



# Did You Know?



## Justice Hugo Black

To the best of our knowledge only two Supreme Court Justices were ANCC members. The most recent was Ruth Bader Ginsberg who was a temporary member from 1983 to 2005. Justice Ginsberg was preceded by Hugo Lafayette Black who served as a United States Senator from Alabama (1927-1937) and as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court (1937-1971). Originally a temporary ANCC Member, in July 1955 at the Executive Committee's recommendation, the Board of Governors transferred his membership to honorary and then immediately elected him to regular membership.

## Hugo Lafayette Black

**Hugo Lafayette Black** (February 27, 1886 – September 25, 1971) served in the United States Senate (Alabama) from 1927 to 1937, and as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1937 to 1971. A member of the Democratic Party and a devoted New Dealer, Black endorsed Franklin D. Roosevelt in both the 1932 and 1936 presidential elections. Having gained a reputation in the Senate as a reformer, Black was nominated to the Supreme Court by President Roosevelt and confirmed by the Senate by a vote of 63 to 16.

The fifth longest-serving justice in Supreme Court history, Black was one of the most influential Supreme Court justices in the 20th century. He is noted for his advocacy of a textualist reading of the United States Constitution and of the position that the liberties guaranteed in the Bill of Rights were imposed on the states ("incorporated") by the Fourteenth Amendment. During his political career, Black was regarded as a staunch supporter of liberal policies and civil liberties.

However, Black wrote the majority opinion in *Korematsu v. United States* (1944), during World War II, which upheld the Japanese-American internment that had taken place. Black also consistently opposed the doctrine of substantive due process and believed that there was no basis in the words of the Constitution for a right to privacy, voting against finding one in *Griswold v. Connecticut*.



Justice Black admitted himself to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, in August 1971, and subsequently retired from the Court on September 17. He suffered a stroke two days later and died on September 25. Services were held at the National Cathedral,

His remains were interred at the Arlington National Cemetery. He is one of twelve Supreme Court justices buried at Arlington. Justice Black, who served in the 81<sup>st</sup> Field Artillery during

World War I, is buried to the right of the main cemetery entrance, and up a hill, 200 yards behind the Taft monument. Black's headstone is "identical in size and shape to the tens of thousands of military headstones in Arlington." It says simply, "Hugo Lafayette Black, Captain, U. S. Army".

In his lifetime Justice Black was twice featured on the cover of *Time* magazine. After his death he was honored with the naming of the new Federal District Courthouse in Birmingham, Alabama and the issuance of a postage stamp.



The Hugo L. Black United States Courthouse in Birmingham, Alabama



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*Time*: October 9, 1964