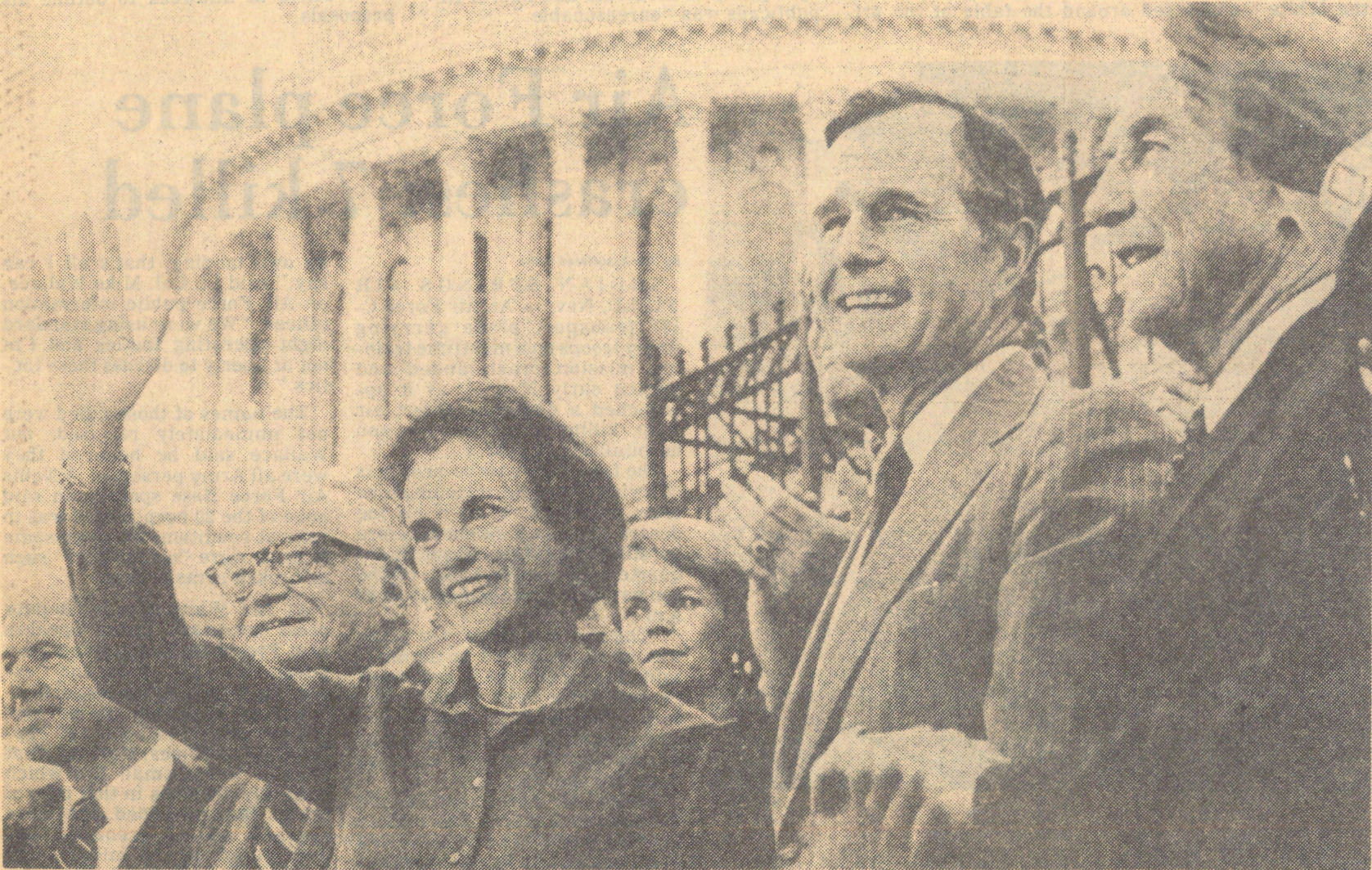


Our readers speak

"Really it ought to be the five dissidents who should be leaving instead of (Marvin) Townsend."

— LUTHER MATHIS JR.
Letters to the Editor, page 12A

Senate confirms O'Connor 99-0



Sandra Day O'Connor waves from the steps of the Capitol yesterday following her confirmation as Supreme Court

justice. Behind her (from left) are Attorney General William French Smith, Arizona Sen. Barry Goldwater, Vice

President George Bush and South Carolina Sen. Strom Thurmond.

All-male tradition on top court ends

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate, ending an all-male tradition nearly two centuries old, unanimously confirmed Sandra Day O'Connor as an associate justice of the Supreme Court on Monday.

Mrs. O'Connor, a 51-year-old Arizona state appeals judge, will be sworn in Friday in time to join the court for the opening of its 1981-82 term on October 5.

The vote was 99-0, with only Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., who was attending an economic conference in his home state, missing from the tally. He had supported Mrs. O'Connor in earlier committee action.

"Today is truly a historic occasion," said Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, leading off a series of 22 speeches in warm praise of President Reagan's first high court nominee.

Hailing a "happy and historic day," President Reagan said in a statement the confirmation of his nominee "symbolizes the richness of opportunity that still abides in America — opportunity that permits persons of any sex, age or race, from every section and walk of life, to aspire and achieve in a manner never before even dreamed about in human history."

As the vote neared, a small knot of conservatives who had questioned Mrs. O'Connor's views on abortions fell into line behind her nomination.

Jesse Helms, R-N.C., leader of the most conservative bloc of Senate Republicans, voted for Mrs. O'Connor, saying he talked to the president and was assured that Mrs. O'Connor shares Reagan's opposition to a national policy of legalized abortions.

Sen. Joseph Biden of Delaware, the senior Democrat on the judiciary panel, said, however, that it is fruitless and risky to predict how any Supreme Court nominee might vote once he or she is sworn in.

"Once a justice dons those robes, enters that inner sanctum across the road (in the Supreme Court building)," Biden said, "We have no control. All bets are off."

The late president Dwight Eisenhower nominated Earl Warren believing he was a "mainstream Republican," and he turned out to be the most liberal chief justice in Supreme Court history. Biden recalled.

Biden said Mrs. O'Connor won such broad support from conservatives and liberals from both parties because she has "superior intellect," strong moral character and the right temperament to be a judge.

"That's all I have a right to ask," said Biden, criticizing conservatives who attempted to make Mrs. O'Connor's views on abortion the sole criterion on whether she should be confirmed.

Mrs. O'Connor will become the 102nd person to don the black robes of a Supreme Court member since the court was created as one of three equal branches of the federal government 191 years ago.

A graduate of Stanford University Law School, she worked as a state prosecutor in Arizona before serving terms in both houses of the state legislature.

A former majority leader of the Arizona Senate, Mrs. O'Connor served as a state trial court judge and was later named by Gov. Bruce Babbitt to the Arizona Court of Appeals.

Nothing Reagan has done in his eight months as president has won such broad support and acclaim from so many sides of the political spectrum on Capitol Hill.

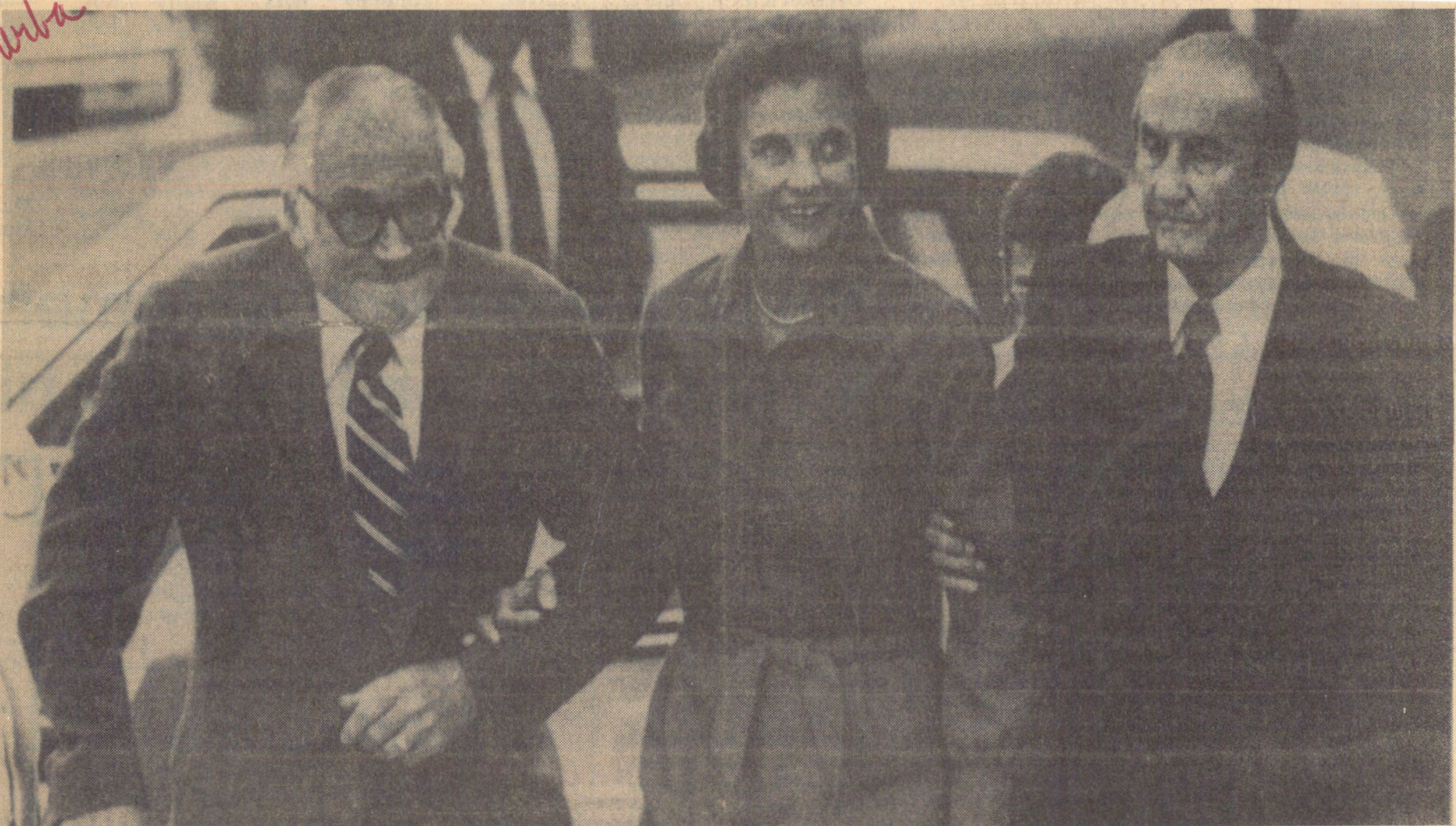
In three days of testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Mrs. O'Connor said she finds abortion personally offensive, but declined to give her constitutional view of whether a woman has a legal right to end a pregnancy.

Helms said on the day Reagan announced Mrs. O'Connor's nomination, he met with the president at the White House about how Mrs. O'Connor might rule on abortion cases to come before the court.

Based on his half-hour talk with Reagan, Helms said, "It is fair to assume that Mrs. O'Connor agrees with his (Reagan's) position."

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Sandra O'Connor arrives at the U.S. Capitol yesterday with Sen. Barry Goldwater, R-Ariz., left, and Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., after her confirmation by the Senate. (AP)

O'Connor gets sweeping Senate OK

Swearing-in ceremony expected later this week

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sandra Day O'Connor, confirmed by a unanimous Senate as the first woman justice on the Supreme Court, promises to be "very busy, very fast" after she is sworn in later this week.

There is no clear indication, however, how she will vote on social and constitutional issues that come before the court.

The 51-year-old Arizona appeals judge won a 99-0 endorsement in the Senate on Monday as the 102nd justice in the 191-year history of the nation's highest court. She will be youngest of the nine members.

Mrs. O'Connor will be sworn in for her lifetime position in

ceremonies Friday afternoon at the Supreme Court building. But because the ceremony will be conducted in the courtroom itself, the recording for posterity will be limited.

"As is the court practice, there will be no TV, no photographs and no tape recordings," court spokesman Barrett McGurn today said in a printed statement released today.

Reporters and artists will be admitted to the ceremony, as they are for all court sessions. There will be no public admission, however, except by invitation.

Two "picture opportunities" are scheduled shortly after the

15-minute ceremony.

McGurn said official court photographers would be on hand but added, "I know of no plan to have any photograph taken in the courtroom (during the ceremony)."

Chief Justice Warren E. Burger will administer Mrs. O'Connor's oath of office, and White House officials said President Reagan may attend the Friday ceremony.

"My hope is that 10 years from now, after I've been across the street and worked for a while, that they'll all feel glad for the wonderful vote they gave me today," a smiling Mrs. O'Connor said at an appearance

on the Capitol steps with Vice President George Bush and Senate leaders.

Once installed on the court, which opens its 1981-82 term Oct. 5, "I'm going to get very busy, very fast," Mrs. O'Connor said.

Reagan hailed a "happy and historic day" and said in a statement that Mrs. O'Connor's confirmation "symbolizes the richness of opportunity that still abides in America — opportunity that permits persons of any sex, age or race, from every section and walk of life, to aspire and achieve in a manner never before even dreamed about in human history."

Mrs. O'Connor steadfastly refused to indicate how she might rule on any specific issue.

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Mrs Sandra Day O'Connor, flanked by Senator Barry Goldwater (left) and Vice-President Bush, after the Senate confirmation of her appointment to the Supreme Court.