

Robert Jackson's "First Mondays"

*John Q. Barrett**

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In the United States, October 5, 2015, is not merely the first Monday in October, but "First Monday," the start of the new term at the Supreme Court of the United States.

On this First Monday, the nine Justices, all judicial colleagues since 2010, will take the bench at 10:00 a.m. They will announce actions (cases to be reviewed, cases not to be reviewed, etc.) decided in their most recent private conferences, including last week. Then they will hear oral arguments in the first two cases of the term. The Court's in-person audience will include hundreds of spectators, including numerous government lawyers.

Beginning in the later 1930s, U.S. government lawyer Robert H. Jackson was one of those spectators. In 1936 and 1937, it seems likely that Jackson, then an Assistant Attorney General of the U.S., was present at the Court on First Monday. In 1938 and 1939, Jackson was Solicitor General of the U.S. and, as the government's chief advocate before the Court, he definitely was present. In 1940, Jackson was Attorney General of the U.S. and, it seems, occupied elsewhere.

Thereafter, Jackson's First Monday seat was on the Court's bench. As Justice Jackson, he was present and participated in thirteen First Mondays. These occurred in 1941-1944 and 1946-1954.

On Monday, October 1, 1945, he of course was absent. He was in Nuremberg in Allied-occupied former Germany, sick in bed with a bad cold and working on near-final drafts of the imminent international indictment of the principal Nazi war criminals.

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Here are direct links to other First Monday-related posts that are on the Jackson List archive site:

- *"Landslide Lyndon" in the Supreme Court (1948)*—[click here](#);
- *White House Social Call (1939)*—[click here](#);
- *First Monday with Friends (1941)*—[click here](#);
- *First Monday at the Supreme Court, and a Philadelphia Lawyer's Tuesday Letter (1945)*—[click here](#); and
- *Mr. Copley, First Monday and Supreme Court Stewardship (1952)*—[click here](#);