

Q86 – George Washington is famous for many things. Name one.

DOUGLAS GINSBURG, Federal Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit:

George Washington is rightly deemed the Father of Our Country. “First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.” That eulogy captures the many achievements for which Washington is revered. During the American Revolution, Washington led the Continental Army through eight years of war. Having fought beside the British as a young man, he now fought against Britain for the liberty of Americans. Washington faced the monumental task of turning what one British general scorned as “a rabble in arms” into a disciplined army: one that could fight like the British -- and outfight them.

When independence had been won, Washington was again called to lead. As president of the Constitutional Convention, he encouraged the compromises vital to its success. He didn’t come to Philadelphia with a blueprint for government. Instead, he brought his prestige. As the most respected American, his endorsement of the new Constitution would help sway his countrymen.

The Constitution had just been ratified when Washington was called upon once again. This time to be our first president. Indeed, the world’s first president. He governed with skill and humility – conscious that everything he did would set a precedent for his successors.

For all these reasons and more, George Washington is rightly esteemed as the Father of Our Country.