

**INVESTITURE**  
**OF**  
**JUSTICE MICHAEL L. DOUGLAS**

**Monday, May 3, 2004**

**1:30 p.m.**

**Old Assembly Chambers**  
**Capitol Building**  
**Carson City, Nevada**

**IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE  
STATE OF NEVADA**

**CHIEF JUSTICE MIRIAM SHEARING**

**JUSTICE DEBORAH A. AGOSTI**

**JUSTICE ROBERT E. ROSE**

**JUSTICE NANCY A. BECKER**

**JUSTICE A. WILLIAM MAUPIN**

**JUSTICE MARK GIBBONS**

**KENNY C. GUINN, GOVERNOR OF NEVADA**

**THE REV. DR. ROBERT E. FOWLER, SR.**

**INVESTITURE OF MICHAEL L. DOUGLAS**

**GENE T. PORTER, ESQ.**

**ANTHONY M. PACHOT**

---

**INDEX  
OF  
CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS**

	PAGE
Invocation, The Rev. Dr. Robert E. Fowler, Sr. ....	1081
Opening Remarks, Chief Justice Shearing .....	1082
Pledge of Allegiance, Tikal Ramirez & Ixchel Ramirez .....	1082
Remarks, Kenny C. Guinn, Governor of Nevada .....	1083
Remarks, Gene T. Porter, Esq. ....	1086
Remarks, Anthony M. Pachot.....	1087
Administration of Oath to Justice Douglas, Chief Justice Shearing.....	1089
Acceptance, Justice Douglas.....	1090
Benediction, Elder William O. McCurdy, Pastor .....	1094
Closing Remarks, Chief Justice Shearing .....	1094

## INVESTITURE PROCEEDINGS

---

BAILIFF:

All rise. The Supreme Court of the State of Nevada convenes in special session for the administration of the official oath of office to the Honorable Michael Douglas, Chief Justice Miriam Shearing presiding.

CHIEF JUSTICE SHEARING:

Good afternoon. The Nevada Supreme Court is in special session. Please remain standing for the invocation to be given by Dr. Robert E. Fowler, Sr., of the Victory Missionary Baptist Church in Las Vegas.

REVEREND FOWLER:

Thank you. Would you bow with me please. Eternal God and Heavenly Father we thank you this day for the privilege that we have of being able to live it. We're grateful to You for the wonderful-weather state that You've given to us to live, and we understand that everyone across this country is not as blessed as we are. And we're grateful to You for the occasion which has caused us to gather together in this room. We thank You, how You navigate circumstances and situations in our lives to put together pieces that form a puzzle that presents a beautiful portrait of how You would like to see life be. We're grateful to You today for the fact that You have given the privilege to Judge Douglas to serve this State in the capacity that he has been appointed to serve it in. We thank You for preparing him in the most adequate way that You have prepared him: for his educational upbringing, for the upbringing that he had with the family that he lived with, for the upbringing that You have given to him by the experience that he has been able to possess in his background. We thank You for that. In life, You give to us stages, which cause us to have to behave in certain ways. You likewise bless us with positions, which cause us to believe certain ways. And You have placed him at a stage in his life, in a position where both his belief and his behavior must come together to serve the common good of all men. And we thank You for that. We pray, Father, that you would continue to touch him in his body and in his mind, to the end that he will think right and behave right. We pray that You would empower him with wisdom that could only come from upon high, provide him articulation, which would be able to communicate in such a way that all would be persuaded to provide fairness and justice for everyone. And we pray, Father, for the decisions that he's a part of making; that not only will they be honoring to You, but that they will bring peace

to our State as well. Thank You once again, God. We gather together here because both government and citizens agree with this decision. Now we ask Your blessings upon it. In the name of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

CHIEF JUSTICE SHEARING:

Please remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance to be led by Tikal Michael Ramirez and Ixchel Ramirez, Judge Douglas' grandchildren.

TIKAL MICHAEL RAMIREZ:

Please put your right hand over your heart. Now we will begin.

IN UNISON:

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CHIEF JUSTICE SHEARING:

Please be seated. Good afternoon. Welcome to this historic occasion—the investiture of Michael Douglas. I'll start the introductions. The members of the supreme court are Justice William Maupin, Justice Bob Rose, Vice-Chief Justice Deborah Agosti, Justice Nancy Becker, and Justice Mark Gibbons. Other constitutional officers and dignitaries here are Governor Kenny Guinn, Attorney General Brian Sandoval, State Treasurer Brian Krolicki, and Yolanda Garcia, Regional Representative for Senator Harry Reid. Let's give them a hand.

Accompanying Justice Douglas are his family in the first row: Martha Douglas, his wife; as you saw, Tikal Michael Ramirez and Ixchel Ramirez, his grandchildren; Christine Ramirez, his daughter, and Hugo Ramirez, her husband; Susan Douglas, his sister, and Bowman Thomas, her son; and James and Yvonne Casonhua, his cousins. Would you please stand so we can recognize everybody. I'm sure you're very proud, as are we.

Also present are many of Justice Douglas' other family and friends, including Steve Sisolak, Regent of the University and Community College System of Nevada; former U.S. Attorney Mahlon Brown; former Assemblyman Bob Price; Rosalyn Guy; Kirby Burgess, Director of the Clark County Juvenile Court Services; and Florence McClure, longtime community activist.

Also present are Justice Douglas' staff from Las Vegas in the Eighth Judicial District Court: Chuck Short, Arthur Sewell, Joyce Brown, Kit McDonald, Cat Nelson, Alicia Phillips, and Akaterine Virvelos. And his current staff, Linda Mercer and Jill Hiatt. Would you stand and be recognized.

Members of the judiciary who are here today are: U.S. District Court Judge David Hagen; U.S. Magistrate Judge Valerie Cooke; District Judges James Hardesty, Michael Griffin, David Huff, Mark Denton, and Michael Gibbons; Justice of the Peace Stephen Dahl; and Municipal Court Judges Barbara Finley and Ken Proctor. Would you please stand and be recognized.

Our first speaker today is the one responsible for the appointment of Michael Douglas. He is well known to all of you. The Honorable Kenny Guinn, Governor of Nevada.

GOVERNOR GUINN:

I might say, Justice Douglas, that if Tikal had been a little older and out of law school, you might have a great deal more competition because he was very poised. Did you see how he grabbed my microphone and lowered it to his height? Tikal, you did a beautiful job. Well, I want to thank all of you for attending today's very important event, and it is an important event. Today is a momentous day in the life of Justice Michael Douglas, and it is a momentous day in the history of the great State of Nevada.

Before we proceed, though, I want to ask all of you to take a moment to remember another important man in the history of our State. The man Justice Douglas succeeds—Justice Myron Leavitt. If he were here with us today in person, he would have a smile and therefore I know that he is smiling today because of the great admiration that Justice Leavitt and Justice Douglas certainly had for each other. It's truly an honor for anyone when you can follow such a great friend into such an important position. Today, certainly, Myron would be very, very pleased. Myron was a close friend of mine, as he was of many of you, and I think I speak for all of us when I say that since his untimely passing in January, we all miss him dearly. Myron was an exceptional man: caring; intelligent; hard working; a man devoted to his State and, of course, to his family. He served the State with an incredible high degree of distinction—from Clark County Commissioner to Lieutenant Governor, to the final post of a Supreme Court Justice, his ultimate in life after his family. Myron Leavitt always put the needs of this State first and that is Myron's legacy to our State. Please join me in a brief moment of silence as we remember a truly great person—Supreme Court Justice Myron Leavitt. (*Moment of silence.*) Thank you.

We are here today, of course, to recognize an equally great man, Michael Douglas, also a true friend and a respected individual in our community and in our State. Today is one of those days we will always remember. May 3, 2004, will go down as one of the most important days in the history of the great State of Nevada. May 3, 2004, will always be remembered first, as a day when the

man, Michael Douglas, became a State Supreme Court Justice, and second, it is a day when Michael Douglas became the first black Justice in the 140-year history of our State's highest court.

I want to take just a few moments to tell you a few things about Justice Douglas and why he is such a worthy addition to our Supreme Court and to support these fine individuals who sit behind me here today. Since 1996, Justice Douglas has served with distinction as District Court Judge for the State of Nevada. As Chief Judge for the Eighth Judicial District Court, he has been known as a progressive and collegial thinker. He is a man of deep intellect with all of the positive character traits that have always been distinguished through the great justices of our State. And believe me, he has those elements also.

Justice Douglas was born in Los Angeles where he graduated from Dorsey High School. And I'm very pleased to hear the word "Dorsey" because in my grown-up days when we had opportunities to play football in California, I thought they only had football players at Dorsey High School, and so today it's nice to know that they have someone that can not only knock you down but someone who can pick you up. He is a Long Beach State 49er, having earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from a well-established southern California institution. He is a 1974 graduate of the University of California's Hastings College of Law in San Francisco.

Justice Douglas moved to Las Vegas in 1982 where he quickly established himself as a staff attorney for Nevada Legal Services in Clark County. From 1984 through 1995 he served as Deputy District Attorney for the Clark County District Attorney's Office. Since 1996, he has served as District Court Judge for the State of Nevada.

Justice Douglas' membership in bar associations, professional and judicial societies as well as other organizations is extensive, and I won't run through them all today for you because they are too extensive, but I will note that he has been honored with a National Federation of Black Administrators mark for excellence in award and the Black Law Students community service award.

He has received, which is very important for us because it has great consistency in staying power, the Distinguished Man in Southern Nevada award for the past six consecutive years. He also received the Hall of Fame award for the 53rd Western Regional Convention for the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. And in 2003 he was named a Nevada Law Foundation colleague.

But more than the honors and the awards is the man himself who sits before you and will stand before you soon. Justice Douglas has a rare capability of standing outside of himself and realizing what today's investiture truly means. Yes, he is the first black Justice in the 140-year history of our State's highest court, but his impact will be felt in a much greater way.

Like all of the great men and women who have come before him as members of the Supreme Court, he carries with him an enormous responsibility. To be a Supreme Court Justice you must be special; you must put political and personal ideologies aside and base your decisions on a tremendous ability to balance the issues before you time and again, time and again. Our best supreme courts in America represent a success of process and tradition though that otherwise could not have been done in judicial systems throughout the world, and they certainly cannot match those that we have in this great country of ours. And Michael Douglas possesses this rare ability of being a centered and extremely balanced individual. These are special qualities that will ensure his success on this important body of law. And it will spur other young men and women to say that they too would one day like to follow in his footsteps. What a great model. Michael is a man of memorable footsteps because he is a person of the highest integrity and character, and of all the things that we wish in a person it is integrity and character because that falls in line with everything we would expect him to do thereafter.

He has dedicated his professional life to a career of service, and he has always put others before himself. He truly is a caring man. You would not want anyone else in this position, and it goes along with the same responsibilities these other individuals have here too. They are caring people who rule for the people.

Justice Douglas is the right man for this job, and this is the right time and the right place for him to take his seat on the bench of our State's highest and most powerful court—with great power and great responsibility. And I think more than anyone else, Justice Douglas has a clear appreciation of what his appointment to our State's highest court means. Today is not just about history, it's about the best man for the most important of jobs. He is the best man for this terribly, terribly important job. Ladies and gentlemen, on this historic day, I present to you and the great State of Nevada its newest Supreme Court Justice, Justice Michael Douglas. Justice Douglas, congratulations.

**CHIEF JUSTICE SHEARING:**

Our next speaker will be the Honorable Gene T. Porter, at least he used to be honorable. A former district court judge in the Eighth Judicial District Court, Gene Porter graduated from our own UNLV and Pepperdine University School of Law. He's served four terms in the Nevada State Legislature, including two as majority leader. He was appointed to the Eighth Judicial District Court in 1995 and was a leader in the development of Nevada's first business court, as well as presiding judge of the civil division and Chief Judge in 2001 and 2003. Just last year he returned to private practice and is an instructor at the Boyd School of Law. Judge Porter.



JUDGE PORTER:

You know, I'm not shy, Governor. How come the last time I was called upon to publicly speak was for a dinner honoring Justice Rose and I got to follow Dick Bryan at that dinner and now for Justice Douglas I get to follow Kenny Guinn, and I'd really like to talk to whoever puts these programs together.

Chief Justice Shearing, members of the Nevada Supreme Court, and honored guests. In 1936, a photographer, Walker Evans, and a writer, James Agee, loaded up their Chevrolet and drove into rural Alabama to chronicle the devastating effects of the Depression on tenant farmers, black and white, who toiled there. Through photographs and words, they showed the ravishing fire of poverty and despair. There was no New Deal for the people of whom they wrote and photographed. They, however, in their book, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, managed to reveal that these victims of an economic tragedy, which originated in a part of this country that these farmers had never and would never visit, were individuals whose character, integrity, perseverance, and sheer will to survive could not be vanquished. Agee believed that just as the courage belonging to these people of Alabama could not be diminished, America's sense of social responsibility and its respect for human dignity must be increased. He stated, "I believe that every human being is potentially capable . . . of . . . 'realizing' his potentialities; that this, his being cheated and choked of it, is infinitely the ghastliest, commonest, and most inclusive of all the crimes of which the human world can accuse itself." That one place that we as a people must have faith that we are being valued as individuals, our rights protected, our dignity maintained, our humanity not cheated and choked, is our courts. And the highest court in this State, in any state, is the supreme court.

Today we honor a man who will bring even greater honor to that court. Michael Douglas is a man who has dedicated his life to ensuring that one person's rights will not be trampled on because of another man's personal or political agenda. He, like Agee, believes that all men, all women, are famous not for the reasons that we normally attribute to fame but because they are human beings whose lives are precious and to be treasured in their own individual way and it is through the law and the judicial system that each human being looks to have their individuality and their independence affirmed. That is the same law, the same sense of fairness and justice, to which Michael has dedicated his life. It is fitting then that we praise him and honor him and thank him for honoring us with his commitment to ideals for those of us who know him are second nature to Michael.

Yes, it is historic and a cause for celebration that Michael, Justice Douglas, as the first African American takes a seat on the Nevada Supreme Court, but it is even more significant for really

two very important reasons. One, that it is long overdue that a person of color is finally seated on our supreme court. But it is important also because Governor Guinn has selected a man who comes to this court without an agenda but with only a desire to pursue both truth and justice for all people, for all Nevadans. It is this—the content of Justice Douglas’ character—that we look to and are grateful for, not the color of his skin. Because it is my hope and I know it is yours and the hope of Justice Douglas, that fifty years from now we will look back on this day and we will not note that a man of color was at long last seated on the Nevada Supreme Court, but that instead a man of integrity and true character, a famous man, did honor to the people of Nevada by agreeing to serve and that in doing so maintained the faith that we, as Nevadans, have in our justice system.

Justice Douglas, Martha, I thank you and I wish you well. We, all of us, are in good hands, as is the future of this State and the women, men, and children of all colors and political beliefs who live here. Take care, my friend, Mr. Justice.

CHIEF JUSTICE SHEARING:

Our next speaker will be Anthony M. Pachot. Tony Pachot is originally from Trinidad, British West Indies. Tony and Justice Douglas met on the ball fields around 1960 and have been like brothers ever since. Tony joined the L.A. County Sheriff’s Department in 1975. As a deputy sheriff he worked in the jails, on patrol, as a training officer, and as a detective. In 1986, he transferred to the Aero Bureau where he is still assigned as a pilot, flight instructor and accident investigator. Mr. Pachot.

ANTHONY PACHOT:

You know, I was just telling the Judge—and he was complaining about people putting him up behind the Governor, and now I have to come behind him. Some speech. Thank you, Justices. Welcome ladies and gentlemen. You know this is such a moment. I’ve got a speech here that I wrote, and I’ve changed it several times. So I put “moments” on it—I want you guys to remember that word. Michael and I have been friends for almost forty-five years, and I’m all choked up with pride today.

I’ve known Mike since the 60s. We went to elementary school together; junior high school. We’ve gone through all our experiences; our ups, our downs; our victories, defeats. Through all of this we’ve grown closer. And as a friend I couldn’t even say to you from my own words what it means to me to have a friend like Mike, so I went to the Book of Proverbs and it says, “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.” And that’s Proverbs 17:17. And at Proverbs 18:24 it says, “A man that hath friends must show himself friendly; and there is a friend that

sticketh closer than a brother.’’ That’s how I view my friendship with Mike. I’m blessed to have him as a friend. I’ve got another friend here who is the same and I just want to get through this and allow him to be as he’s supposed to be. So that being said, let’s get down to the moment now that we’re here.

We’re part of a historical moment today, brought to us by Mike and his perseverance. I don’t know if you guys have any idea how Mike perseveres. His energy level for what he does; his steadfastness, you know, the discipline that he has is just overwhelming. I mean, I wish I had it. You know, Mike is a disciplinarian to himself. We all have moments in our lives that are filled with some good times, bad times, memorable times, sad times, times to be treasured. You know, some great times, some times that aren’t so great, and some times we just have to forget altogether. And what’s interesting about that is that all of us have these times in our lives, and how we deal with it really shapes what happens to us and how people perceive us. In this arena is where Mike excels. Through his discipline, he controls the consequences, which eventually leads to his successes. You know, life is funny. It’s either disciplining or consequences. So if you don’t take care of yourself by disciplining yourself, you’re going to have to suffer the consequences. And Mike has it all in that category. It’s not an easy thing to do because with discipline comes pain. To persevere through adversity is sometimes painful. Adversity caused from within ourselves or from the outside, small setbacks like not getting through a particular self-imposed career phase or exams, promotions, or just bad timing. But all of us have to try to overcome these setbacks, and discipline is the way we do it. Mike’s discipline, in my belief, came from his parents. The upbringing they gave him gave him a good overall understanding of how to deal with life and how to approach it. This led to his patience, and with that came the determination he has and the wisdom to achieve. And I’ve been privileged to watch a lot of these moments, to be part of it. And though he internalizes most of the things he does through discipline, time and time again he turned setbacks into victories. He embraces discipline. Hard work is his playground. No task is too great or too small for him to tackle; nor too painful to endure; nor too overwhelming for him to overcome, through his use of patience and discipline.

You know, Mike has something going on every minute that he’s awake. He’s always on the move. He’s probably sitting there right now thinking of something to do that’s job related. With all the good stuff I’ve told you, at times he has those moments where, like I said, some of those moments we’d like to forget. He gets so focused and determined on doing something that he loses his discipline. So under threat, I’ve removed a lot of these things so I’ll just tell you about one. He has a house now that he bought, and he was cleaning it up. He was determined to get this room cleaned out and

it had a lot of mildew. So Mike decided he was going to mix some chemicals, which we've all done, you know Comet and bleach together—they make hydrochloric acid. And he's in an unventilated room, coughing, but he's determined to get this done. Now you and I probably would have stepped out after a few coughs and taken a little breather, but not Mike, no, no, he stayed there and finished the room. Mike laid down and Martha had to get him up in the middle of the night and take him to the emergency room. So after a week-long stay in the hospital, I think that he's gotten over some of these little lapses in discipline that he had.

So, I'll just conclude this. I don't want to keep you guys here too long. Little moments, big moments, all those in-between moments in Mike's life, and how he handled them has brought us all here today. In a courtroom in this State some years ago, not in this courtroom, I stood before a group of people much like yourselves and some of you that were there then and the Supreme Court Justices were, oh, they were about twenty-five feet away. And I made the comment then that we had come a long way already and they weren't far enough away for Mike not to get there and I expected him to be there soon. So now here we are today at this moment in Carson City, Nevada. To now become a part of history, and I don't know if Mike really understands how big this is. Today, you have caused every school that you went to to be in a history book, every job that you've worked to be recognized as a stepping stone; all your friends and family bursting with pride and joy. It's just an amazing thing when the Governor said, you know, the first black Justice in the 140-year history of this State. I can't even tell you how much that means to a lot of people. But more than that, nationwide, this is going to have an impact. Mike is not going to stop here. He is going to keep on going because that's just the way he is. You notice I call him Mike all the time. So, at this moment, and I don't think I've ever done this before, but I'm going to do it now. I'd like to say congratulations, Mike, from the bottom of my heart. And I would like to congratulate the Honorable Michael L. Douglas, my friend.

The Governor talked about what the justices are charged with and again I went to the scripture to look this up. So don't despair, I'll just be here for a minute. But long ago, I think Moses wrote down, when he was given this instruction and it says, and it's for the judges, "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour." Godspeed, Mike. Congratulations.

CHIEF JUSTICE SHEARING:

Now's the big time. Michael, Martha, Christine, and Susan, please step forward. (*Chief Justice Shearing administered the oath of office to Justice Douglas.*)

CHIEF JUSTICE SHEARING:

Congratulations and welcome to the Supreme Court.

JUSTICE DOUGLAS:

Thank you very much. Chief Justice, members of the Nevada Supreme Court, Governor Guinn, distinguished guests, friends, colleagues, associates, soldiers in various ventures and wars that I've been part of, to other trailblazers who are sitting out in this audience, and I mean trailblazers, the real ones that helped me get to where I am today. Let me start by saying, I'm where I'm at because of the love and care of my father and my mother who taught me everything that I needed to know to get me here. I've been blessed by two governors, and the tie that I wore today binds them together for different reasons. It's a red tie, and it has Tweety Bird on it because in the life that I've chosen you must take yourself serious but you can't take yourself too serious. Governor Miller took a chance on me; Governor Guinn has taken a bigger chance on me. I hope to fulfill their hopes and their beliefs.

People have talked about the historical significance of today. In the State of Nevada, you go back to 1960 when a black gentleman by the name of Charles Keller came out here. He was asked to come out here by Thurgood Marshall to be an NAACP attorney. The bar was only given in Reno. He came in. They couldn't find his reservation for a room; he slept in his car. He took the bar; he passed it. They wouldn't let him into the bar due to some character problems. He wound up suing the bar. In between, 1963, Robert Reed and Earl White came out from Howard University, took the bar, passed it, and were admitted to the bar as the first blacks. Some time thereafter, in the early seventies, Robert Reed became the first black judge, a justice of the peace. Moon Mullins, a municipal court judge. Thereafter, a very great man and one of the men that was a mentor to me in the legal profession, Judge Guy was appointed to the district court bench. He was special, I was honored to be chosen to fill his seat when he stepped down. In between, Earl White was a district court judge, we've had Lee Gates who is our senior black judge in the State. We had a first in 1998 when Johnnie Rawlinson was appointed to the federal district court and again in 2000 when she became the first African-American woman appointed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals for the United States. And now today, 2004.

A lot of great things have been said. I'm not sure I will ever live up to them. I felt kind of like it was an obituary and I was having an out-of-body experience. My shoulders have been broad. I'm not sure if they're broad enough to put all of that on them. But I have been blessed from a friend that goes way, way back. To fraternity brothers, to law school classmates, to members of the bar, to my

family, to special people—the people who have worked with me, not under me but with me, the colleagues who work with me at the Eighth Judicial District Court, my staff who made me better because of what they did, my new colleagues at the Supreme Court who will help me become better.

But for all the things that are said, please understand that I do believe in liberty and justice for all, not for some, but for all. My friend Tony talked about my stubbornness. It's a gift and a vice all at the same time. One of the things I learned, because you have to understand I had an oxygen mask strapped on me and I was in the hospital, and I had people coming in telling me I should have had a union card and that was the problem, and I should hire someone to fix the house. And then let me take a step further. I got well from that. I went back to fixing the house. New Year's Eve I went home and we weren't going any place special. I bought some champagne. I put it on ice. I got into my work clothes, and I was working on patching a wall. I got a call. Officers came; I signed a search warrant for a bank robbery. I went back to patching the wall and, like I am, I said, "I'll do one more thing." Well, I didn't set my ladder; I came off my ladder wrong. I fell fifteen feet on the stairs, dislocating an ankle. My wife comes running down, "Are you all right?" and I said, "Let me see if my ankle still moves." And my ankle was going in directions it wasn't supposed to go. So I went to the hospital a second time. And I got back to work and my staff says, "You know, you really ought to hire somebody." And they told me it was "the house two; me nothing." And I said, "If it does it again to me, I'm going to burn it down. And it's not about the insurance." But the thing that was important about doing the house was actually when I was in the hospital. Because it made me realize some things that are very important, simple things that you take for granted. The doctor came into the room at one point after they'd done a battery of tests about the third day and he said, "I have good news and bad news. The good news is you're going to get better. The bad news is that you are going to have permanent lung damage." Well, I looked at him and I just started laughing, and he asked me what was so funny, and I said, "Doc, it can't be bad. I'm still alive." Well, through modern medicine and good treatment I have no residual damage. I got lucky—I'm alive.

This morning I got in line and paid the good State of Nevada \$300 for the privilege to run to be retained for this seat, and someone asked me, "Why do you want to do this—why would you do this to yourself? You see what we write in the newspaper." I said, "Yes, I see what you write in the newspaper. To be quite frank, I don't care." If the job was easy, anybody could do it. The job is difficult. The people behind me—and even though all of them do not have gray hair—it is a tough job, so I come with the

gray hair already. I do it, as I said, because I do believe in liberty and justice for all. Not for just the rich; not for just the poor; not for just the blacks or the Asians or the Hispanics, but for everybody. Everyone should have that level playing field. I wanted to be on the court because I thought I could make a difference. The Constitution—and there's been a lot written lately about it—some people understand it; some don't. I hope I'm one of those when it's all said and done that understands it. But it does even the playing field. It does provide an opportunity for everyone, not just for some, and you can't just read it to benefit you, you have to read the good and the bad to benefit everyone.

I had the privilege, when I was on the district court, to work beside the Honorable Gene Porter who taught me things about being patient; things about holding temperament when sometimes I was not happy with the way some things were going at the court, but he too believed in justice. But the thing that I most admired about Gene was that Gene was a father; Gene loves his son, and if I had no stronger bond with Gene, it was simply because he loved his family and his son.

My friend Anthony Pachot, Tony, and most people mispronounce his last name. Eight years ago he told a story, and I will retell part of the story. Since everyone said good things about me, I'll give you another side of me. We were in junior high school, and we were going home and we were riding our bicycles like we so often did. I had somebody on my bike; he had somebody on his bike. We were zipping down the road. I hit the intersection in front of him; I went straight through; he hollers, "Is it clear?" And I looked back at him, and I said, "Yeah" with a pause, "just a truck." Fortunately, he had good reflexes and turned sideways, and the truck didn't get him. We're still friends.

The Governor was good enough to talk about the past and the present, and he talked about one person who was very special to me, and I need to mention another person who was special to me. Judge A.D. Guy, whose department I inherited, was a mentor. One of the things he did when I came to the bench, because he and Myron Leavitt were neighbors in the district court, he looked at Myron and he said, "Myron, take care of him." And Myron took very good care of me, even when I brought him things that had green ink on them, which he despised. And I made jokes about Las Vegas High School, or him being a sprinter at one time in his life. He tolerated me. He made the mistake a few times of making me acting Chief Judge when he was gone and he was our Chief Judge. And one time I said, "If you do this again, I'm going to banish you to family court." He didn't make me Chief Judge any more, acting or otherwise.

But today is special. I would be remiss and I would probably have to find a Murphy bed in the Supreme Court if I didn't thank

someone else who has been with me through the thick and the thin. You are judged too often by what people see of you and by what people hear of you, by deeds that are written, but the people that are with you in the lonely moments are the people who should be appreciated and thanked, so I must thank my wife.

In closing let me say this. It's a story I've told before. It talks about courage, and it's probably fitting for northern Nevada and Nevada as a great open state. There was once a gentleman who owned a very large ranch, 15,000 acres. He had a home up on a hill; gorgeous view of the mountains, much like around Carson City, with snow, streams, grass, fields. It was just flat gorgeous. Behind the home was a pond. The pond was fairly unique, and on this particular day he had guests over and they were admiring this view, this vista. And they kept looking at this pond, and they said, "What's about the pond?" And he said, "Well, I got what I got because I'm a man of courage. In that pond, it's filled with alligators. Should any of you choose to swim from one side to the other this day, I will give you my land, my house, my money—anything that you wish." Everyone looked at him. They kind of laughed and snickered, and they began to follow him in for lunch. Well, all of a sudden, as everyone had turned their back they heard "splash." They looked around, and they saw this person flailing and trying to get to the other side as quickly as he could with things nipping at his heels. The person got to the other side. The man went back. All the guests followed. And he said, "Sir, you are the most courageous man I've ever met. My home, my riches, my wealth—anything you want." The man looked around and said, "Who the hell pushed me in?"

Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know whether I jumped or Governor Guinn pushed me in, but thank you very much.

**CHIEF JUSTICE SHEARING:**

Michael, it's with great pleasure that I welcome you to our court. We've worked with you in the capacity of judge and Chief Judge of the Eighth Judicial District Court and know that you will be a welcome addition to our court. You have big shoes to fill, the big shoes of Justice Myron Leavitt, but I am confident that you will be able to bring your unique contribution to the court. Thank you for taking that challenge.

Before we conclude, I would like to recognize some other people that I see—other dignitaries. The President of the State Bar of Nevada, Patrick Flanagan. The Director of the Nevada Law Foundation, Susan Baucham. District Judge Valorie Vega from Las Vegas and Frances Doherty, District Judge in Washoe County.

Thank you all for attending. There will be a reception that will be hosted by Justice and Mrs. Douglas in the Supreme Court Ro-



tunda immediately following this session. At this time, I'd like to call upon Pastor William McCurdy of the Progressive Community Church of God in Christ in Las Vegas to step forward and give our benediction. Please rise.

**PASTOR MCCURDY:**

Gracious Father, Lord God. Today, we thank You for this sitting of this Supreme Court and this executive of this State, the Governor of Nevada. Oh God, we thank you for what you have done, and we thank you for what you have been for us and Jehovah Jirah, you are our provider, and we thank you for the wisdom and the knowledge that these men and these women, they are going to render on behalf of the people of the State of Nevada. I pray tonight, today, as we get ready to leave this place, that we would not forget Thee and we would not be less to honor Thee. And God, we thank you right now for each and every one of these dignitaries that are here today. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

**CHIEF JUSTICE SHEARING:**

Thank you, Pastor. Thank you all for attending. The Nevada Supreme Court is now adjourned.