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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
July 17, 2017
10:00 a.m.

RHONDA JANE ASHTON, DERYA AYDOGDU,
DENYS GROVER CASTRO, JEASIK CHO,
GERARDO ANTONIO CORTEZ MICHEL, ANDEJ DANCZIK,
ANTONIO HERNANDEZ MARES, THORSTEN MOERK JANUS,
HAEBICHI KIM, JIN MI LEE, GUHAT ITIS LIBAN,
FILO LOSALU, COUMARANE MANI, ELENA MCDANIEL,
TIMOTHY CHRISTOPHER MILLER, MARIA DEBROY MONZON,
MOHAMED AMIR MUSA, LINIKONI TAUFANA, SHUNDE YIN,

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 CATHLEEN D. PARKER
United States Bankruptcy Judge

APPEARANCES:

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Federal Official Court Reporter
2120 Capitol Avenue, Room 2226
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001

Proceedings recorded by mechanical stenography, transcript
produced with computer.

1 (Proceedings commenced 10:00 a.m., July 17, 2017.)

2 COURTRROOM DEPUTY: Oyez, Oyez, the Honorable United
3 States District Court for the District of Wyoming is now open
4 for the transition of business, pursuant to adjournment: The
5 Honorable Nancy D. Freudenthal, Chief United States District
6 Judge, presiding, along with the Honorable Alan B. Johnson,
7 United States District Judge; the Honorable Kelly H. Rankin,
8 Chief United States Magistrate Judge; and the Honorable
9 Cathleen D. Parker, Chief United States Bankruptcy Judge.

10 All having business before this Honorable Court draw
11 near, give attention and you shall be heard. God save the
12 United States of America and this Honorable Court.

13 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Please be seated.

14 As the first order of business, I'll suspend the local
15 rule prohibiting cameras in the courtroom, so I would welcome
16 our local news outlet and anyone else to photograph these
17 proceedings as you may desire.

18 Again, welcome. Particularly welcome to our new
19 citizens. Let me make a few introductions. As announced, my
20 name is Nancy Freudenthal. I'm the Chief Judge for the
21 District of Wyoming.

22 To my left is Alan Johnson, former Chief Judge and
23 active District Judge for the District of Wyoming.

24 To my far right is Chief Magistrate Judge Kelly Rankin
25 and to my immediate right is Chief Bankruptcy Judge Casey

1 Parker.

2 I'll make some additional announcements and welcomes
3 as we go, but I would like to welcome Sherrie Smith here from
4 the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services. Thank you very
5 much for attending the naturalization ceremony today.

6 We have our Assistant U.S. Attorney, Mark Klaassen,
7 here. And it is my understanding, Mark, that you will provide
8 the roll call of citizens to be naturalized. If you wish to do
9 that now, I'd welcome that.

10 MR. KLAASSEN: Thank you. Good morning, Your Honor.

11 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Good morning.

12 MR. KLAASSEN: May it please the Court, Judge Rankin,
13 Judge Johnson, Judge Parker. I'm here as a representative of
14 the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Wyoming
15 and on behalf of the Attorney General of the United States in
16 these proceedings.

17 It is my privilege to introduce to the Court the
18 following individuals who appear in person today on their
19 petitions for naturalization as United States citizens.

20 I've done my best to try and track down the proper
21 pronunciation of your names, but I'm really sorry if I get this
22 wrong today.

23 The first name I have is Rhonda Jane Ashton, formerly
24 of Australia; Derya Aydogdu, formerly of Turkey; Denys Grover
25 Castro, formerly of Bolivia; Jeasik Cho, formerly of South

1 Korea; Gerardo Antonio Cortez Michel, formerly of Mexico; Andej
2 Danczik, formerly of the Czech Republic; Antonio Hernandez
3 Mares, formerly of Mexico; Thorsten Moerk Janus, formerly of
4 Denmark; Haebichi Kim, formerly of the Republic of Korea; Jin
5 Mi Lee, formerly of the Republic of Korea; Guhat Itis Liban,
6 formerly of Somalia; Filo Losalu, formerly of Tonga; Coumarane
7 Mani, formerly of India; Elena McDaniel, formerly of Moldova;
8 Timothy Christopher Miller, formerly of Canada; Maria Debroy
9 Monzon, formerly of Guatemala; Mohamed Amir Musa, formerly of
10 Somalia; Linikoni Taufua, formerly of Tonga -- I like the
11 jacket, by the way. It is nice -- Shunde Yin, from the Peoples
12 Republic of China.

13 Your Honor, each of these individuals has been
14 interviewed and examined under oath by a designated examiner of
15 the United States Citizenship & Immigration Services. The
16 examiner has also completed a character and background
17 investigation. CIS indicates that each of these individuals
18 has met all requirements for naturalization and are well
19 qualified as desirable candidates for United States
20 citizenship.

21 As a fellow citizen I want to welcome and congratulate
22 each of you.

23 So on the recommendation of the Immigration officer,
24 it is my honor to move that all of these petitioners be granted
25 United States citizenship on taking the oath. Thank you, Your

1 Honor.

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

3 We heard the motion. I would invite all citizens to
4 be naturalized to stand to take the oath of citizenship. I
5 would also invite my fellow judges to join.

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

21 Let's welcome our new citizens.

22 (Applause.)

23 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: And I would invite all to
24 stand to join our new citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance.

25 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

1 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you. You may be
2 seated.

3 We're happy to have Jim and Rhonda Johanson here
4 joining us to perform "This is America."

5 ("This is America.")

6 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you, Mr. and Mrs.
7 Johanson. It is wonderful to have you here.

8 At this time I would like to introduce our guest
9 speaker, Justice Michael Davis. Before moving into his
10 official introduction, I have to note that he is the husband of
11 a key member of my chambers staff, my court reporter, Jan
12 Davis. And so that in my mind is a first order of business and
13 major qualification for him to be here to address the citizens.

14 Justice Davis was appointed to the Wyoming Supreme
15 Court by Governor Matt Mead on August 30th, 2012. Before his
16 appointment to the Wyoming Supreme Court, Justice Davis served
17 as a District Judge here in Cheyenne, the First Judicial
18 District.

19 He also served in the United States Army from 1973 to
20 1975.

21 He received a BA suma cum laude from Western State
22 College of Colorado in 1977 and a Juris Doctorate with Honor
23 from the University of Wyoming College of Law in 1980.

24 It was a real pleasure to have Justice Davis in my
25 class throughout law school. He set the top bar. Everybody

1 knew that he was going to get the high A in the classes.

2 Justice Davis practiced law with the firm of Yonkee &
3 Toner in Sheridan from 1980 to 2006 and from a Cheyenne branch
4 office of that same firm from 2006 until 2008, when he became a
5 district judge.

6 He is a member by way of Judicial Fellow of the
7 American College of Trial Lawyers.

8 Justice Davis, we would welcome your comments to our
9 new citizens.

10 JUSTICE DAVIS: Thank you, Chief Judge Freudenthal.
11 May it please the Court.

12 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Justice.

13 JUSTICE DAVIS: Pleasure to be back here standing at a
14 lectern and talking to the folks in the jury box because I
15 haven't done that for over ten years since I became a judge.
16 And I am just as nervous as I ever was.

17 But I'm deeply honored to be among the first to
18 congratulate you, my fellow Americans, on becoming citizens of
19 this great nation. I was thinking as I tried to prepare for
20 this of the journeys you have made to get to this courtroom, to
21 this day, when you receive the honor and the award of
22 citizenship that you deserve. You had physical journeys, and
23 I'm guessing some of them were kind of harrowing. It might not
24 have been that easy to get here in the first place.

25 And then you had the journey of going through the

1 process of attaining citizenship, which is not easy either. I
2 suspect, particularly from looking around this courtroom, that
3 you had some help along the way from your friends and family.
4 And just as this is your day, this is their day, too.

5 And I wonder, Chief Judge, if it would be all right to
6 have some applause for the friends and family that are here.

7 (Applause.)

8 JUSTICE DAVIS: I'm sure that your children and their
9 children and their children's children will cherish the story
10 of your journey and your accomplishments today.

11 I was thinking to myself also that it is kind of
12 ironic that I would speak to you about the value of United
13 States citizenship. I was given that great gift just by being
14 born. I was the production of forces of nature and happened to
15 be in the right place at the right time to be born in a little
16 hospital in a little town in Kansas.

17 You, on the other hand, have chosen this country, and
18 beyond that, you chose to become citizens, and you worked to
19 attain that honor. I suspect that if anybody can talk about
20 the value of being a citizen of the United States it is you,
21 for you have lived that experience in a way that those of us
22 who were just given that great gift have not.

23 Our nation except for our Native Americans is a nation
24 of immigrants and of the descendents of immigrants. That
25 background and tradition have led us to embrace our differences

1 rather than to fear them.

2 There is in this country no right way to think or
3 believe. We are a nation which tolerates differences of
4 opinion and indeed encourages them. At times I must admit in
5 history we have failed to live up to the ideals we profess
6 today, but I believe as a society we grow closer each day to
7 attaining those ideals. Each of you will make the tapestry of
8 our state richer for the traditions and beliefs you bring with
9 you and stronger for the resolve you have shown.

10 Now that you have this new status, you embark on a new
11 road. I was struck by something President Barack Obama said at
12 a naturalization ceremony at the National Archives in 2007. He
13 said, and quoting him, "The truth is being an American is hard.
14 Being part of a democratic government is hard. Being a citizen
15 is hard. It is a challenge. It is supposed to be. There's no
16 respite from our ideals. All of us are called upon to live up
17 to our expectations for ourselves, not just when it is
18 convenient, but when it is inconvenient, when it is tough and
19 when we're afraid."

20 I think he was speaking of the challenges the vote
21 brings. Now that you can vote, you will want to do so wisely
22 because you are responsible for the governance of this country
23 and all of its subdivisions. You have a lot of elected
24 officials to keep track of. You're going to want to know
25 what's going on out there.

1 I'm talking about starting with the local school board
2 for the school where your kids go. You're going to want to
3 make sure those folks are responsibly running your schools and
4 educating your children. To city and county officials, the
5 folks making sure the roads are kept open, that the bridges
6 continue to function, and then, of course, to the state
7 legislators and elected officials to assure that we have laws
8 in the state of Wyoming which are appropriate for our citizens,
9 which provide the adequate protections and opportunities that
10 you deserve. And, of course, you have to monitor our
11 representatives in Congress, and I think you may hear from some
12 of them today, or their representatives. And you even have to
13 monitor the job performance of our Commander-in-Chief. So
14 that's an awful lot to keep track of.

15 You're very fortunate to live in Wyoming. Your local
16 and state officials and our congressional representatives are
17 just a phone call or an e-mail away. They are approachable,
18 and they're interested in what you have to say.

19 You have every right to attend school board meetings,
20 city council meetings, county commissioner meetings and the
21 committee and other meetings of our state legislature. The
22 legislature even streams those so you don't have to leave your
23 home to know what's going on. You can weigh in, present your
24 views and speak out against injustice, and you may have to
25 speak out for those who cannot speak. And I hope you take that

1 opportunity.

2 Our nation will only become weak if our citizens
3 become apathetic about how it is governed. It will always be
4 strong if citizens are well informed and involved.

5 Perhaps along your journey you will decide you should
6 serve in government at some level. This is not a small
7 sacrifice, as you can see watching politics these days. And if
8 you don't believe me, you can ask Judge Freudenthal whose
9 husband was our former governor and one of the very best in
10 Wyoming history.

11 You have to open yourself up to debate and criticism,
12 some of which is becoming unpleasantly personal in these days.
13 And you do that just to serve your city, county, state or
14 nation for compensation which probably nowhere weighs against
15 the things you have to go through.

16 But I hope you will take up that challenge if you
17 believe you can make a contribution to our democracy. We need
18 great leaders and we need diversity among our leaders.

19 We are in a magnificent courtroom today, and you're
20 sitting, as I've already pointed out, where the jury usually
21 sits. Someday you're going to be called to serve upon a jury.
22 And maybe it will be here, maybe even in this courtroom, but
23 maybe it will be in state court up the street or in the
24 counties that you come from. I hope that you will view this as
25 an opportunity to not only exercise one of your rights as a

1 citizen, but to serve your state and your nation and to support
2 the rule of law.

3 You took an oath a moment ago to support and defend
4 the Constitution. Thomas Jefferson said, and I'll quote him,
5 that he considered "trial by jury as the only anchor yet
6 imagined by man by which a government can be held to the
7 principles of its constitution."

8 I think what he was saying is if you look at our
9 Constitution, it is words written in fading ink on a very old
10 piece of paper. What makes those words mean something are
11 people, the people on our juries, the people who are in our
12 system. It is ironic that with all the judges and lawyers in
13 the world, the only people we trust to make decisions about
14 whether the Government or the State has proven another citizen
15 guilty of a crime beyond a reasonable doubt is citizens who
16 serve on juries. That just tells you how important it is.

17 You will make an immeasurable contribution by serving
18 as jurors and applying the rule of law in the cases that you
19 sit on, and I hope you will do that.

20 In 1944 this country was in the throes of World War
21 II, a war which was won, but at great cost, and in 1944 the
22 outcome was very much in doubt. It was a troubled time for
23 this country. A judge named Learned Hand gave a speech to a
24 large crowd on the 4th of July of that year in New York. I
25 won't read it all to you, but there's some high points I'd like

1 to hit.

2 And I want to tell you that the title of that speech
3 was the Spirit of Liberty. Judge Hand said that, and I quote,
4 "Liberty lies within the hearts of men and women. When it
5 dies, no constitution, no law, no court can save it." He
6 explained, as we should all realize, that it is difficult to
7 define the spirit of liberty, that at least it must be a spirit
8 that is not too sure it is right. It is a spirit that seeks to
9 understand other men and women and their points of view, and it
10 seeks a nation in which the least are given the same
11 consideration as the greatest. The last is what we call the
12 rule of law. And I think the spirit of liberty is also
13 recognizing that at times we have to subordinate our own
14 interests to those of our fellow men and women for the good of
15 our states and our nation.

16 In conclusion, I hope that you will be able to enjoy
17 this landmark day in your lives with your friends and family.
18 You should revel in your accomplishment and truly make the most
19 of it. Most of all, I hope the spirit of liberty will be in
20 your hearts as you turn the page and start the next chapter of
21 your life. Thank you.

22 (Applause.)

23 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you, Justice Davis.
24 Very inspirational and appropriate speech for our new citizens,
25 as well as everyone else here today.

1 Before we move to presenting certificates, I'd like to
2 recognize some of the patriotic organizations and others here
3 today. And we've got -- and I recognize them not only because
4 of their service in our community, but they support and help us
5 during naturalization proceedings. You'll be receiving
6 information in a packet that normally is handed out by the
7 patriotic organizations, but because we are a bit crowded
8 today, we thought we would just put it all in a packet. But
9 nonetheless, they're a part of our proceedings, and I thank
10 them very much for their continued support and representation.

11 We'll have a tea after this ceremony is concluded in
12 the jury room. All are welcome. Please join us. The tea will
13 be hosted -- hosted by the Daughters of the American
14 Revolution. Members of that organization are Judy Engelhart,
15 Jeanette Chambers and Teresa Wright.

16 We have the American flag that you've got in your
17 packet. That's presented by the VFW 1881 Auxiliary,
18 represented by Carol Tabor.

19 We've got the American Flag Code -- I hope it made it
20 into your packets. That's presented by the VFW 4343 Auxiliary.
21 The representative is Kay Thomas.

22 The Star-Spangled Banner booklet is presented by the
23 Colonial Dames of the XVII Century, represented by Van Mellblom
24 and Judy Norman.

25 Because I actually looked in your packets, and I

1 thought I'm going to take one of these and take it home -- The
2 Citizen's Almanac, beautiful book, and that's presented by the
3 Colonial Dames of America. We've got Claire Davis and Ibbey
4 Davis representing that organization.

5 And the United States Constitution along with the
6 Declaration of Independence, all in one booklet, presented by
7 the American Legion No. 6 Auxiliary. Eva Moore and Linda
8 Hollingsworth are here representing that organization.

9 I believe -- do we have the letters in the packets?

10 COURTROOM DEPUTY: The Senators' offices have them.

11 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: We will call the
12 representatives of our two Senators and Congresswoman forward
13 later, and I'll recognize their offices when they're ready to
14 present their letters.

15 At this time I'd invite the -- I'd ask Tammy, our
16 courtroom deputy, to perhaps move the lectern a bit out of the
17 way and we will all crowd down there because it is important
18 for us to welcome you in presenting the certificates that
19 you've worked so hard to have awarded to you today.

20 Invite all the judges to join me for that
21 presentation.

22 And, family members, as you're awaiting your loved
23 one's presentation, you're welcome to come into the well. It
24 will be a bit crowded, but if you'd like a closer photograph,
25 please feel free to come forward to photograph the

1 presentation. And we will be here after this ceremony as well
2 if you'd like individual photographs.

3 First presentation is Rhonda Ashton. Congratulations.

4 If you'd like to go down -- it is like a receiving line here.

5 Then we have Derya Aydogdu, recently married.

6 Congratulations.

7 Denys Castro, congratulations.

8 Jeasik Cho, congratulations. I hope I'm pronouncing
9 that correctly.

10 Gerardo Cortez Michel, congratulations.

11 Andej Danczik, congratulations.

12 Antonio Hernandez Mares, congratulations.

13 Thorsten Janus, congratulations.

14 Haebichi Kim, congratulations.

15 Jin Mi Lee, congratulations.

16 Guhat Liban.

17 We have a young family who is moving down to be
18 welcomed. Congratulations.

19 Filo Losalu, congratulations.

20 Coumarane Mani, congratulations. This new citizen is
21 Judge Johnson's son-in-law.

22 Elena McDaniel, congratulations.

23 Timothy Miller, congratulations.

24 Maria Monzon, congratulations.

25 Mohamed Musa, congratulations.

1 Linikoni Taufa, congratulations.

2 And Shunde Yin, congratulations.

3 (Applause.)

4 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: And now I'd like to welcome
5 forward the representatives of our congressional officeholders.
6 At the national level we've got Senator Enzi's office
7 represented, we have Senator Barrasso's office represented and
8 Congresswoman Liz Cheney's office represented. If you'd like
9 to come forward to make your presentations.

10 (Presentation by delegations.)

11 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you. And thank you
12 for maneuvering through that jury box with all the cords and
13 equipment. It is no easy -- no easy matter. Thank you very
14 much.

15 Please stand for the presentation by Jim and Rhonda
16 Johanson of "God Bless America."

17 ("God Bless America.")

18 (Applause.)

19 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: I know each of us up here on
20 the bench wish to congratulate and welcome you as new citizens.
21 I would call on Chief Judge Parker for some remarks.

22 JUDGE PARKER: Thank you, Judge Freudenthal. And
23 thank you to everyone here who helped support these individuals
24 to get to this point, but most importantly, congratulations on
25 your citizenship and thank you very much for letting me be a

1 part of it. I've learned from talking to others after these
2 ceremonies that this is a little daunting, that this is not
3 what they expected when they showed up, that they kind of
4 expected to come into a room, take an oath, maybe some cake and
5 leave.

6 But as Justice Davis said, this is what makes Wyoming
7 great is this room is full of people that really want to be a
8 part of this. They want to be a part of this history, and they
9 want to welcome you. I don't know if you've noticed, but
10 there's also been like a rotating gallery out in the hallway
11 because we have standing room only and all the people that want
12 to see this part because everyone wants to welcome you as new
13 U.S. citizens.

14 It is truly an honor for me to be part of and really a
15 highlight of my short career on this side of the podium. But
16 even on the other side of the podium it is really a highlight
17 to be able to be part of this.

18 The oath that you took, "that I will support and
19 defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of
20 America against all enemies, foreign and domestic," this is
21 such a powerful statement. As Justice Davis -- or like Justice
22 Davis, I was born with the privilege of being a citizen. But I
23 also in becoming a federal judge was given the privilege of
24 being able to make that statement, like my colleagues up here,
25 but many U.S. citizens are never given an opportunity to make

1 that statement that you got to make. United States Presidents
2 and U.S. Senators get to make that statement when they are
3 sworn in and the members of our military when they are sworn in
4 to defend our country get to make that statement, so you are
5 part of a very small group that are privileged to make that
6 statement in front of others.

7 America, the land of the free, it is the freedom to
8 choose your path in life, to form and express opinions, to
9 educate yourself, to be part of decision-making, to practice a
10 religion of your choosing. But as you have been told and will
11 be told, freedom -- with freedom comes responsibility. You
12 have already shown this by your commitment to becoming United
13 States citizens, a process that requires dedication and
14 tenacity and I'm sure a lot of sacrifice.

15 But don't stop here. Take your commitment, your
16 drive, your pride and make us better. You've had to study and
17 learn America's history and way of life. I would guarantee you
18 probably are so much better in American history right now than
19 I could even try to be and probably better than a lot of people
20 in this room. So use this, make us all better. But use your
21 own history, your own culture, your own experience. Do not
22 lose this, and add this to our culture and our country.

23 The United States was built on diversity. The
24 diversity you bring here today makes us a stronger nation. Our
25 tolerance to allow people the freedom to express their views is

1 an underpinning of the strength of our nation, something that
2 you as new citizens worked so hard to attain. And I believe if
3 we allow our tolerance to wane, so will our strength as a
4 nation.

5 So again, congratulations. Your dedication to this
6 process demonstrates great things to come for all of you.

7 (Applause.)

8 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Chief Judge Rankin.

9 CHIEF MAGISTRATE JUDGE RANKIN: Thank you, Chief Judge
10 Freudenthal.

11 Again, welcome, and probably good to hear the words
12 you are now Americans. Again, congratulations to all of you
13 and your friends and family that are here in support of this
14 long journey. What a long road I'm sure it has been for you
15 and your families. I'm sure it has also been a struggle at
16 times, as Judge Parker said, not an easy process, probably
17 leaving your homeland, saying good-bye to beloved family and
18 friends, travelling to this country, finding a home, a job,
19 adjusting to a new culture, a new way of life.

20 But the good news for all of us is the best of your
21 culture and way of life is the best of ours. And your
22 traditions enrich not only your family, but they enrich
23 America. Always remember that this country was founded on the
24 diversity of many tribes, countries and cultures. We have been
25 blessed by rich cultures and traditions of so many people like

1 you and those that came before you.

2 America is a combination of the best of everyone that
3 comes here. This great country depends on new citizens such as
4 you to learn and grow. Our survival depends on the values of
5 diversity, tolerance, dignity and respect that we live and
6 teach each other.

7 Our very first president, George Washington,
8 recognized the importance of immigrants to our land, not just
9 the rich and high-ranking newcomer, quote, "but the oppressed
10 and persecuted of all nations and religions, who we should
11 welcome to a participation in all our rights and privileges,"
12 end quote.

13 Being a United States citizen, as you've heard today
14 by Justice Davis and Judge Parker, means that you are free.
15 The Constitution and laws of this country are designed to
16 protect your freedom. You are free to think on your own and to
17 form your own opinions. And you may voice those opinions
18 whether many people or few people agree with you. You're free
19 to work where you want to work, to read what you want to read,
20 to say what you want to say. You are free to believe what you
21 want to believe. There is no single American way to think or
22 believe. As a citizen of the United States, you are free to
23 follow your own path, wherever that may lead you.

24 But with freedom, of course, comes responsibility.
25 The freedom of democracy comes with the responsibility, as

1 you've heard today, to participate in the democratic process by
2 voting, not casually or carelessly, but in a way that is
3 thoughtful and informed. You have a responsibility to educate
4 yourself so that you can make good decisions for yourself, your
5 family and this country that is now your country.

6 The democracy so hard fought for only works when its
7 people participate fully by helping to choose who will govern
8 us all and by taking that process seriously.

9 The freedom of democracy also carries a responsibility
10 to your community and to your country. You must be willing to
11 serve this country as you can. Use your talents, be active in
12 your communities, give back to your new country through civic
13 service, participation, and helping one another.

14 I'm sure all of you come here today because someone
15 has made it possible for you to be here -- a friend, family
16 member, a teacher, a sponsor. Maybe they are and hopefully
17 they're with you here today. As you celebrate your new
18 citizenship, make sure you let them know how much their help
19 has meant to you. And perhaps a wonderful way to honor them
20 for their service to you is to reach out a hand to someone else
21 that may need your help. Your new country, our country, will
22 continue to thrive if we all care about our fellow citizens as
23 human beings.

24 Again, congratulations and welcome. You have
25 worked -- I just want to say you've worked incredibly hard, we

1 all know that, and I know I speak for all of our Wyoming
2 neighbors when I say we are grateful to have you.

3 (Applause.)

4 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Judge Johnson.

5 JUDGE JOHNSON: Well, Your Honor, thank you.

6 I have a very special reason for being here today. I
7 am deeply honored and grateful that I'm present today in this
8 ceremonial courtroom to share with my colleagues this
9 life-changing event for new citizens and their families. Today
10 marks a very special day and a milestone for my own family. My
11 treasured son-in-law, (indicating), has taken the oath with you
12 and has become a fellow citizen with you.

13 I know now, having observed the thought-filled path
14 that he has followed, that becoming a citizen is not easily
15 attained. There are many frustrations and delays, as well as
16 considerations of family and relations on the other side of the
17 planet that must be taken into account.

18 The naturalization ceremony has bittersweet elements
19 as well. Each new citizen have been nurtured and have grown
20 within the culture of their nation of origin. Their
21 experiences, their memories have marked them and, most
22 important, have given them an identity that they have brought
23 here to us today.

24 We welcome their spirit and commitment, joining with
25 us in the adventure of our lives together as fellow citizens of

1 the United States of America.

2 I hope that we take advantage of the opportunities to
3 become acquainted with and welcome those among us who are
4 naturalized citizens, their families and friends who have
5 brought their cultures, religious beliefs and languages to our
6 Wyoming.

7 In addition, we are mindful of the refugee catastrophe
8 that is unfolding in the world today as families and
9 individuals seek liberty, freedom from oppression, freedom from
10 want, and freedom to express individual opinions and to
11 preserve beliefs and culture. Many of those individuals will
12 find their way to these shores and become part of the diversity
13 that is the unique strength of this nation.

14 Each of our new citizens is indeed a member of a
15 special group. There are approximately 13,500,000 lawful
16 permanent residents in the United States today. This includes
17 students studying at American colleges and universities,
18 persons who have found asylum here, and the millions who have
19 come seeking employment and have been issued green cards.

20 8 million of these lawful residents are eligible to
21 seek citizenship as each of you have done. Approximately
22 4,500,000 persons are not presently eligible for citizenship
23 for various reasons, including the lengthy waiting period
24 required by law. Each of our citizens who have taken the oath
25 today are indeed special for they have endured the sacrifices,

1 the waiting, the testing necessary to have made their dream and
2 aspiration come true.

3 The oath freely given today is an oath to support
4 ideas of freedom, the Constitution and laws of the United
5 States, not a person or place. We do not pledge allegiance to
6 any person's -- any stranger's ancestors nor to anyone else.
7 The United States of America is one of the very unique places
8 in this world that developed the idea of liberty based upon a
9 Constitution rather than allegiance to a king or some foreigner
10 or some dictator or some other person.

11 We listen to the news today of people in Venezuela
12 struggling to express themselves by conducting their own free
13 expression of a will to preserve a constitution. What an
14 amazing thing, that despite the efforts of those in power to
15 suppress them, that those people voted and expressed their
16 opinions. In our own hemisphere, what an amazing thing.

17 In time of war and national need, the duty of the
18 citizen will be henceforward to serve the United States. The
19 status of being an American means that each citizen has the
20 duty to support the laws which guarantee our rights. That's
21 something we've learned from our own cultures and religions,
22 that it is appropriate to take into consideration the needs of
23 our fellow neighbor, to support them, sometimes expressed as do
24 unto others as we would have done to us.

25 We share a duty to inform ourselves of the issues

1 affecting our lives, our communities and our nation, and we
2 should express our views by voting or even taking public office
3 as has been suggested here today.

4 We have the freedom to express ourselves, to write,
5 speak and read what our minds conceive; to worship, to express
6 our own spirituality. The courtrooms of America such as this
7 wonderful ceremonial place are places where persons accused of
8 violating the laws will be heard by juries composed of citizens
9 just like you, where disputes between citizens are resolved
10 under the rule of law with the opportunity to be heard without
11 regard to personal wealth or status.

12 It is so pleasant to see a large audience here today,
13 and for some this may be the first time you have been in a
14 courtroom in your lives. It is only appropriate that it be at
15 a ceremony such as this one.

16 Like Justice Davis, I have been impressed by the words
17 of Learned Hand, that important occasion before thousands in
18 the midst of World War II, but what was emphasized there is
19 that the idea of liberty lies within each individual. There is
20 no constitution or anything else. It is what lies within the
21 hearts of each of us that guarantees liberty.

22 As he said, "It is what must lie in the hearts of men
23 and women. It is not the ruthless, the unbridled will. It is
24 not freedom to do as one likes. That is a denial of liberty
25 and leads straight to its overthrow.

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

9 Those seem like good words to leave you with.
10 Congratulations, new citizens, and best wishes to each of you.

11 (Applause.)

12 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Let me also add my
13 congratulations to each of you and best wishes. As the last
14 speaker, also know I recognize that my remarks stand between
15 the hugs and kisses of your family members and cake and
16 cookies, so I will try to be brief.

17 I, too, would like to focus a bit on the oath. Just
18 think about what it would mean if you were asked to renounce or
19 abjure anything that mattered in your life. Think of how
20 difficult that is to ask new citizens to make that
21 renunciation. I just want to emphasize that what you renounce
22 is allegiance to any foreign state or prince or potentate or
23 sovereignty. You are not renouncing nor should you ever
24 renounce the significance and importance of the culture,
25 heritage, memories, individuals from your country of birth.

1 The devotion you carry for those experiences and for that
2 country should be preserved always.

3 Also, I'd like to suggest that for the benefit of your
4 children, your grandchildren and for society in general, while
5 you need to master the English language just to be here and to
6 take this -- take the oath and become new citizens, preserve
7 your native language and your native heritage and culture. Not
8 only will it enrich the lives of your family members and those
9 that you love, but it enriches all of us.

10 For over 200 years, this country has had a constant
11 infusion of new people from all over the world who have brought
12 their languages, their heritage, their cultural values with
13 them. Today it is you who bless us. Preserve that always.

14 Some time ago there was a president of a university,
15 the Yale University. He has since passed. And in his
16 welcoming address to the new freshman class he spoke of, quote,
17 "the legitimacy of differentness." The legitimacy of
18 differentness. And he recognized that people of different
19 ethnic groups and races and adherences of various religions and
20 political and personal beliefs have a right to coexist as
21 equals under the law and have an obligation to forge the
22 freedoms they enjoy into a coherent, civilized and vigilant
23 whole.

24 I believe those remarks are important today and as is
25 the legitimacy of differentness. Ignore those voices in this

1 country that suggest that there's only one true American
2 religion, one true way to think, one true American set of
3 values, one true set of politics or ways to think about
4 economics. There is no one true way to think as an American.
5 In fact, conformity of thought and belief is contrary to the
6 underlying principles of this great nation.

7 Just as Felix Frankfurter of the United States Supreme
8 Court came to this country when he was 12 years old, he became
9 a naturalized citizen and then went on to be a recognized
10 justice on the bench. Justice Frankfurter believed that,
11 quote, "In this country the highest office is citizen."

12 You have now each assumed that high office, and your
13 office, like my office, has privileges and duties. As remarked
14 today, you have the duty to stay informed, the duty to
15 participate as you see fit in political process, the duty to
16 vote, to serve on a jury and, yes, to even pay taxes. You also
17 have the duty to work to make this country, the United States
18 of America, the country that you hoped to find and that you
19 want it to be.

20 Again, welcome to each of you as new citizens.
21 Congratulations. Thank you for the enrichment that you bring
22 to this land.

23 (Applause.)

24 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: With that, we'll close this
25 wonderful naturalization ceremony. As Justice Parker -- Judge

1 Parker said, this is one of our favorite ceremonies and
2 proceedings in federal court. Thank you all for joining your
3 loved ones and for supporting them in this long journey of
4 becoming citizens of the United States of America.

5 Having no other business to conduct before the Court,
6 again, I would remind you of the tea. If you wish to stay
7 behind for a bit for pictures or whatever, you are welcome.
8 This courtroom is your courtroom as new citizens. Welcome.

9 We'll stand in recess.

10 (Proceedings concluded 11:11 a.m., July 14, 2017.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, JANET DAVIS, Federal Official Court Reporter for the United States District Court for the District of Wyoming, a Registered Diplomat Reporter, Federal Certified Realtime Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, do hereby certify that I reported by machine shorthand the foregoing proceedings contained herein on the aforementioned subject on the date herein set forth, and that the foregoing pages constitute a full, true and correct transcript.

Dated this 24th day of July, 2017.

Janet Davis

JANET DAVIS, RDR, FCRR, CRR
Federal Official Court Reporter