Michael
24 O'Connor -- both of whom I hope made it here -- Mark
25 Childress, and Amy Jimenez, I will never forget the flowers

1 or the heart that came with them.

2 Chief Judge Winter has already told you about the
3 long and respected history of the Second Circuit Court of
4 Appeals, my new court and my new family. I can only add
5 that I know how honored I am to be joining one of the most
6 distinguished groups of jurists in the world. I have a
7 daunting task ahead of me. I came to the District Court
8 awed by the talent of the many judges on that bench. Now I
9 come to the Second Circuit humbled by its prestigious
10 history and by the depth of intellect and passion that my
11 new colleagues exhibit without bound. To the members of the
12 Second Circuit: Joining you is a privilege like no other,
13 and with your support and guidance, I will work hard to be a
14 sister of whom you can be proud.

15 At this point, however, there are two people whom
16 I have not yet mentioned but who have been the real backbone
17 of my life for the last six years. The first is my good
18 friend and secretary, Theresa Bartenope. (Applause)
19 Theresa is, without doubt, the soul and life of my chambers.
20 She brings to it consummate integrity, professional skill,
21 and efficiency. She also brings to it a very distinctive
22 type of warmth, which makes my chambers an inviting and
23 energetic place to work, where everyone, including myself
24 foremost, looks forward to spending their days. There is
25 not a family member, friend or lawyer in this room who does

1 not know how important Theresa is in my life and how
2 carefully she protects me. Mom, she really is my second
3 Mom. (Laughter) My Mom is shaking her head yes. Without
4 her, I would be lost. Theresa - thank you for giving me one
5 of the most valuable gifts of friendship that I have ever
6 received. (Applause)

7 It won't take a genius to know that I am near the
8 end of the thank you's. I left the best for last. There is
9 the most important person in my life, Peter, my
10 husband-to-be. In this room today, there are many friends
11 who have known me for most of my adult life. What they know
12 is that the professional success I had achieved before Peter
13 did nothing to bring me genuine personal happiness. Peter
14 has given me happiness and much, much more.

15 Peter, you have made me a whole person, filling
16 not just the voids of emptiness that existed before you, but
17 making me a better, a more loving, and a more generous
18 person in the process. You have altered my life so
19 profoundly that many of my closest friends forget just how
20 emotionally withdrawn I was before I met you.

21 Peter, it was you who convinced me to say yes
22 when the President called about my nomination, and it was
23 you who lifted my spirits each time I came close to giving
24 up during this process. Four years ago, we committed to a
25 life together. It is a commitment for life and it is the

1 best thing that has ever happened to me. Thank you for all
2 that you do for me, large and small, for all that we do
3 together. Thank you for your eternal patience with me. My
4 friends are laughing back there. (Laughter) My mother just
5 shook her head yes. I am thanking you, and I thank you for
6 giving me the life we have and continue to create together.
7 Peter, thank you for making me the happiest person in the
8 whole world.

9 (Applause)

10 You have all figured out why I am so rich. You
11 can probably also see why I must now bite my tongue and stop
12 thanking people. I don't want to take up the whole night
13 and I know you are too hungry for me to do that, including
14 my niece who told me she was hungry when I walked in.

15 Just over six years ago, when I was sworn in as a
16 District Court judge, then Chief Judge Charles Brieant,
17 another dear friend, congratulated me and conveyed the wish
18 that I administer my office "with divine guidance, in good
19 health and happiness."

20 Those words have echoed in my mind to this day.
21 I recall them publicly now, and ask you all to help me pray
22 for wisdom, and for the courage to act on this wisdom, as I
23 encounter the many hurdles this new position will bring me.
24 I know that judging is an enormous responsibility. In
25 performing my functions, I will survive only with your help.

1 I therefore ask you each night to keep me in your prayers,
2 and I hope that you will continue loving and supporting me
3 as you have and throughout my life. Thank you to everyone
4 in this room for coming and celebrating this day. We are
5 now, in just a few minutes, to go and party all night, so
6 don't leave too fast! Thank you. (Applause)

7 (Judge Sotomayor moved to the bench and shook
8 hands with each Circuit Court judge.

9 Standing at Judge Winter's side:)

10 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: None of you know how supportive
11 Judge Winter has been and how much Judge Winter has done for
12 me in these last eighteen months. Thank you.

13 (Standing at Judge Cabranes's side:)

14 JUDGE SOTOMAYOR: Judge Cabranes, too, was one of
15 my Yale professors.

16 (Judge Sotomayor took her seat on the bench with
17 the other Circuit Court judges.)

18 CHIEF JUDGE WINTER: These proceedings are
19 adjourned.

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