

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF WYOMING

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In the Matter of the  
Naturalization and Granting of  
United States Citizenship to:

Yara Isabel Abad Pesantez, Ahmed  
Fouad Ahmed Aljuboori, Rosie  
Millang Augustine, Lorna Clare  
Blust, Fanny Ngwi Bolima, Lucy  
Ann Booth, Farah Darwiche,  
Ludmila Didier, Ylse Anays  
Engler, Victor Manuel Escalona,  
James Fredrick Fennema, Elaine  
Dacosta Goff, Gisele Ropelato  
Grosser, Manuela Alexandra  
Hatch, Mayra Kinney, Huanita  
Anca Kiss, Angie Siobhan Kober,  
Lien Thi Bich Le, Tyson Nian  
Luo, Victor Malai, Rebecca  
Isorena Manlangit, Marco Tulio  
Monge Orellana, Leslie Andrew  
Munro, Victor Abiel Vazquez,  
Martha Lucia Nield, Iannette  
Chan Olais, Carlos Alcala  
Pelagio, Agnes Calauman Parker,  
Ha Thi Minh Pham, Sonia Isabel  
Pippenger, Lucino Rosas  
Resendiz, Alexandra Schmier,  
Sange Dorjee Sherpa, Giedrius  
Skupas, Kiattisak  
Suphakitchathorn, Liudviha  
Tsudzik, Elma D. Vore, Douglas  
Harvey White, and Alma Leticia  
Yohe,

Mammoth Hot Springs,  
Yellowstone National  
Park

September 9, 2015  
11:14 a.m.

Petitioners.

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TRANSCRIPT OF HEARING ON PETITIONS FOR  
UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND NATURALIZATION CEREMONY

BEFORE THE HONORABLE MARK L. CARMAN  
United States Magistrate Judge, Presiding

## APPEARANCES:

For the Government: MR. FRANCIS LELAND PICO  
United States Attorney's Office  
Yellowstone Justice Center  
Yellowstone, Wyoming 82190

Court Reporter: ANNE BOWLINE, RMR, CRR  
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Casper, Wyoming 82601  
(307) 235-3376

\* \* \* \* \*

1 (Proceedings commenced at 11:14 a.m.,  
2 September 9, 2015.)

3 THE COURT: You may be seated. We're now going to  
4 come to order in this court proceeding. It's my honor and my  
5 privilege to be able to be the first to welcome you to this  
6 ceremony for the naturalization of new citizens of the United  
7 States of America. I welcome you all to Yellowstone National  
8 Park on behalf of the National Park Service and also on behalf  
9 of the District Court for the District of Wyoming. I want to  
10 welcome you on behalf of our Chief Judge, Judge Nancy  
11 Freudenthal, also Judge Alan Johnson and Judge Scott Skavdahl.

12 I also want to represent you on behalf of the United  
13 States Citizenship and Immigration Service. Our host today  
14 will be Deputy Superintendent Steve Iobst, who is present at  
15 the podium, and you will get to hear him speak in a little  
16 while.

17 I want to express a welcome to Christine Reinhart's  
18 class from Gardiner High School, government class. This is an  
19 important aspect of what happens and what makes America  
20 America, and I'm glad that these young people can join us  
21 today and see this process.

22 (Applause.)

23 THE COURT: Now, this is a formal court proceeding,  
24 and in the Federal District Courts, cameras are not allowed.  
25 And I see all of these people already have their cameras out,

1 and there's pictures being taken. So I will, to save you,  
2 suspend that rule and encourage you to take as many photos and  
3 videos as you would like. You may move around as necessary to  
4 get that special Kodak moment. Now, that "Kodak moment" is an  
5 old reference. They were a company that used to make  
6 something called film so can you get that special photograph.

7           It is a tradition in the Wyoming District Courts  
8 during the ceremonies to take some time to honor our military  
9 heroes. I'd like those of you who have served in any of the  
10 branches of the military, at this point in time if you would  
11 please stand. Some of you are already standing, I understand.

12           (Applause.)

13           THE COURT: You may be seated. I want to on behalf  
14 of this Court express our gratitude and thanks to you for your  
15 service on behalf of this country.

16           But I think it's also important to remember the many  
17 men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice, gave their  
18 lives to preserve this country and the ideals for which it  
19 stands. During the great wars of the 20th Century through  
20 today, over 620,000 servicepeople, men and women, have given  
21 their lives for this country, and almost two million have  
22 suffered injuries and disabilities and trauma in that service.

23           We owe a debt of gratitude to those people who, quite  
24 frankly, we cannot repay. But at this point in time I'd like  
25 for us to take a brief moment of silence to honor those

1 veterans and those who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

2 (Moment of silence.)

3 THE COURT: Thank you very much.

4 Now we get to turn to something a little more  
5 pleasant, and that is the actual ceremony. And what we're  
6 going to do to start with is we're going to do a roll call of  
7 our honored guests who will be soon naturalized as American  
8 citizens. At this time I'll ask the Clerk of Court to read  
9 that roll, and I would ask that when your name is called, you  
10 please stand, and if you would remain standing.

11 THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: And I'm going to apologize for  
12 any mispronunciation. I probably will not do your names  
13 justice. Yara Isabel Abad Pesantez, Ahmed Fouad Ahmed  
14 Aljuboori, Rosie Millang Augustine, Lorna Clare Blust, Fanny  
15 Ngwi Bolima, Lucy Ann Booth, Farah Darwiche. Is she here?  
16 I'm not sure if she made it or not.

17 Ludmila Didier, Ylse Anays Engler, Victor Manuel  
18 Escalona, James Fredrick Fennema, Elaine Dacosta Goff, Gisele  
19 Ropelato Grosser, Manuela Alexandra Hatch, Mayra Kinney,  
20 Huanita Anca Kiss, Angie Siobhan Kober, Lien Thi Bich Le,  
21 Tyson Nian Luo, Victor Malai, Rebecca Isorena Manlangit, Marco  
22 Tulio Monge Orellana, Leslie Andrew Munro, Victor Abiel  
23 Vazquez, Martha Lucia Nield, Iannette Chan Olais, Carlos  
24 Alcala Pelagio, Agnes Calauaman Parker, Ha Thi Minh Pham.

25 Did they stand up?

1           Sonia Isabel Pippenger, Lucino Rosas Resendiz,  
2 Alexandra Schmier, Sange Dorjee Sherpa, Giedrius Skupas,  
3 Kiattisak Suphakitchathorn, Liudviha Tsudzik, Elma D. Vore,  
4 Douglas Harvey White, and Alma Leticia Yohe.

5           THE COURT: Very good. I'm going to ask that the  
6 rest of us now stand. Everybody, please stand for the  
7 presentation of the colors.

8           Today the colors are going to be presented by the  
9 Yellowstone National Park Mounted Color Guard. Now, the  
10 Mounted Color Guard members are Daniel Kowalski and Jackie  
11 Sene. Also assisting the color guard in its presentation of  
12 the colors will be Anna Bogkin and Wes Hardin. And if you'll  
13 look over your primarily right shoulders, you'll see the  
14 approach of the color guard.

15           (Posting of the colors.)

16           THE COURT: I'm going to ask that you now all join me  
17 in the Pledge of Allegiance.

18           (Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.)

19           THE COURT: Please remain standing for the national  
20 anthem. We are honored to have Michael Breis with the  
21 National Park Service to perform the anthem for us.

22           (Singing of national anthem.)

23           (Applause.)

24           THE COURT: Thank you very much. Everyone may be  
25 seated at this point in time.

1           At this time it's going to be my pleasure to  
2 recognize Mr. Francis Leland Pico. Mr. Pico has -- is with  
3 the United States Attorney's Office and has been with the  
4 office in the District of Wyoming for a distinguished and  
5 lengthy career. Mr. Pico is also the United States Attorney  
6 who appears regularly in my court, and it is my honor to  
7 recognize him at this point in time for the purposes of an  
8 introduction for a motion.

9           Mr. Pico.

10           MR. PICO: Thank you, Your Honor. May it please the  
11 Court. At this time, Your Honor, I would ask for leave of  
12 court to allow a layman, if you will, on behalf of the United  
13 States of America to make a motion before you for the purposes  
14 of naturalizing these soon-to-be citizens, and therefore I  
15 would ask that you recognize Immigration Services District  
16 Director Kristi Barrows to make the motion, Your Honor, before  
17 this Court. Thank you.

18           THE COURT: Your motion is granted.

19           MR. PICO: Thank you.

20           DISTRICT DIRECTOR BARROWS: Thank you, Mr. Pico.  
21 Thank you, Your Honor. On behalf of the Department of  
22 Homeland Security and the United States Citizenship and  
23 Immigration Services, I have the honor of presenting to the  
24 Court 37 individuals from 22 countries. There are four  
25 petitions to request a name change before the Court.

1           All 37 individuals have been examined under the  
2 relevant sections of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and  
3 their applications for naturalization have been approved.  
4 They have been found eligible and qualified to be administered  
5 the oath of allegiance for admission to citizenship.

6           At this time I would like to introduce the candidates  
7 for citizenship according to their country. So when I call  
8 the name of your soon- -- soon-to-be former nationality, if  
9 you could please stand up: Belarus, Brazil, Cameroon,  
10 Lithuania, Mexico, Canada, China, Columbia, Ecuador, Germany,  
11 Guatemala, Guyana, Iraq, Moldova, Nepal, Philippines, Romania,  
12 Slovakia, Thailand, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and Vietnam.

13           At this time the Government moves that the oath of  
14 allegiance be administered to the prospective citizens of the  
15 United States and that all petitions for a name change be  
16 granted.

17           THE COURT: Thank you, Ms. Barrows.

18           Okay. While you're already standing -- and it's a  
19 good sign that now all of the applicants are standing, and  
20 that means we didn't miss any countries -- I'm going to  
21 administer the oath of citizenship. I'd ask that you at this  
22 point in time raise your right hand and repeat after me:

23           (Oath taken as follows:

24           "I hereby declare, on oath, that I  
25           absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all

1           allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince,  
2           potentate, state or sovereignty of whom or which  
3           I have heretofore been a subject or citizen;  
4           that I will support and defend the Constitution  
5           and laws of the United States of America against  
6           all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will  
7           bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that  
8           I will bear arms on behalf of the United States  
9           when required by law; that I will perform  
10          noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the  
11          United States when required by law; that I will  
12          perform work of national importance under  
13          civilian direction when required by law; and  
14          that I take this obligation freely without any  
15          mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so  
16          help me God.")

17                 THE COURT: Based upon the petition of the United  
18 States, I find that each of the 37 candidates identified in  
19 the petition has satisfied the legal requirements to become  
20 citizens of the United States of America. I hereby grant the  
21 petition of the United States and will enter an order that  
22 each of these petitioners be granted United States  
23 citizenship. Congratulations.

24                 (Applause.)

25                 THE COURT: Okay. You may be seated. You may not

1 leave yet, though.

2           At this point in time we're going to present your  
3 certificates of citizenship. To make this as easy as  
4 possible, we're going to come down here, and we'll present  
5 them on the grass in front of the podium. We'll be calling  
6 your names out. You come forth individually. I want to make  
7 sure that anybody that wants to take any photographs, you need  
8 to be ready to do it so we can keep this process moving, but I  
9 want to make sure that you get photographs of this moment.

10           DISTRICT DIRECTOR BARROWS: Victor Manuel Escalona.

11           Leslie Andrew Munro.

12           Gisele Ropelato Grosser.

13           Angie Kober.

14           Elaine Dacosta Goff.

15           Lien Thi Bich Le.

16           Sange Dorjee Sherpa.

17           THE COURT: It's okay. We have time for pictures.

18           DISTRICT DIRECTOR BARROWS: Giedrius Skupas.

19           Liudviha Tsudzik.

20           UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You have to go back.

21 Backsies.

22           Douglas Harvey White.

23           Huanita Anca Kiss.

24           Ludmila Didier.

25           Martha Lucia Nield.

1 Iannette Chan Olais.  
2 Alma Leticia Yohe.  
3 Lucino Rosas Resendiz.  
4 Victor Abiel Vazquez.  
5 Ylse Anays Engler.  
6 Mayra Kinney.  
7 Sonia Isabel Pippenger.  
8 Marco Tulio Monge Orellana.  
9 Ahmed Fouad Ahmed Aljuboori.  
10 Victor Malai.  
11 Rebecca Isorena Manlangit.  
12 Lorna Clare Blust.  
13 Kiattisak Suphakitchathorn.  
14 Elma D. Vore.  
15 Rosie Millang Augustine.  
16 I think I'm going to hear a little noise for James  
17 Fredrick Fennema.  
18 Alexandra Schmier.  
19 Lucy Ann Booth.  
20 Carlos Alcala Pelagio.  
21 Manuela Alexandra Hatch.  
22 Yara Isabel Abad Pesantez.  
23 Fanny Ngwi Bolima.  
24 And Agnes Calauman Parker.  
25

1           THE COURT:  Anybody that didn't get a good picture,  
2 come up.  If I'm going to suspend the rule, I'm going to  
3 suspend it --

4           DISTRICT DIRECTOR BARROWS:  Big time.

5           THE COURT:  -- big time.  Congratulations again.  Got  
6 it?  Okay.  Thank you very much.  Congratulations again.

7           Anybody else?

8           (Inaudible discussions.)

9           THE COURT:  I will say that anybody that wants  
10 pictures afterwards, we can do that too, just so we can get to  
11 the speeches.

12           DISTRICT DIRECTOR BARROWS:  I think we're ready.

13           THE COURT:  So we've completed that process, and like  
14 I say, if anybody wants more pictures afterwards, we'll make  
15 ourselves available for your convenience.

16           At this time I want to welcome each and every one of  
17 you now as a new citizen of the United States.  And let's have  
18 a round of applause.

19           (Applause.)

20           THE COURT:  And I'm sorry to report that President  
21 Obama could not join us today, but he did provide an audio  
22 recording which I assume is all set up.  And so at this time  
23 we're going to play president Obama's greeting.

24           (Playing audio recording.)

25           THE COURT:  At this point in time, there's a number

1 of us who would like to say a few words, and we're going to  
2 start with Mr. Leland Pico. Mr. Pico, as I indicated, is a  
3 United States Attorney, Assistant United States Attorney for  
4 the District of Wyoming, and who appears in my court every  
5 day. He's the only other attorney besides myself within like  
6 60 miles, and he's become a good friend as well. At this time  
7 I'd like to welcome Mr. Pico to speak with you.

8 MR. PICO: Thank you, Your Honor.

9 May it please the Court, everybody gathered here, and  
10 especially our new citizens. Welcome very much.

11 I was perusing a couple of presidential speeches that  
12 had been given in the past, and some of the things that struck  
13 me I wanted to share with you just briefly. Number one is  
14 keep in mind that regardless of the circumstances that brought  
15 you here -- some of it adventurous, some of it escape,  
16 tyranny, some of it to just be with loved ones and family --  
17 the fact of the matter is now you are part of the freest  
18 nation in the world. The fact of the matter is that you and  
19 not the government has the power. You give the government the  
20 power and the rights that it has.

21 In addition to that, my experience in growing up, I  
22 grew up in a small mill town, a steel mill town where there  
23 were Italians, Lebanese, Portuguese, Greeks, and many other  
24 nationalities. One of the great things about growing up that  
25 way was the fact that we shared our culture, our various

1 cultures. It was not uncommon for me to be eating Portuguese  
2 at lunch and Greek for supper. Great, great times for me, and  
3 it was great to assimilate all of that.

4           And in effect, by you coming in today as citizens,  
5 America is in a sense reborn. We remake ourselves every time  
6 we have new citizens brought in. That's what the cultural  
7 diversity brings. Bring the best of your culture with you and  
8 share it. We are not a melting pot. We keep these identities  
9 to a certain extent. We are all Americans, have no doubt  
10 about that, but we are Colombians and Chinese, et cetera. So  
11 keep that part of the culture as well.

12           In addition, the diversity that we experience here in  
13 the United States is not only cultural, but as you probably  
14 have noticed if you've lived here any length of time, we have  
15 a diversity of philosophies and ideologies. As one of our  
16 presidents said recently, it's one of the great American  
17 moments to be sitting in front of your TV and have one of the  
18 talking heads espousing something that you disagree with  
19 terribly, and you have that feeling that you want to take off  
20 your shoe and throw it at the TV. Don't miss that moment.  
21 It's part of the American culture.

22           Indeed, we have a diversity of ideas, but  
23 nonetheless, we have always managed to overcome our  
24 differences and bring together those notions and ideas that  
25 are espoused in the Pledge of Allegiance that we always want

1 to be one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and  
2 justice for all.

3 God bless you all, and God bless the United States of  
4 America.

5 (Applause.)

6 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Pico.

7 MR. PICO: You bet.

8 THE COURT: Be careful when you throw that shoe,  
9 though, because it's your television set you're probably  
10 throwing it at.

11 We're honored today on behalf of Senator Tester's  
12 office, a Senator from the state of Montana, to have Sara  
13 Thane joining us to speak a few words and represent, quite  
14 frankly, all of our Congressional delegations from all of the  
15 states from which you are now residents.

16 Sara.

17 MS. THANE: Thank you, Your Honor.

18 Good morning. Senator Tester is not able to be here  
19 today, but he left me with a few words to share with you.

20 "Dear friends: After years of proving yourselves;  
21 immersing yourselves in the country; studying the history, the  
22 rules, the laws, and taking and passing the citizenship test,  
23 the United States of America opens her arms and welcomes you  
24 as one of her own. Congratulations and welcome.

25 "This is not a ritual to take lightly. You're here

1 today because this country has chosen to admit you. It is a  
2 demonstration of trust. The true challenge of citizenship,  
3 however, is not in blindly embracing another culture and way  
4 of life. It is more about contribution, sharing, and  
5 dialogue. It is about reaching across to your neighbors,  
6 understanding the dynamics of your community, and actively  
7 engaging in it. Democracy loses its luster when we choose not  
8 to participate.

9 "So today represents many things. The United States  
10 of America is granting each of you the opportunity to  
11 participate in this country as her citizen. In turn, you're  
12 granting this country and its citizens the chance to know you  
13 and learn from you. As you leave here today and go back to  
14 your families, jobs, and communities, know that we are very  
15 glad to have you.

16 "Respectfully, John Tester."

17 (Applause.)

18 THE COURT: Thank you, Sara, and thank you, Senator  
19 Tester, as well for that message.

20 Next to speak with you is going to be our own Steve  
21 Iobst. Steve Iobst is the Deputy Superintendent of  
22 Yellowstone National Park, and he is -- has a few words for us  
23 today, and I welcome him to the podium. Thank you so much.

24 DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT IOBST: What a glorious day,  
25 and all I can think of are the words of my grandchildren:

1 awesome. This is an incredibly wonderful day and certainly  
2 emotional. On behalf of Yellowstone National Park and the  
3 entire National Park Service, it is my pleasure to welcome you  
4 here on this historic day as you become American citizens.

5           The National Park Service is proud to partner with  
6 the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to host  
7 ceremonies like this in national parks around the country.  
8 Our national parks are places that we as a people have agreed  
9 to set aside and preserve and tell America's story, from  
10 breathtaking natural landscapes like here at Yellowstone to  
11 the hallowed ground of a Civil War battlefield to the homes of  
12 U.S. presidents and to places where we fought for civil  
13 rights. These places are real, their stories are real, and  
14 they are now yours.

15           America's national parks belong to every American  
16 citizen. And we invite you to visit, to learn, to volunteer,  
17 to have fun, and to join us in the stewardship of these places  
18 that were entrusted to the care of the National Park Service  
19 nearly 100 years ago.

20           Visiting the national parks will help you get to  
21 know, to learn about the events that have shaped our history  
22 and the people who came before you, many of whom were  
23 immigrants themselves. First said by a British diplomat over  
24 a century ago and often echoed throughout the decades is the  
25 sentiment that the national parks are America's best idea and

1 perhaps her best export.

2           There is a colorful myth that this best idea was  
3 conceived just a few dozen miles from here, south of here,  
4 around a campfire in 1871. One year later Yellowstone  
5 National Park was created.

6           After the park was set aside, it took us a while to  
7 figure out how to carry out the Congressional mandate to  
8 manage Yellowstone for the benefit and enjoyment of the  
9 people. For a long period of time, the park was administered  
10 by the United States Army. Soldiers enforced park regulations  
11 and guarded the resources. Fort Yellowstone, built here in  
12 Mammoth Hot Springs, served as Army headquarters for more than  
13 30 years.

14           Later on, in 1916, a new government agency was  
15 created. The National Park Service was charged with the  
16 mission of protecting Yellowstone and other national parks  
17 across the country for future generations to enjoy.

18           And now because of the work of the National Park  
19 Service in protecting both natural and historic resources, we  
20 are able to hold this ceremony in the Fort Yellowstone  
21 Historic District, marked by the many stone and cream-colored  
22 and red-roofed buildings and the old parade grounds to your  
23 right.

24           National parks are places, and this is a nation where  
25 the ideals of conservation were put into practice. And as

1 Americans, we can all enjoy the shared heritage, shared  
2 stories, and shared treasures that most certainly are  
3 America's best idea.

4           Next year, in 2016, the National Park Service will  
5 celebrate its 100th birthday. Our goal of the centennial is  
6 to engage the next generation of park visitors, supporters,  
7 and advocates. We hope you will be part of our second century  
8 of service, because national parks need the commitment of  
9 every American citizen, including you. Please visit more of  
10 our -- your national parks, and bring your children so that  
11 they too will understand, enjoy, and appreciate all of these  
12 places. Congratulations, and thank you for being here.

13           (Applause.)

14           THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Iobst. We owe a great  
15 debt of gratitude to the National Park Service for what they  
16 preserve and what they accomplish, not just for what we have  
17 here in Yellowstone National Park but the over 400 sites in  
18 the United States that represent so many of our greatest  
19 wonders and our history.

20           At this time it's my extreme honor to be able to  
21 introduce Lori Scialabba. Ms. Scialabba is the Deputy  
22 Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration  
23 Service. She has traveled from Washington, D.C., to join us  
24 today, and it is, quite frankly, a great honor that she would  
25 come here to share with us her thoughts and be our keynote

1 speaker. So at this time I would welcome her and ask that you  
2 all welcome her as well.

3 DEPUTY DIRECTOR SCIALABBA: Well, good afternoon,  
4 everybody, and it's my pleasure to be here today. And I want  
5 to say a special thanks to the National Park Service and to  
6 Deputy Superintendent Iobst for hosting us in what is a  
7 breathtakingly beautiful venue.

8 I am privileged to be the Deputy Director of the  
9 United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, and I've  
10 been able to do these ceremonies in the Everglades, at  
11 Yosemite, and various other national parks, and it is an honor  
12 and a privilege as always to be able to do that. So thank you  
13 so much and thank you, Judge, for allowing us to participate  
14 in this judicial ceremony. We very much appreciate that also.

15 As the Deputy Director of U.S. Citizenship and  
16 Immigration Services, this is one of the best things I get to  
17 do, is to be a keynote speaker at a ceremony where people  
18 become United States citizens and celebrate that with them.

19 I want to say just a few things about Yellowstone,  
20 and you got quite a history lesson from the deputy  
21 superintendent. I just want to mention that you should take  
22 the time to see the park. It's beautiful. It's absolutely  
23 beautiful. We took some time and went up to Old Faithful, and  
24 it was glorious.

25 One of the things I also wanted to mention is that

1 the person that the deputy superintendent -- one of the people  
2 that he was talking about who had an influence on this place  
3 becoming a national park was an immigrant himself. Thomas  
4 Moran immigrated to the United States from England when he was  
5 a boy, and he was raised in Pennsylvania.

6           And in 1871 he came to this region on a 40-day  
7 expedition. He visited 30 sites and captured their wonder in  
8 his breathtaking sketches and watercolors, and his experiences  
9 and creations helped to inspire and convince people in the  
10 United States Congress that the glory of Yellowstone should be  
11 protected as a national park. And he's known today as Thomas  
12 "Yellowstone" Moran, and his paintings of Yellowstone are on  
13 display at the White House and the Smithsonian in Washington,  
14 D.C. And here at Yellowstone Park you can visit Moran Point.  
15 It's a picturesque viewpoint named after him in 1883.

16           As United States citizens, you too will help shape  
17 our nation's future. Each of you brings distinct skills,  
18 characteristics, culture that you heard about from our friend  
19 from the U.S. Attorney's Office, Mr. Pico.

20           And I want to find out where you grew up, because I  
21 grew up in a small town with steel mills and coal mines,  
22 although our culture was Italian and Polish mostly.

23           MR. PICO: Youngstown.

24           DEPUTY DIRECTOR SCIALABBA: Johnstown, Pennsylvania.  
25 We're from the same area.

1           American citizenship provides you with a unique bond  
2 that unites people around civic ideals and beliefs in the  
3 rights and freedoms that are guaranteed by our United States  
4 Constitution, which you-all studied. And while we are  
5 protected by our rights as citizens, one of the things we need  
6 to do is strive to be active citizens and to embrace our  
7 responsibilities that are bestowed on us by our United States  
8 citizenship. So I encourage all of you to become involved and  
9 engaged citizens.

10           Whether you volunteer in a national park or a local  
11 organization, whether you run for public office -- and  
12 oftentimes new citizens do -- or simply cast your vote on  
13 election day your participation is important, each one of us  
14 can make a difference, and each one of us has a voice in  
15 society.

16           Today I'm humbled both by the grandeur of Yellowstone  
17 National Park and by the significance of your achievement.  
18 And I know it's getting warm, so I'm going to cut it short.  
19 We welcome you today, and we also reflect on all of those  
20 generations of American immigrants that are natural-born  
21 citizens as wells as those of you who have naturalized.

22           I wish you the best of luck as you start this new  
23 chapter in your life. Congratulations and welcome to the  
24 United States.

25           (Applause.)

1           THE COURT: Ms. Scialabba mentioned Thomas Moran, who  
2 I actually did not know was an immigrant. We all come from  
3 immigrants for the most part. And one of the things he  
4 painted was the liberty cap, which is right behind me. The  
5 liberty cap was named in honor or at least recognition of the  
6 caps which were worn during the French revolution. And he  
7 stood not too far from where we are now and painted that in  
8 1871.

9           Well, I'd like to let you know that I'm the only  
10 thing standing between you and the refreshments, and I will --  
11 I will make this brief. It's amazing how hot a black robe is  
12 out here today, and now I know why we normally do all of our  
13 court proceedings indoors.

14           Of my duties as federal judge, I can tell you that  
15 there is none which provides me a greater joy and satisfaction  
16 than being able to preside as a naturalization -- at a  
17 naturalization ceremony and play what is a small role in a  
18 transformational day in your lives.

19           My wife and I took 27 years and we made three  
20 citizens, and it wasn't easy and we're working on that every  
21 day. And here I can -- I can just grant a motion and I've got  
22 37 new citizens, and this is the way to do it.

23           But I know that while it's easy for me to grant a  
24 motion, it has not always been easy for some of you. I don't  
25 know your life stories. I don't know your life histories, but

1 as Mr. Pico alluded, I'm sure that many of them involve  
2 hardship and escape. You have worked hard to reach this day.  
3 All of you have, even if it's just dealing with the legal and  
4 educational and emotional struggles of becoming an American  
5 citizen. You have earned this day. You have earned your  
6 citizenship.

7           Now, my family goes back many generations, way, way,  
8 way back. In fact, it goes back to the Pilgrims of 1620, so  
9 getting close to 400 years on this soil. They fought in every  
10 American war from the War of Independence to the Civil War, on  
11 both sides, and every war thereafter. They traveled in  
12 covered wagons to homestead the West, and they endured  
13 hardships that are, quite frankly, beyond my comprehension or  
14 my desire to repeat.

15           They earned their citizenship with their blood, their  
16 toil, and their sacrifices. I, on the other hand, just  
17 happened to be born at the right location on a map with the  
18 lines inside the right lines to become a citizen.

19           But as we stand here today, we stand here equal. We  
20 are equal citizens in the United States of America. Whether  
21 you've been here a long time or you're newly naturalized, we  
22 are equal citizens of this country. But I want to tell you  
23 that with that -- with that joy, with that privilege, there  
24 comes responsibility.

25           I happen to be a great fan of the British leader

1 Winston Churchill. We have some people from Great Britain  
2 joining us today. He said that "It has been said that  
3 democracy is the worst form of government except all others  
4 that have been tried."

5 Government is not an easy proposition. It is not an  
6 easy endeavor. Democracy does depend upon and require  
7 informed citizens for it to function properly. And,  
8 therefore, we are at our best when we are informed and we  
9 think for ourselves.

10 President John F. Kennedy once said -- this is  
11 probably my favorite quote of all time -- "Too often we enjoy  
12 the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought."  
13 I'm going to say that one again, especially for our young  
14 people: "Too often we enjoy the comfort of opinion without  
15 the discomfort of thought." I'd like you to keep those words  
16 in mind as we enter what seems to be a never-ending election  
17 process in this country.

18 This country has achieved great things, and it has  
19 done great deeds. You only have to look around this national  
20 park and remember that this is where the idea of setting aside  
21 places for the benefit and enjoyment of the people -- those  
22 words that you'll see on the arch at Gardiner -- arose. This  
23 is a concept which has spread around the world, but it wasn't  
24 completely -- I mean, while we're the first national park, we  
25 learned from things that happened around the world, and the

1 mood and the spirit grew and created and sparked into the idea  
2 of a national park right here, close to where you are sitting.

3           But we're also capable of making great mistakes.  
4 During World War I we arrested and imprisoned people for doing  
5 nothing more than speaking out against the war or sometimes  
6 just speaking the German language or having books written in  
7 the German language. Later in that same century we rounded up  
8 and interned people, including fellow American citizens, based  
9 solely upon their race. We may be a country which makes  
10 mistakes, but we have also shown that we are a country which  
11 can learn from our mistakes provided we're willing to undergo  
12 the discomfort of thought and not just the comfort of opinion.

13           So be informed on the issues. Exercise our sacred  
14 right -- I'll say even duty -- to vote in a way that will make  
15 your new country a better country.

16           I also want to echo some of the thoughts that I  
17 believe others spoke of here, and that is don't try to become  
18 an American. You are now Americans. And bring the richness  
19 of your past -- including your heritage, your experiences --  
20 to America. That is what has and always will make this  
21 America a better country. The diversity of America is  
22 represented by the diversity of our new citizens that are  
23 seated in front of me right now. The different cultures, the  
24 traditions, the experience combine to give this country a  
25 richness of people that you will find nowhere else on Earth.

1           And finally, as Americans you have a duty to all of  
2 your new fellow Americans. There's an African proverb that  
3 says, "If you're going for a long walk, do not walk alone."  
4 Each of you is now starting a new walk, and hopefully it will  
5 be a long walk as American citizens. Do not do it alone.  
6 Share your experiences. Share your culture. Share your  
7 beliefs. Enrich this country.

8           I believe that many of you come from cultures where  
9 you know what it means to walk together, and you can lead us  
10 by example. We have people in need in this country -- the  
11 poor, the homeless, the disabled, the elderly -- with whom we  
12 need to walk together.

13           So congratulations, my fellow Americans. I wish for  
14 each of you the very best in the days to come. And God bless  
15 you, and God bless this country.

16           (Applause.)

17           THE COURT: If there's nothing further to come before  
18 the Court --

19           MR. PICO: No. Thank you, Your Honor.

20           THE COURT: Mr. Pico shakes his head no. Lori?

21           Then we will now stand in recess. There will be  
22 refreshments -- that's in the map room; correct? -- in the map  
23 room of the hotel, which is right over there. I understand  
24 that there was a bison bull laying there, so remember: at  
25 least 25 yards, and no selfies. They have an aversion to

1 selfies. We've had five people gored already this year.  
2 Fortunately nobody was killed, but please treat the animals  
3 with respect. And congratulations.

4 (Applause.)

5 THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: All rise.

6 THE COURT: We're in recess.

7 THE COURTROOM DEPUTY: Court is now adjourned.

8 (Proceedings concluded at 12:17 p.m.,

9 September 9, 2015.)

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