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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF WYOMING

IN THE MATTER OF THE
NATURALIZATION AND GRANTING OF
UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP TO: Cheyenne, Wyoming
March 7, 2016
2:00 p.m.

JOSE CARLOS GONZALEZ OROZCO Central High School
SHAN LI, SREEJAYAN NAIR, Cheyenne, Wyoming
MIROSLAV TOMSCHIK, MICHAEL JOHN BURR,
JOSE NATIVIDAD FUENTES GARCIA,
JULIA SIMONE STETLER,
Petitioners.

TRANSCRIPT OF HEARING ON PETITIONS FOR
UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND NATURALIZATION CEREMONY
BEFORE THE HONORABLE NANCY D. FREUDENTHAL
Chief United States District Judge, Presiding
THE HONORABLE ALAN B. JOHNSON
United States District Judge
THE HONORABLE KELLY H. RANKIN
Chief United States Magistrate Judge
THE HONORABLE KATHLEEN PARKER
United States Bankruptcy Judge

APPEARANCES:
For the UNITED STATES: JAMES C. ANDERSON
Assistant United States Attorney
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
2120 Capitol Avenue, Suite 4000
P.O. Box 668
Cheyenne, WY 82003-0668

Court Reporter: MRS. JANET DAVIS, RDR, FCRR
United States Court Reporter
2120 Capitol Avenue, Room 2228
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001
(307) 635-3884

Proceedings recorded by mechanical stenography, transcript
produced with computer.

1 (Proceedings commenced 1:35 p.m., March 7, 2016.)

2 (Presentation of colors.)

3 (Star-Spangled Banner performed.)

4 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Well, next on the agenda is
5 my welcome, but I would like to thank Central High School for
6 welcoming us, the federal district court family, to the high
7 school, to your auditorium and for the naturalization ceremony
8 here today where we will be naturalizing eight new citizens.

9 It is always a special time in federal court. It is
10 great to join the students, the new citizens, their family
11 members, my colleagues and friends for this wonderful ceremony.
12 Normally I suspend the rule in federal court that prohibits
13 taking photos, but inasmuch as we are in the auditorium, your
14 rules apply. Feel free to take photos as you may desire.

15 At this time I would like to call on our Assistant
16 United States Attorney James C. Anderson both for the motion
17 for naturalization as well as for the roll call of the citizens
18 to be naturalized. Mr. Anderson.

19 MR ANDERSON: Thank you, Your Honor. May it please
20 the Court.

21 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Counsel.

22 MR ANDERSON: My name is Jim Anderson. I'm appearing
23 today as a representative of the United States Attorney's
24 Office for the District of Wyoming and in proxy for the
25 Attorney General of the United States in these proceedings.

1 It is my privilege, Your Honor, to introduce to the
2 Court the following individuals who appear in person for a
3 hearing on their petitions for naturalization as United States
4 citizens: First, Jose Carlos Gonzalez Orozco, a native and
5 former inhabitant of the republic of Mexico. Mr. Orozco here.
6 Thank you.

7 Next, Ms. Shan Li, a native and former inhabitant of
8 the People's Republic of China. Ms. Li is here.

9 Next, Mr. Sreejayan Nair -- did I get it right,
10 Mr. Nair? Mr. Nair is a former inhabitant and native of the
11 Republic of India.

12 Next, Miroslav Tomschik. Mr. Tomschik is a native and
13 former inhabitant of the Czech Republic.

14 Next, Michael John Burr, a native and former
15 inhabitant of the Commonwealth of Australia. Mr. Burr.

16 Jose Natividad Fuentes Garcia, a native and former
17 inhabitant of the Republic of Mexico.

18 And finally, Julia Simone Stetler, a native and former
19 inhabitant of the Federal Republic of Germany.

20 Your Honor, each of these individuals have been
21 interviewed and examined under oath by a designated examiner of
22 the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, and
23 they have completed a character and background investigation
24 necessary to qualify for citizenship.

25 Citizenship and Immigration Services indicates that

1 each of these individuals has met all of the requirements for
2 naturalization and is well-qualified as a desirable candidate
3 for United States citizenship.

4 As a fellow citizen of the United States, I want to
5 welcome and congratulate each of these applicants on this very
6 special occasion.

7 This morning, as I thought about this ceremony, I
8 thought, "What can I say to these folks?" And I looked up over
9 my desk. I have a poster and that poster has a title and it
10 says, "Place Tian'anmen," and it shows a man standing in front
11 of a column of tanks. It was taken in 1989 at Tian'anmen
12 Square in Peking, China. This man is dressed in a white shirt,
13 dark slacks. He's holding what appears to be a stack of
14 groceries. He stood there in front of a column of tanks that
15 was trying to get into Tian'anmen Square where there were
16 hundreds, thousands of people protesting the policies of that
17 country, of the People's Republic of China. And this lone man
18 stood in front of that column of tanks protesting their entry
19 where they were about to arrest and incarcerate a number of
20 those protestors.

21 We're so fortunate in this country, for over 150 years
22 not a citizen of this country has had to stand in front of our
23 military to protest or to try and stop a wrongful action by our
24 government. These individuals who are about to undertake the
25 responsibilities and duties of citizenship have come here from

1 many different places, and they've come to our country because
2 our country is a wonderful place to live, where our freedom of
3 speech is guaranteed, where our right to participate in our
4 government by our vote and by our voice is guaranteed. We
5 cannot be arrested by individuals in tanks unless a neutral
6 magistrate, a judge, allows the government to go and arrest
7 someone.

8 This country is a beacon. It is a wonderful place to
9 live, and it is a wonderful place to live because over the
10 centuries, the last two centuries, people such as these seven
11 individuals have come here because they want to make a better
12 life for themselves and for their families. And to do that,
13 they're willing to undertake the responsibilities of
14 citizenship; that is, the right and the exercise of the right
15 to vote, the right to criticize the government, the right to
16 inform themselves and protest the actions of our government.

17 So thank you for being willing to undertake those
18 responsibilities and duties, and so with that said, none of us
19 here in this room, hopefully, as we continue to participate,
20 keep our country strong, we won't have to stand in front of
21 that column of tanks some day.

22 On the power and recommendation of an immigration
23 officer, it is my distinct honor and privilege to move that all
24 these applicants be granted United States citizenship upon
25 taking the oath.

1 Thank you, Your Honor. Thank you.

2 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you, Mr. Anderson.

3 It's a pleasure to be here as part of the court
4 family. It is my practice to ask my fellow judges to stand
5 when the oath is administered. Let me introduce each of them.
6 They were announced when we walked in, but just so you can put
7 the right name to the right face, to my immediate right is U.S.
8 District Judge Alan Johnson. He's the longest serving district
9 judge on the bench, former Chief U.S. District Judge.

10 My name is Nancy Freudenthal. I'm Chief District
11 Judge for the District of Wyoming.

12 To my left is Judge Casey Parker. She is our Chief
13 Bankruptcy Judge for the District of Wyoming. She also has the
14 pleasure and unique opportunity to be codesignated for the
15 District of Colorado, so her duties take her beyond the duty
16 station just here in Wyoming down to Colorado for bankruptcy
17 matters that are required of her down there.

18 To Judge Parker's left is our Chief U.S. Magistrate
19 Judge, Judge Kelly Rankin.

20 We have one other magistrate, full-time magistrate
21 judge whose duty station is in Mammoth, and we have several
22 part-time magistrate judges around Wyoming for criminal duties
23 called upon them. And our Chief Magistrate Judge supervises --
24 I'm not sure supervises is the right word, but he's designated
25 as Chief as to that magistrate judge system and operation in

1 Wyoming.

2 I also want to introduce our United States Marshal,
3 Marshal Wood, who is in the back of the auditorium. And a
4 number of his Marshals have helped us with this service here
5 today in terms of logistics and security. Thank you, Marshal
6 Wood, for your office's presence here.

7 I also want to thank the clerk's office for their
8 presence here today. Our clerk of court, Stephan Harris, sadly
9 I think he's caught that nasty cold that's circulating around
10 various locations and so he regrets that he can't be here.

11 District Judge Scott Skavdahl is also unable to join.
12 His duty station is in Casper and with the winter weather, I
13 think he decided that it was better to attend to court duties
14 in Casper and not risk the round trip.

15 Circuit Judge Greg Phillips was sad to not join here
16 today. He has U.S. Circuit Judge arguments in Denver and is
17 heading down there.

18 Last, I would like to thank my judicial assistant
19 Kellie Erickson, who is here in the crowd. She always does
20 such a nice job planning our naturalization ceremonies and
21 making sure with some coaching and paperwork and additional
22 coaching that I can make it through the ceremony without too
23 many significant omissions.

24 I would like to thank the talent of the Centralaires.
25 The songs -- your production and performance of the

1 Star-Spangled Banner in no easy feat. I look forward to
2 hearing America The Beautiful as well in the naturalization
3 ceremony.

4 So with those introductions, we will be administering
5 the oath for our new citizens. If you wish to follow along,
6 it's printed on the back of the program. I encourage you to
7 read along.

8 I would ask my fellow colleagues to stand with me and
9 the new citizens to stand as well.

10 (Administration of oath.)

11 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: I, state your name, hereby
12 declare, on oath, that I will absolutely and entirely renounce
13 and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince or
14 potentate, state or sovereignty, of which or of whom, I have
15 heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and
16 defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of
17 America, against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will
18 bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear
19 arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law;
20 that I will perform noncombatant service in the armed forces of
21 the United States when required by law; that I will perform
22 work of national importance under civil direction when required
23 by law; and that I will take this obligation freely, without
24 any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, so help me God.

25 Congratulations.

1 (Applause.)

2 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: While our citizens are
3 standing, I would invite the rest of the group collected to
4 stand and join our new citizens in taking the Pledge of
5 Allegiance.

6 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

7 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you. Please be
8 seated.

9 At this time I would ask the staff of Central High to
10 cue up the President's video to the new citizens.

11 (Text of the President's message):

12 PRESIDENT OBAMA: It is an honor and privilege to call
13 you a fellow citizen of the United States of America. This is
14 now officially your country, your own to protect, to defend and
15 to serve through active and engaged citizenship. Together we
16 are a nation united, not by any one culture or ethnicity or
17 ideology, but by the principles of opportunity, equality and
18 liberty that are enshrined in our founding documents.

19 Today marks a very special day in your life. You've
20 traveled a long path to get here. You've sworn a solemn oath
21 to this country and now have all the rights of citizenship.
22 With the privilege of citizenship, though, comes great
23 responsibilities, and so I ask that you use your freedoms and
24 your talents to contribute to the good of our nation and the
25 world.

1 Always remember that in America no dream is
2 impossible. Like millions of immigrants who have come before
3 you, you have the opportunity to enrich this country thorough
4 your contributions to civic society, business, culture and your
5 community. You can help write the next great chapter in our
6 American story, and together we can keep the beacon that is
7 America burning bright for all the world to see.

8 I'm proud to welcome you as a new citizen of this
9 country. May God bless you and may God continue to bless the
10 United States of America.

11 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you. Now we're very
12 pleased to have Justice William U. Hill. Justice Bill Hill
13 here today as our guest speaker.

14 My friend Justice Hill was appointed to the Wyoming
15 Supreme Court in 1998. He served as Chief Justice for the
16 Wyoming Supreme Court from 2002 to 2006. Prior to his
17 appointment to the Wyoming Supreme Court, he served the State
18 of Wyoming as its Attorney General from 1995 to 1998.

19 Previously, he served as an Assistant United States
20 Attorney for the District of Wyoming, so he was working in the
21 same office as Jim Anderson who addressed us earlier.

22 Before his service as the United States -- as
23 Assistant United States Attorney, Justice Hill had stints in
24 private practice in Riverton and in Cheyenne, Wyoming. For
25 several years he served as Chief of Staff for U.S. Senator

1 Malcolm Wallop in Washington, DC.

2 In 1970 he received his Bachelor's of Arts from the
3 University of Wyoming, and received his Juris Doctor from the
4 University of Wyoming College of Law in 1974. Justice Hill was
5 raised and educated in Riverton, Wyoming.

6 Please welcome Justice Hill as our speaker today.

7 (Applause.)

8 JUSTICE HILL: Thank you very much, Your Honor,
9 members of the judiciary, other friends from years past in the
10 federal court, ladies and gentlemen, honored guests and
11 particularly our seven new citizens.

12 This is a great honor and a privilege to be asked to
13 participate in your ceremony. Judges of any kind very seldom
14 get to do anything that is as enjoyable as this. Courtrooms
15 are often very serious, somber places, and auditoriums, too,
16 but it takes something like this, your naturalization or
17 perhaps the adoption of children or ceremonies where new
18 lawyers are sworn in to the Bar Association or new judges are
19 sworn in to serve on the bench, to equal this. Most of the
20 things that most judges do on a weekly, monthly basis do not
21 rise to this level because this is a genuinely great moment in
22 your lives.

23 As -- as you have heard in other remarks, it is a day
24 of great celebration, and I've been pretty close to it,
25 although I've never been able to participate here in a

1 naturalization ceremony. But as a young lawyer in Riverton,
2 Wyoming, which is a little town up in the middle of the state,
3 my father and I, also an attorney, got to assist two families
4 of folks from mainland China as they prepared to become
5 citizens. And as they went through all the steps of
6 preparation we got to assist them and advise them. And indeed,
7 when they all got sworn in, and both families did, in the
8 federal court here in Cheyenne, we got to come down with them
9 and to that extent we participated in the ceremony.

10 And it was a time of great celebration for those two
11 families. And I can also tell you that they stayed in that
12 little town up there and made great -- took great advantage of
13 the fact that they were now citizens of this wonderful country.
14 I had one more opportunity with a friend of mine who taught at
15 the University of Wyoming who came over and was sworn in.

16 But it is a grand day, and I know you all, of anyone
17 in the room, appreciate the magnitude of this accomplishment of
18 yours and this new achievement.

19 Those folks in Riverton truly believed that on that
20 day here in Cheyenne they became citizens of the greatest
21 country on earth, and I shared that belief. Many would share
22 that belief, perhaps even the belief that it is the greatest
23 country in human history.

24 Why is that? We have a history of great generosity in
25 this country when there is a tragedy or a natural disaster. We

1 have never shirked from committing the blood of our finest or
2 our treasure to securing freedom for other peoples or winning
3 it for other peoples as well as defending it for ourselves. We
4 are generous to a fault in our history, if you look at it, in
5 kindness to our enemies who have been overcome, restoring their
6 countries to new life and to vigor and to freedom.

7 That together is wonderful and it is an accomplishment
8 of this great country and the people that you are now a part
9 of, but I think the thing that has always set the United States
10 of America apart is the fact that we are still engaged in the
11 great adventure and the great experience of self-governance.
12 When our country was founded, it was done so after by force of
13 arms we had freed ourselves from a monarchy. We have no kings
14 or queens in America. We have no emperors. We have no
15 dictators. The great experiment is we govern ourselves.

16 I know you've probably read the Constitution by now so
17 you know that the first three words of that immortal document
18 are "We, the people." And that's who runs this country.
19 That's who runs our branches of government. That's who elects
20 the people who serve us in the executive branch of government
21 or in the legislative branch of government and, in fact, those
22 that serve on the judiciary are going to have to be appointed,
23 selected and appointed in one fashion or another to the federal
24 court and state court by the people that we elect.

25 And if they're not doing the job the way we, the

1 people, think they should do it, we may remove them from
2 office. Nobody is going to -- as Mr. Anderson articulated, so
3 many of the freedoms that are guaranteed in our Constitution
4 and in our Bill of Rights, if that is the We, the people's
5 decision that this person who we have placed in power no longer
6 has earned it, then We, the people may remove them.

7 So the limitations that we find in the Constitution
8 and in the Bill of Rights are not on the liberty of each of us.
9 Those are limitations placed on the government and what the
10 government can tell us and what the government can do to us,
11 and those limitations are what we all respect and what we cling
12 to as citizens of this great country.

13 Are we perfect in America? Hardly. Hardly. We
14 certainly have problems. But, we're working on it and you will
15 work on it. And I charge you today on behalf of all your
16 fellow citizens to get involved, study that history. My friend
17 from China in Riverton knew the history of the United States
18 probably better than anyone in Riverton, Wyoming, and you dare
19 not get into an argument with him because he would win. He
20 knew. He had studied. He had learned.

21 So I encourage you all to spend a lot of time learning
22 the history of your country, and as the President urged you as
23 well, be involved. Never hesitate, never fail to go vote, to
24 educate yourself, whatever the office may be. Please don't
25 fail to do that. It is a freedom that is hard won over our

1 history, and too many Americans neglect to do that. So please
2 don't do that.

3 Please get involved in your government. Please
4 contribute. That's exactly what we are asking you to do as we
5 make you citizens here today.

6 Finally, I would just say, again, what a wonderful
7 occasion this is and what a great day in your lives. And from
8 now on, you are Americans and I hope that you will enjoy it. I
9 hope that, as the president said, you will take the
10 responsibilities seriously and that you will prosper.

11 So, God bless and Godspeed, and we will see you soon.

12 (Applause.)

13 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you, Justice Hill.
14 Very fine remarks indeed.

15 At this time I would ask the judges to join me with --
16 I thought it befitting this celebration to invite the new
17 citizens up one at a time, much like in a graduation, to come
18 across the stage and get their paperwork representing their
19 naturalization.

20 So we will get up and stand in front of this table and
21 invite the citizens up on call.

22 (Presentation of certificates.)

23 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Jose Carlos Gonzalez Orozco.
24 Shan Li.

25 Sreejayan Nair.

1 Miroslav Tomschik.

2 Michael John Burr.

3 Jose Natividad Fuentes Garcia.

4 Julia Simone Stetler.

5 (Applause.)

6 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: We also have presentations
7 by the various patriotic organizations that helped us make this
8 ceremony so nice. We have presentations and refreshments
9 hosted by these patriotic organizations. The organizations
10 represented today are: The American Legion No. 6 Auxiliary,
11 Colonial Dames of America, Colonial Dames of the XVII Century,
12 Daughters of the American Revolution, Veterans of Foreign Wars
13 1881 Auxiliary, and Veterans of Foreign Wars 4343 Auxiliary.

14 If I could invite the presentation by the American
15 Legion No. 6 Auxiliary.

16 Next the Colonial Dames of America.

17 Next if the representatives of the Colonial Dames of
18 the XVII Century could step forward. Thank you very much.

19 We have the Daughters of the American Revolution.

20 And for the audience, we have a number of things being
21 distributed from American flags to copies of the Flag Code,
22 copies of the U.S. Constitution, a number of publications for
23 these new citizens.

24 We have the Veterans of Foreign Wars 1881 Auxiliary.

25 And I'll use this as a thank you to the Veterans of Foreign

1 Wars 4343 Auxiliary who host refreshments after this ceremony.
2 The refreshments will be served in the choir room, and
3 everybody -- our new citizens, their families, members in the
4 audience -- are welcome to join the auxiliary and the Court
5 there in the choir room.

6 (Presentations by patriotic organizations.)

7 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you very much from our
8 patriotic organizations.

9 We also have presentation of letters by our
10 congressional delegation. We have representatives here from
11 our senior Senator Mike Enzi's office, from Senator John
12 Barrasso's office and from Cynthia Lummis, our U.S. House of
13 Representatives. If you wish to come forward to distribute
14 your letters, congratulations from our congressional
15 delegation.

16 (Presentation of letters.)

17 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you very much for your
18 representation of the good offices of our delegation. Please
19 extend the Court's appreciation for their participation in the
20 ceremony by way of letters to each of our new citizens.

21 We also have a special presentation for today's new
22 citizens by the fifth grade class from Jessup Elementary. They
23 have some congratulatory materials that I understand that they
24 prepared for presentation to the new citizens. Please step
25 forward.

1 If one of you wants to advise what you're presenting
2 to the new citizens, I know the audience as well as the judges
3 would be interested in learning what you're giving the
4 citizens.

5 Let's see, can I get one of the students to tell us
6 what they're handing out?

7 JESSUP STUDENT: We're handing out letters of
8 congratulations that all of us signed so we could congratulate
9 all of these citizens for becoming citizens.

10 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Great. Very good. Thank
11 you so much.

12 (Presentation of letters.)

13 (Applause.)

14 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you to the entire
15 fifth grade class and the students and school officials who
16 made your attendance at the ceremony at the high school
17 possible. We appreciate your being here. Thank you.

18 At this time I would invite the Centralaires forward
19 again for a performance of America The Beautiful.

20 (America The Beautiful performed.)

21 (Applause.)

22 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you.

23 Now it is our opportunity to also address the new
24 citizens, congratulate and welcome them as colleagues and
25 cocitizens with us in this great country. I would like to

1 invite our newest judge, Judge Parker, to lead off with
2 comments.

3 JUDGE PARKER: Thank you, Judge Freudenthal. Thank
4 you for letting us use your school. Thank you, Jessup, for
5 joining us here today. Thank you for helping us support these
6 individuals in their endeavor in becoming United States
7 citizens. More importantly, congratulations. Thank you for
8 letting me a part of this. It is really an honor.

9 There are really no words that can express the
10 sacrifices you've made or how proud the people are that you are
11 here. Your oath that I will support and defend the
12 Constitution and laws of the United States of America against
13 all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith
14 and allegiance to the same: It is a very powerful statement, a
15 statement that cannot be taken lightly because only a portion
16 of United States citizens ever get to say those words. You are
17 making the same allegiance the president of the United States
18 made when he was sworn in, when United States senators are
19 sworn in, when judges are sworn in or when regular military
20 sign up to defend our country.

21 This is the land of the free. Many of you may have
22 come from backgrounds that did not allow you the freedom you
23 will now have here; the freedom to choose your path in life, to
24 form and express opinions, to educate yourselves, to be part of
25 the decision-making, to practice the religion of your choosing.

1 But as you've heard today, with freedom comes
2 responsibility. We're in the middle of a very contentious
3 presidential race. Having gone through this process, you, more
4 than many current United States citizens, as Justice Hill
5 pointed out, are attached to the histories and ideology of our
6 founding fathers, the spirit of the United States. Use this
7 knowledge and continue to learn and decide who you think will
8 make the country better, and use one of the strongest tools
9 citizenship grants you and go out and vote.

10 It is easy for us to take for granted the opportunity
11 provided to us in the United States. But we all have an
12 obligation to make the place we live a better place. You have
13 already shown your commitment to this by becoming a United
14 States citizen. The process requires dedication and tenacity.
15 Don't stop here. Take your commitment, your drive, your pride
16 and make us better.

17 You have had to study and learn America's history and
18 way of life. But your life, your culture and experiences can
19 enhance all of our lives. The only way for that to happen,
20 though, is for you to become involved. A state with such a
21 small population provides you an opportunity to be involved.
22 It is unique to this group, the opportunities that you will
23 have here in Wyoming. The access you have to your local and
24 state officials is like no other anywhere else in the United
25 States. Take advantage.

1 I hope for everybody here today that this ceremony
2 reminds us the United States was built on diversity. That
3 diversity makes us stronger as a nation. Our tolerance to
4 allow people the freedom to express their views, their
5 religion, their belief is the underpinning of the strengths of
6 this nation, the freedom these new citizens worked so hard to
7 attain. If we allow our tolerance to wane, so will the
8 strengths of our nation.

9 Again, congratulations. Your dedication to this
10 process demonstrates great things to come for all of you.

11 (Applause.)

12 THE COURT: Thank you.

13 Judge Rankin, do you have some remarks?

14 CHIEF MAGISTRATE JUDGE RANKIN: I do. Thank you,
15 Judge Freudenthal.

16 Welcome. You are all now Americans. Congratulations
17 to each of you. I know this is a very special day. Your
18 families and friends are with you, a number of other observers,
19 and I know there are two fifth grade classes, as we saw a
20 moment ago, and they have been excited about today. They have
21 been working on these cards and love to attend these
22 ceremonies, and I know that because I've got the inside scoop
23 from my son Sam who is back there acting very shy.

24 But it is an honor to be here. It is such a special
25 day, one that you will remember for a long time. And I would

1 like to recognize what a long road I know it has been for you
2 and your families. If the people knew how much time and effort
3 and commitment goes into this process -- and I'm sure it has
4 also been a struggle at times. It has not always been easy.
5 Leaving your homeland, saying good-bye to beloved family and
6 friends, traveling to this country, finding a job, adjusting to
7 a new culture and a new way of life.

8 But the good news for all of us is the best of your
9 culture, your way of life, is the best of ours. Your
10 traditions enrich not only your family, but they enrich this
11 great nation. Always remember that this country was founded on
12 the diversity of many tribes, countries and cultures. We've
13 all been blessed by the rich culture and traditions of so many
14 people like you, of so many people that came before you.
15 America is a combination of the best of everyone who comes
16 here. This great country depends on new citizens like
17 yourselves to learn and to grow. Our survival depends on the
18 values of diversity, tolerance, dignity and respect that we
19 live by and teach each other every day.

20 Our very first president, George Washington,
21 recognized the importance of immigrants like you to our land,
22 not just the rich and high-ranking newcomer, quote, "... but
23 the oppressed and persecuted of all nations and religions whom
24 we shall welcome to a participation in all our rights and
25 privileges," end quote.

1 Being a United States citizen, as you heard from Judge
2 Parker and Justice Hill, means that you are free. The
3 Constitution and laws of this country are designated to protect
4 your freedom. You're free to think on your own and to perform
5 your own opinions. And you may voice those opinions whether
6 many people or few people agree with you.

7 You are free to work where you want to work, to read
8 what you want to read, to say what you want to say. You are
9 free to believe what you want to believe in matters of
10 religion. There is no single American way to think or to
11 believe. As a citizen of the United States, you are free to
12 follow your own path wherever it may lead you.

13 But that freedom, with it comes responsibility.
14 Freedom of democracy comes with the responsibility to
15 participate in the Democratic process by voting, not casually
16 or carelessly, but in a way that is thoughtful and informed.
17 You have a responsibility to educate yourselves so you can make
18 good choices for yourself, your family and this country that is
19 now your country.

20 This democracy so hard fought for only works when its
21 people participate fully by helping to choose who will govern
22 us all and by taking that process seriously.

23 Freedom of democracy also carries a responsibility to
24 your community and to your country. You must be willing to
25 serve this country as you can. Use your talents, be active in

1 your community, give back to your new country through civic
2 participation and service.

3 I'm sure all of you have someone whose help made it
4 possible for you to be here today -- a friend, a relative, a
5 neighbor. Maybe they are even here with you today. As you
6 celebrate your new citizenship, make sure you let them know how
7 much their help meant to you. And perhaps a wonderful way to
8 honor them for their service to you is for you to reach a hand
9 out to someone else that may need your help. Your new country,
10 our country, will only continue to thrive if we care about our
11 fellow citizens as human beings.

12 Again, congratulations and welcome. You have worked
13 incredibly hard to earn your citizenship, and I know that I
14 speak for all of your Wyoming neighbors when I say that we are
15 all grateful to have you.

16 (Applause.)

17 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Judge Johnson, I turn to you
18 as the longest serving member on our court.

19 JUDGE JOHNSON: You get to hear from an old geezer
20 now.

21 Thank you, each one of you, for the wonderful talents,
22 your minds and the energy of your lives that you bring to this
23 nation, the contributions that you have made and will be making
24 in future years as you grow in your citizenship.

25 As representatives of the United States District Court

1 for the District of Wyoming, we are honored to be present today
2 at Central High School and participate in this important event
3 that will mark the beginning of the lives of those who have
4 taken the oath of citizenship as citizens of the most
5 altruistic nation on earth.

6 We are doubly blessed today because this ceremony is
7 occurring before the students and the educators at Central High
8 School as well as the students of Jessup, fifth grade students
9 at Jessup Elementary who are witnessing and learning firsthand
10 the obligations that are solemnly taken by the naturalized
11 citizens which are the same duties that each native born
12 daughter and son assumes on birth.

13 This ceremony may serve to inform you of the struggle
14 and commitment on the part of some of the students here who
15 have parents who have come to America for better opportunities
16 and the blessing of a first-class education that their children
17 might achieve at high schools and grade schools like Jessup and
18 the blessings of a first-class education.

19 I hope that we take advantage of opportunities to
20 become acquainted with those among us who are naturalized
21 citizens, the students, their families and friends who bring
22 their cultures, religious beliefs and languages to our city.
23 We must be mindful of the refugee catastrophe that is unfolding
24 in the world today as families and individuals seek liberty,
25 freedom from oppression, freedom from want and freedom to

1 express individual opinions, beliefs and cultures.

2 Each of our new citizens is, indeed, a member of a
3 special group. There are approximately 13,500,000 lawful
4 permanent residents in the United States, including students
5 studying in America's colleges and universities, persons who
6 have found solace here from oppression and threats to their
7 lives and the millions who have come seeking employment who
8 have attained green cards.

9 8,000,000 of these lawful residents are eligible to
10 seek citizenship as each one of you have done. Approximately
11 4,500,000 persons are not presently eligible for citizenship
12 for various reasons, including the lengthy waiting period
13 required by law. Each of our citizens who have taken the oath
14 today are, indeed, special, for they have endured the
15 sacrifices, the waiting, the testing necessary to have made
16 their dream come true.

17 The oath freely given today is an oath to support
18 ideas of freedom. The Constitution and laws of the United
19 States are not a person or a place. Prior allegiances to other
20 governments and kings have been set aside. In time of war, in
21 national need, the duty of the citizen will hence forward be to
22 serve the United States. The status of being an American means
23 that each citizen has a duty to support the laws which
24 guarantee our rights.

25 We share a duty to inform ourselves of the issues

1 affecting our lives, our communities, and our nation. We
2 should express our views by voting or even seeking public
3 office if we are able to do so. In America we have the freedom
4 to express ourselves, to write, speak and read what our minds
5 conceive. A citizen is free to worship and express his or her
6 spirituality. The courtrooms of America are places where
7 persons accused of violating the criminal laws will be heard by
8 juries composed of fellow citizens and where the disputes of
9 citizens are resolved under the rule of law with the
10 opportunity to be heard without regard to personal wealth or
11 status. I wish that every citizen would visit the courts of
12 this land to educate themselves about what transpires there.

13 We are indeed honored to be here today with you, and I
14 wish to leave you today with these thoughts from Learned Hand,
15 a United States judge who spoke at a ceremony like this one.
16 However, the ceremony in New York City occurred in the midst of
17 the Second World War, and that naturalization ceremony was
18 attended by a much larger audience than this. Judge Hand spoke
19 these words about our precious liberty. I think the words are
20 as well written today as they were during that perilous period:

21 "Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women. When it dies
22 there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it. No
23 constitution, no law, no court can even do much to help it.
24 While it lies there it needs no constitution, no law, no
25 court to save it. And what is this liberty which must lie

1 in the hearts of men and women? It is not the ruthless and
2 unbridled will. It is not freedom to do as one likes.
3 That is the denial of liberty. It leads straight to its
4 overthrow.

5 "What, then, is the spirit of liberty? I cannot define it.
6 I can only tell you my own faith. The spirit of liberty is
7 a spirit which is not too sure that it is right. The
8 spirit of liberty is the spirit which seeks to understand
9 the minds of other men and women. The spirit of liberty is
10 a spirit which weighs the interests alongside" -- "weighs
11 their interest alongside its own without bias. The spirit
12 of liberty remembers that not even the sparrow falls to
13 earth unheeded."

14 Judge Hand's words seem to be good words for both new
15 and old citizens to consider as we go forward together.

16 Congratulations, fellow citizens.

17 (Applause.)

18 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Well, ladies and gentlemen,
19 our new citizens, it is my privilege to join in all of these
20 wonderful congratulatory remarks and recognize you as new
21 citizens.

22 The oath of allegiance which I encourage people to
23 follow when it was read and taken by our new citizens can be a
24 little unsettling. Think, if you will, if you were asked to
25 renounce, renounce, turn away, turn your back on a foreign

1 state or sovereignty, the foreign state and sovereigns under
2 which these new citizens were born and raised. They were
3 asked, now is your time to turn your back on that and face
4 America and embrace America as your new home.

5 Now that renunciation of the foreign state, the
6 prince, the potentate doesn't mean that you renounce everything
7 and everyone that you love from your countries of birth. Your
8 culture and your heritage enrich us. Hold your devotion, your
9 love, what made you strong and made you. The people that you
10 are here today comes from that history in your country of
11 birth. Carry it in your heart. You can renounce a sovereignty
12 and a prince and potentate and love the culture and heritage,
13 the friends and loved ones that remain behind.

14 As I say, welcome. Welcome to your new home, America.
15 It is a great country, as remarked by Justice Hill and other
16 judges here. It causes one to think what made this country so
17 great. We talked about the rule of law. We talked about the
18 Constitution and the importance to support and defend the
19 Constitution and the laws.

20 But there's a third leg on that stool, and that's the
21 people here, the liberty that is held in the hearts of our
22 citizens, you and I alike. All of us as Americans, unless
23 you're blessed to have come from a Native American, have an
24 immigrant in your future. And we have -- or in our past, and
25 we have an immigrant in our future.

1 Whether that immigrant in the past is a distant past
2 or more recent, as the new citizens here; whether it is German,
3 as one of our citizens is from Germany or hails from Germany
4 previously, or Mexico or China or perhaps the more exotic
5 lands, Africa, Sweden, there's an immigrant in our history.
6 And we owe a debt of gratitude to those immigrants in our past,
7 a debt we can't forget, just as we owe a debt of gratitude to
8 the immigrants here today who become new citizens, who bring --
9 who are bringing their history, their heritage, their culture,
10 their diversity to this great land.

11 It is the constant infusion of immigrants who really
12 have made this country great, along with the Constitution and
13 the laws. The Constitution and rule of law would be dead
14 documents without that part in the heart of each of us called
15 liberty, that part that embraces the freedoms, the privileges,
16 and the obligations of what it means to be an American.

17 We have talked about what that means to be an
18 American, and what it doesn't mean. In today's time a lot of
19 discord and controversy, debates and arguments in the news and
20 on the Internet, you may take away that there's really just one
21 true American way to be: One true American religion, one true
22 American way to think and believe about social matters or
23 economic matters or political matters, or perhaps one true set
24 of values because, sadly, we -- there are people in this
25 country that tend to criticize those that don't think the way

1 they do.

2 But never believe it when anyone suggests that there
3 is one true American way to think or believe. As Judge Rankin
4 said, being an American means you can freely and openly hold
5 the religious beliefs that you wish or none at all. Being an
6 American means that you can openly adhere to political,
7 economic and social views, even if they differ from everyone
8 you know. You can openly discuss and hold beliefs and values
9 from cultures that differ from those of your friends and
10 neighbors. It's the tolerance that we should hold in our heart
11 along with the liberty to recognize, respect and realize that
12 that is part of this great country we call America.

13 The simple fact is that there is no way that is called
14 an American way to think or believe. Indeed, conformity of
15 thought was one of the points of rebellion that Justice Hill
16 discussed today. It is against our democratic principles to
17 force conformity of thought. It is contrary to the underlying
18 principles upon which this great country was founded.

19 You heard from Judge Johnson a great and truly
20 historic set of remarks from Justice Hand. I think about Felix
21 Frankfurter during these naturalization ceremonies because he
22 was an immigrant. He came to this country from Austria. He
23 came in 1894 when he was 12 years old. He became a naturalized
24 citizen. 12 years old. He went on to be a justice of the
25 United States Supreme Court.

1 Justice Frankfurter, that wonderful immigrant who
2 became a naturalized citizen and aspired and took the bench on
3 the highest court in the land, believed that, in his words, in
4 this country the highest office is citizen. It is not
5 president. It is not senator. It is not justice and it is not
6 judge. The highest office is citizen.

7 You seven citizens have now assumed that high office
8 with its privileges and duties, just like any office. You have
9 a duty, as we talked about, to be informed, to participate in
10 this great country, including participating in the political
11 process, a duty to exercise your privilege of vote, your duty
12 to serve on a jury. That's one of the duties of national
13 importance that falls in that oath. And, yes, the duty to pay
14 taxes. That's not in that oath but that's out there in terms
15 of upholding the laws.

16 You also, as has been mentioned, have a duty to work
17 and serve this country to make the United States of America the
18 country that you hoped to find when you got here and the
19 country you want it to be.

20 Again, welcome to this new high office of citizen.
21 You're part of the We, the people, but you are that select set
22 of people in our country that can proudly say, "I'm a citizen."

23 And thank you for the enrichment that I'm sure you'll
24 offer this great country of ours.

25 (Applause.)

1 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: I would like to, again,
2 thank the Centralaires for your wonderful music talent.

3 I would like to thank the administrative staff of
4 Central High for making our stay possible and enjoyable.

5 Thank you to the students and teachers who have joined
6 us here today. Thank you to the students and staff of Jessup
7 for allowing the fifth graders to participate in this wonderful
8 naturalization ceremony.

9 Thank you to our patriotic organizations'
10 representatives and our congressional delegation
11 representatives.

12 Again, as another reminder, refreshments hosted by the
13 Veterans of Foreign Wars 4343 Auxiliary will be served in the
14 choir room.

15 Is there anything further in terms of business of the
16 court for naturalization purposes?

17 We'll stand in recess until call.

18 (Proceedings concluded 2:44 p.m., March 7, 2016.)
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