

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF WYOMING

In the Matter of the Cheyenne, Wyoming
Naturalization and Granting of November 7, 2016
United States Citizenship to: 10:00 a.m.

TORILL SIGNY MORTON Laramie County Community
MARIA LOVE College
MOREEN MONITA BURNS Health Science Building
KASPARS KARTUPELIS Room 111
JAKE SMURDEN
SOFIA HASSAN ISSAK
LEE DAVID BATTEN
ARMANDO BARRIOS PEDROZA
JEREMIAH KELLY ARTHUR JAMES
BRENDA ROSE DURTSCHI
NADEJDA VLADIMIROVNA KOENIG

Petitioners. **CERTIFIED COPY**

TRANSCRIPT OF HEARING ON PETITIONS FOR
UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND NATURALIZATION CEREMONY
BEFORE THE HONORABLE NANCY D. FREUDENTHAL
Chief United States District Judge

APPEARANCES:

Movant: MR. MARK A. KLAASSEN
Assistant United States Attorney
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
P.O. Box 668
Cheyenne, WY 82003-0668

Court Reporter: MERISSA RACINE, RDR
P.O. Box 21432
Cheyenne, WY 82003
(307) 637-8469

Proceedings recorded by mechanical stenography, transcript produced with computer.

1 (Proceedings commenced 10:00 a.m.,
2 November 7, 2016.)

3 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: What a wonderful day. The
4 weather's -- well, the weather's wonderful, and it's always a
5 special pleasure and privilege to welcome new citizens. It's
6 a particularly auspicious day for the celebration, the day
7 before election day, so I'd like to welcome the new citizens,
8 and welcome everyone here who is participating in the
9 naturalization ceremony.

10 We are particularly appreciative of the Laramie
11 County Community College for hosting us for this event. In as
12 much as the Court is sitting I will suspend the rules
13 prohibiting photography. So if anyone wishes to take
14 photographs of the event, that's certainly permitted.

15 We're pleased to have our television station here
16 reporting the event.

17 So welcome to you all.

18 Mr. Klaassen, I would invite you to make a motion for
19 naturalization, and provide the role call of the citizens to
20 be naturalized.

21 MR. KLAASSEN: Thank you, Your Honor. Thank you.
22 May it please the Court.

23 Can everyone hear me okay?

24 AUDIENCE MEMBER: No. Use the microphone.

25 MR. KLAASSEN: Use the microphone. Okay. Thank you,

1 Your Honor. May it please the Court. I'd also like to extend
2 my welcome to everyone today, and just my appreciation to the
3 Court. I think getting out in the community like this at
4 Laramie County Community College, and at our high schools and
5 different places hosting these events is a great thing for our
6 community.

7 As Your Honor just mentioned, my name is Mark
8 Klaassen. I'm here today appearing as a representative of the
9 United States Attorney's Office for the District of Wyoming,
10 on behalf of the Attorney General of the United States in
11 these proceedings.

12 It's my privilege to introduce to the Court the
13 following individuals who appear in person for a hearing on
14 their petitions for naturalization as a United States citizen.

15 Torill Morton, a native and former inhabitant of the
16 United Kingdom; Maria Love, a native and former inhabitant of
17 Austria; Moreen Monita Burns, a native and former inhabitant
18 of Fiji; Kaspars Kartupelis -- I'm sorry, Kartupelis --
19 apologize if I'm mispronouncing these names -- a native and
20 former inhabitant of Latvia; Jake Smurden, a native and former
21 inhabitant of United Kingdom; Sofia Hassan Issak, a native and
22 former inhabitant of Somalia; Lee David Batten, a native and
23 former inhabitant of the United Kingdom; Armando Barrios
24 Pedroza, a native and former inhabitant of Mexico; Jeremiah
25 Kelly Arthur James, a native and former inhabitant of

1 St. Lucia; Brenda Rose Durtschi, a native and former
2 inhabitant of Canada; and Nadejda Vladimirovna Koenig, a
3 native and former inhabitant of Uzbekistan.

4 Your Honor, each of these individuals has been
5 interviewed and examined under oath by a designated examiner
6 of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, who
7 has completed the character and background investigation. CIS
8 indicates that each of these individuals has met all
9 requirements for naturalization and is well qualified as a
10 desirable candidate for United States citizenship.

11 As a fellow citizen I want to welcome and
12 congratulate each one of these petitioners on this special
13 occasion. And so on the recommendation of the immigration
14 officer, it is my distinct honor to move that all these
15 petitioners be granted United States citizenship upon taking
16 the oath.

17 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you, Mr. Klaassen.
18 On motion, which the Court grants, I would invite my fellow
19 colleagues -- well, let me introduce them. You'll hear from
20 them later. To my immediate left is Chief Magistrate Judge
21 Kelly Rankin. To his left is Circuit Judge Greg Phillips, and
22 to his left is our Chief Bankruptcy Judge Casey Parker.

23 I would invite my colleagues to stand and join me in
24 the oath of citizenship. I would invite the participants here
25 to follow along. The oath is printed on your program

1 brochure.

2 All the new citizens, please stand. Please raise
3 your right hand. I, state your name, hereby declare on
4 oath ...

5 THE PETITIONERS: ... hereby declare on oath ...

6 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... that I will absolutely
7 and entirely renounce ...

8 THE PETITIONERS: ... that I will absolutely and
9 entirely renounce ...

10 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... and abjure ...

11 THE PETITIONERS: ... and abjure ...

12 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... all allegiance and
13 fidelity to any foreign prince ...

14 THE PETITIONERS: ... all allegiance and to any
15 foreign prince ...

16 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... or potentate ...

17 THE PETITIONERS: ... or potentate ...

18 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... state or
19 sovereignty ...

20 THE PETITIONERS: ... state or sovereignty ...

21 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... of whom or which ...

22 THE PETITIONERS: ... of whom or which ...

23 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... I have heretofore been
24 a subject or citizen ...

25 THE PETITIONERS: ... I have heretofore been a

1 subject or citizen ...

2 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... that I will support and
3 defend ...

4 THE PETITIONERS: ... that I will support and
5 defend ...

6 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... the constitution of the
7 United States ...

8 THE PETITIONERS: ... the constitution of the United
9 States ...

10 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... and laws of the United
11 States ...

12 THE PETITIONERS: ... and laws of the United
13 States ...

14 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... against all enemies,
15 foreign and domestic ...

16 THE PETITIONERS: ... against all enemies, foreign
17 and domestic ...

18 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... that I will bear true
19 faith ...

20 THE PETITIONERS: ... that I will bear true faith ...

21 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... and allegiance to the
22 same ...

23 THE PETITIONERS: ... and allegiance to the same ...

24 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... that I will bear
25 arms ...

1 THE PETITIONERS: ... that I will bear arms ...

2 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... on behalf of the United
3 States ...

4 THE PETITIONERS: ... on behalf of the United
5 States ...

6 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... when required by
7 law ...

8 THE PETITIONERS: ... when required by law ...

9 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... that I will perform
10 work ...

11 THE PETITIONERS: ... that I will perform work ...

12 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... of national
13 importance ...

14 THE PETITIONERS: ... of national importance ...

15 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... under civil direction
16 when required by law ...

17 THE PETITIONERS: ... under civil direction when
18 required by law ...

19 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... and that I will take
20 this obligation freely ...

21 THE PETITIONERS: ... and that I will take this
22 obligation freely ...

23 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... without any mental
24 reservation ...

25 THE PETITIONERS: ... without any mental

1 reservation ...

2 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... or purpose of
3 evasion ...

4 THE PETITIONERS: ... or purpose of evasion ...

5 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: ... so help me God.

6 THE PETITIONERS: ... so help me God.

7 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Congratulations. Let's
8 give our new citizens a hand.

9 (Applause.)

10 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: And it's fitting that the
11 first act of citizenship be joined by this entire community in
12 the form of Pledge of Allegiance. Please stand.

13 (Pledge of allegiance.)

14 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you. Please be
15 seated. Now, we're pleased to welcome the Cheyenne Harmony
16 Singers under the direction of Paula Eagan- Wright, performing
17 the Star-Spangled Banner. As this is our country's song, I
18 again please invite all of us to stand and to watch or join in
19 if you're willing.

20 (Star-Spangled Banner performed.)

21 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: The singers may remain in
22 their position. We'll watch a video from the President, and
23 then they will bless us with another song.

24 So let's be seated to hear the president's message.

25 PRESIDENT OBAMA: It is an honor and a privilege to

1 call you a fellow citizen of the United States of America.
2 This is now officially your country; your home to protect, to
3 defend, and to serve through active and engaged citizenship.

4 Together we are a nation united, not by any one
5 culture or ethnicity or ideology, but by the principles of
6 opportunity, equality, and liberty that are enshrined in our
7 founding documents.

8 Today marks a very special day in your life. You've
9 traveled a long path to get here. You've sworn a solemn oath
10 to this country and now have all the rights of citizenship.
11 With the privilege of citizenship, though, come great
12 responsibilities, and so I ask that you use your freedoms and
13 your talents to contribute to the good of our nation and the
14 world.

15 Always remember that in America no dream is
16 impossible. Like the millions of immigrants who have come
17 before you, you have the opportunity to enrich this country
18 through your contributions to civic society, business,
19 culture, and your community.

20 You can help write the next great chapter in our
21 American story. And together we can keep the beacon that is
22 America, burning bright for all the world to see.

23 I am proud to welcome you as a new citizen of this
24 country. May God bless you, and may God continue to bless the
25 United States of America.

1 (My Country performed.)

2 MS. EAGAN-WRIGHT: We wanted to give you a copy of
3 the words of that song so you have something to remember.

4 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Well, what a lovely song,
5 and a wonderful token for remembrance. Thank you very much.

6 Again, let's give the Cheyenne Harmony another round
7 of applause.

8 (Applause.)

9 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: The singers took time off
10 of work to join us at this naturalization ceremony. I know
11 some of them need to return to work. I appreciate their
12 community service and their performance at this ceremony.

13 At this time, and in this facility we're so happy to
14 have the president of the Laramie County Community College,
15 Dr. Schaffer. Dr. Schaffer is, as I say, the current
16 president, and this college is the largest community college
17 in the State of Wyoming.

18 Prior to joining LCCC Dr. Schaffer spent nearly a
19 decade at Montana State University, at Great Falls College of
20 Technology, serving last as the campus dean and chief
21 executive officer. He has also worked at nonprofit, municipal
22 and private industry, including owning and operating a
23 successful website design and internet consulting company.

24 Dr. Schaffer has two degrees, from Bemidjee State
25 University in Minnesota, Montana Tech, and two, including his

1 doctorate in educational leadership from the University of
2 Montana.

3 Dr. Schaffer is an avid outdoorsman and has a deep
4 passion for hunting, fishing, and the great outdoors.

5 At home he claims women rule his world or at least
6 that's what his lovely Brook and his daughters Samantha, ten,
7 and Lia, six, tell him.

8 So join me in welcoming as our guest speaker -- he
9 needs no welcome at this college -- Dr. Schaffer.

10 (Applause.)

11 MR. SCHAFFER: Thank you for that introduction. Good
12 morning, everyone. Welcome to Laramie County Community
13 College. So great to see so many of you here on campus.
14 Thanks for the invitation and opportunity to share some
15 remarks on this special day. It's truly an honor to be part
16 of this ceremony. This is actually my first naturalization
17 ceremony, so it's a learning experience for me as well.

18 Judge Freudenthal, Judge Rankin, Phillips, and
19 Parker, my sincere appreciation for your leadership in our
20 judicial system, and for all you do for our state and country.
21 And thank you for choosing to host the ceremony here at LCCC.
22 It's an opportunity for the college to engage in the
23 community, and we believe the community to engage in the
24 college.

25 And to you, our newest citizens of the United States

1 of America, my heartfelt congratulations to each and every one
2 of you on this special day.

3 I hope you realize what an accomplishment, and also
4 what a privilege it is to become a citizen of our country.

5 So this weekend I was sitting in my home office
6 working on these remarks when my youngest daughter Lia, who,
7 at the age of six, asked me what I was doing. And Lia's at
8 that interesting age where she can surprise you with her
9 rapidly advancing intellect, but also remind you quickly of
10 the simplicity of her childhood innocence. However, one thing
11 Lia doesn't lack is sassiness. I told her I was trying to
12 write some things down that I could share with people who have
13 just become Americans. She looked at me for a second and then
14 in a dismissive tone she said, "Dad, what do you know about
15 being an American? You're from Minnesota."

16 I was caught off guard by this, and had to wonder if
17 that was a moment of true ignorance or if perhaps she was on
18 to some higher level of intelligence, so no disrespect to any
19 fellow Minnesotans in the audience. Of course, I promptly
20 sent her to her room, and made a mental note to chat with her
21 social studies teacher at school the next day.

22 All levity aside, her statement got me to thinking.
23 What do I really know about being an American? And perhaps
24 more poignantly, how much do I take for granted about being a
25 citizen of this great country?

1 While I pondered this I came to the realization that
2 I envy you; how much that I envy you. And let me explain why.

3 My wife and I are fourth generation Americans; her
4 family immigrating from Bulgaria and Italy, my family Austria
5 and Sweden, so more than a century separates the lives of our
6 great grandparents who had to make the transition to this
7 country.

8 In addition, our knowledge of the challenges America
9 faced as a developing nation with individuals from so many
10 different backgrounds, beliefs and cultures, coming together
11 to form a new world, came from what we were told in a
12 classroom or what we read in books. While there's nothing
13 wrong with this, I cannot deny the fact that I experienced
14 America's development and really becoming an American, second-
15 hand.

16 I believe part of what made our country great was the
17 very fact that those who helped charter our constitution,
18 shape our laws, develop our cities and states, had to
19 experience this strife first-hand. Their pain and
20 accomplishments in overcoming adversity helped to instill a
21 pride and commitment that has become the social fabric of what
22 was and is America.

23 I envy you because you too had to endure the effort
24 of transitioning from your native country to becoming a
25 citizen of the United States.

1 Now, my business is education, and specifically
2 higher education in the community colleges. These
3 institutions, and the shifting perspective on education in
4 America over time is a wonderful case study of the development
5 of our democracy in the United States. So humor me while I
6 take you through a bit of higher education history.

7 Not long after colonization, the first institutions
8 of higher ed were established in America. Not surprisingly,
9 given the colonist's roots and origins, these institutions
10 were modelled after colleges and universities in Europe. And
11 for nearly 200 years higher education in America followed the
12 European model. Similar to those in Europe, these early
13 American colleges and universities served a small elite
14 population of individuals.

15 The educational focus was on religion, classic texts,
16 and languages and philosophy, far from what many today would
17 consider a practical education.

18 Things began to change though in the mid 1800s.
19 State charters for public colleges and universities, coupled
20 with the Morrill Land Grant Act, established public investment
21 in higher education. This investment led to an expansion of
22 educational opportunities for all.

23 Now, instead of requiring small groups of students,
24 privileged students to head to the countryside to go to
25 college, higher education began to go where the people were.

1 Public land grant institutions such as the University of
2 Wyoming were established to teach the practical; science,
3 mechanical, agriculture, and military, to the sons and
4 daughters of the working men and women of our states.

5 It was rightly believed that education was critical
6 to the achievement of the American dream. With expanded
7 knowledge and rapidly advancing technology, fueled by an
8 increasingly better educated society, America prospered and so
9 did its citizens.

10 It's nothing short of inspiring to consider that
11 since our founding, each generation of Americans has become
12 better educated and more prosperous than the generations they
13 followed.

14 Certainly there were struggles. Equity and access to
15 higher education, diversity, inclusion, opportunity and
16 affordability, while lauded as American values, took time to
17 become reality.

18 Then arose the community college. Unlike the
19 university, the community college is truly an American
20 innovation and, in fact, countries today are just now trying
21 to emulate the community college movement that has been in
22 existence in America since the early 1900s.

23 Community colleges flourished and expanded from the
24 early 1900s to the middle of the century. You may not find
25 this surprising, and I certainly don't, but this occurred at

1 the same time the country struggled with many of the civil
2 rights movements and challenges. In fact, the Higher
3 Education Act passed just one year after the Civil Rights Act,
4 1965 and 1964 respectively. Higher education and civil
5 liberties are interrelated, because higher education is the
6 gateway to opportunity and prosperity, something we believe
7 all deserve in our country.

8 While many of the protests, riots, and visible
9 conflicts during the civil rights movement played out on our
10 university campuses, behind the scenes the community colleges
11 were working tirelessly to actually address these issues and
12 open the doors to higher education for all Americans.

13 Like America, community colleges were, and to this
14 day still are, a melting pot of individuals.

15 We serve a majority of minority students, and it's a
16 place where people of various ethnicities, ages, socioeconomic
17 backgrounds come together.

18 These American institutions are a current-day
19 representation of the values and beliefs that our country is
20 founded on; equality, opportunity, a diverse community coming
21 together to make a better society.

22 We still face challenges as a country. You only have
23 to follow the rhetoric that plays out daily in the media to
24 understand that we are at a crossroads; a crossroads where the
25 expectation of singularity and our ideals intersects with the

1 preservation of a respect for individuality and diversity; two
2 things that made America what it is.

3 And I was brought up to experience both; a solidarity
4 to a country whose ideals were rooted deeply in my family.
5 There are rich cultural tradition from my German and Swedish
6 roots that shows up at our dinner table and in our annual
7 traditions.

8 My family celebrates Independence Day with reverence.
9 We respect the Constitution and recognize our family members
10 who served in war and conflict to ensure our freedoms. But we
11 also eat Austrian table fare year-round, cherish and celebrate
12 holiday customs carried over from other countries.

13 I have been exposed to Italian traditions through my
14 wife's family, as well as varying political and religious
15 beliefs. We've had some pretty heated debates in my family
16 around our difference. And I must admit that a time or two my
17 German stubbornness landed me a night's stay on the couch.
18 But without these differences my life would not be as rich,
19 nor do I believe I would be as productive a member of our
20 society had I not experienced them.

21 Our country was founded on concepts such as, all men
22 are created equal, the separation of church and state,
23 individualism; life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
24 Yet these foundational tenets are being tested today. Instead
25 of encouraging diverse opinions and beliefs we chastise those

1 who do not share our own. Then we have the audacity to be
2 insulted when others question our own positions and
3 perspectives.

4 We are losing our willingness to engage in civil,
5 productive discourse, and we ignorantly hope to lessen
6 inequality by further polarizing ourselves with an
7 unwillingness to consider the perspectives of those who we
8 believe oppress us.

9 Our very stubbornness to receive and respond to
10 diverse perspectives and opinions in a humane and constructive
11 manner, erodes the values of our forefathers.

12 It diminishes the import of the productive struggle
13 our ancestors endured, protected, and ultimately used to
14 establish a country where we live and benefit every day.

15 Like I said, I envy you. It is far too easy for me
16 and my family to retreat to the comforts of inexperience; to
17 believe the world revolves around us as Americans, and to take
18 for granted the liberties and opportunities we have because we
19 did not have to fight for them nearly as hard as our
20 forefathers did, or nearly as hard as you had to work to gain
21 your citizenship today.

22 I realize that becoming an American has been a
23 challenge and required a commitment from each of you. I also
24 realize that in many ways what you might seek now is to fit
25 in.

1 I hope that isn't the case because I'm going to ask
2 you to stand out. You are a fresh reminder of the commitment
3 this country has made to inclusiveness, equality, opportunity,
4 and the freedom to express our voice and share our
5 perspectives. You can be a catalyst for those of us, who,
6 perhaps, have gotten lazy or a bit too comfortable in our
7 lives, to fight for what makes America the nation it is.

8 The good news is you can start doing that tomorrow.
9 For today, celebrate, rejoice in the fact that you're now a
10 citizen of the United States of America, the greatest country
11 in the world.

12 Congratulations and best wishes on wherever your
13 future leads you. Thank you.

14 (Applause.)

15 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: And now as a tangible
16 representation of this day and your citizenship, I'd ask my
17 colleagues to join me in passing out, recognizing, and shaking
18 each of your hands.

19 Our first citizen is Torill Morton.

20 THE PETITIONER: Thank you.

21 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Then we have Maria Love.
22 Moreen Burns.

23 THE PETITIONER: Thank you.

24 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Kaspars Kartupelis.

25 THE PETITIONER: Thank you.

1 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Jake Smurden, Sophia Issak,
2 Lee David Batten.

3 THE PETITIONERS: Thank you very much.

4 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Armando Barrios Pedroza.

5 THE PETITIONER: Thank you.

6 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Jeremiah Kelly Arthur
7 James.

8 Brenda Rose Durtschi.

9 Nadejda Vladimirovna Koenig.

10 Each of our new citizens have packets that were
11 previously presented by the Clerk of Court. These
12 presentations are from various members of our patriotic
13 organizations, and I'd like to recognize them now. If you
14 could stand as I identify your patriotic organization. We
15 have the American Legion No. 6 Auxiliary.

16 We have the Colonial Dames of America. Welcome.

17 The Colonial Dames of the 17th Century. Welcome.

18 The Daughters of the American Revolution. Welcome.

19 The Veterans of Foreign Wars 1881 Auxiliary.

20 And the Veterans of Foreign Wars 4343 Auxiliary.

21 Thank you. These patriotic organizations have been
22 part of our naturalization ceremonies for a very long time,
23 much before I joined the bench, and I'd like to express my
24 appreciation for your continued attendance.

25 The packets contain a number of items, including the

1 American flag, the American flag code, the United States
2 Constitution, to name just a few.

3 We also have letters from our Congressional
4 delegation. We have representatives here from Senator Enzi,
5 Senator Barrasso, and Representative Lummis' office. If you'd
6 like to come forward and pass out your letters to the new
7 citizens.

8 Thank you.

9 (Documents passed out.)

10 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: And now we have the
11 privilege of addressing the new citizens as well. We'll begin
12 with Chief Bankruptcy Judge Parker.

13 JUDGE PARKER: Thank you, Judge Freudenthal,
14 President Schaffer and the college. This is a special time
15 for me to be out here at the college because not only do I
16 have the privilege of teaching out here every once in a while,
17 but I am also currently a student. So -- but let me tell you
18 that if the girls did completely rule the roost at President
19 Schaffer's home, they would be inundated with chickens, goats
20 and horses, so I guarantee his German stubbornness is holding
21 out now. I don't know how much longer it will.

22 Thank you to everyone that is here. Thank you to
23 everyone that helped these individuals get here today, but
24 most importantly, congratulations to all of you on becoming a
25 United States citizen.

1 Thank you for letting me be a part of this. It's
2 truly an honor.

3 There are no words that can adequately express the
4 sacrifice that you have made to get here today. Your oath
5 that you took, there's so many strong parts of that oath, but
6 the part of it that says, I will support and defend the
7 Constitution and laws of the United States of America against
8 all enemies, foreign an domestic.

9 This is a very powerful statement; a statement that
10 only a very small portion of United States citizens actually
11 get to make. Some of us born in the United States will not
12 make this oath unless they're sworn in as the President,
13 unless they're sworn in as a US Senator, a federal judge, or a
14 proud member of our military.

15 America, the land of the free. Freedom to choose
16 your path in life, to form and express your opinions, to
17 educate yourselves, to be part of the decision-making, to
18 practice a religion of your choosing. But as the president
19 told you, with freedom comes responsibility. Having gone
20 through this process, you more than many current United States
21 citizens are in touch with the history and ideologies of our
22 founding fathers, the spirit of the United States.

23 And nowhere will you find that spirit more than in
24 Washington, DC, and I say that because I had the privilege of
25 being there last week, and only came home this weekend. So I

1 challenge each of you, if you've already been to DC, go back
2 as a citizen. If you've never been there, go there.

3 Every time I have the opportunity to be there I leave
4 in awe. It is an indescribable feeling to stand on the steps
5 of the United States Supreme Court or the Lincoln Memorial,
6 and no matter what your passion, there's something in DC for
7 you.

8 And what you're really lucky with is that you have an
9 amazing Wyoming delegation that will help you. Contact them.
10 I don't know if there's phone numbers on the letters but if
11 not, I'm going to put these three girls to work, and they will
12 set up. We took advantage of it while we were out there.
13 You're really lucky that our Wyoming delegation is very open
14 and wants to see its Wyoming citizens on their steps.

15 I also challenge you in this way. Pay it forward.
16 There was someone that was instrumental in getting you here
17 today, and now it's your turn to be that helping hand or
18 guiding light.

19 I hope for the people here today, that this ceremony
20 reminds us all that the United States was built on diversity;
21 that diversity makes us a stronger nation, that our tolerance
22 to allow people the freedom to express their views, their
23 religion, their beliefs, is the underpinning of the strength
24 of our nation, the freedoms that these new citizens worked so
25 hard for today.

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

3 (Applause.)

4 JUDGE PHILLIPS: Good morning, everyone. I almost
5 started clapping with the microphone in my hand, and someone
6 would have had to help me pick it up. Let me begin by
7 thanking President Schaffer for hosting this naturalization
8 ceremony as well as your very thoughtful remarks which I
9 enjoyed immensely, and so much truth in those words.

10 Today's a day to celebrate, and today is a day to
11 reflect, a day to celebrate your achievement in achieving what
12 you now hold in your hand and what you hold in your heart,
13 which is love a country and citizenship that goes with it.

14 And reflection -- what I would really love to hear is
15 each of you describe how you got here and what all lead to
16 that, but the reflection part also goes the other way, which I
17 think back on my own family and all of our families, how we
18 got here, the sacrifices that were made by people that I never
19 met, but gave us a better life because we were able to be
20 United States citizens.

21 It's my honor to greet you today as our fellow
22 citizens. Our country is stronger today because you are with
23 us, and you bring talents and everything else that you bring
24 with you to help our country.

25 So thank you very much for all of the work that you

1 have done. Welcome to our country, fellow citizens.

2 (Applause.)

3 MAGISTRATE RANKIN: Thank you, Judge Phillips.

4 Well, welcome. You are all now citizens, and I can't
5 think of a better time to become citizens. Tomorrow is
6 election day. Friday is Veterans Day. So our timing is
7 impeccable for you newly-minted citizens. I know it's been a
8 long road for all of you. I'm sure it's also been a struggle
9 at times. You've left your homeland, you've said goodbye to
10 beloved family and friends. As Judge Phillips said, I would
11 love to hear the story about how you got here. Traveling to
12 this country, finding a job, finding a home, finding new
13 friends, adjusting to a new culture and a new way of life.

14 But the good news for all of us is the best of your
15 culture and way of life is the best of ours, and your
16 traditions enrich not only your family, they enrich the United
17 States of America.

18 Always remember that this country was founded on the
19 diversity of many tribes, countries and cultures. We've been
20 blessed by the rich cultures and traditions of so many people
21 like you and many people that came before you.

22 America is a combination of the best of everyone who
23 comes here. This great country depends on new citizens such
24 as you to learn and grow. Our survival depends on the values
25 of diversity, tolerance, dignity, and respect that we live and

1 teach each other.

2 Our very first president, George Washington,
3 recognized the importance of immigrants to our land, not just
4 the rich and high ranking newcomer, quote, "but the oppressed
5 and persecuted of all nations and religions whom we shall
6 welcome to a participation in all our rights and privileges."

7 Close quote.

8 Being a United States citizen also means that you are
9 free. The Constitution and laws of this country are designed
10 to protect your freedom. You are free to think on your own
11 and to form your own opinions, and you may voice those
12 opinions, whether many people or few people agree with you.

13 You are free to work where you want to work, to read
14 what you want to read, to say what you want to say. You are
15 free to believe whatever you want to believe; to openly
16 practice any religion or practice no religion at all. There
17 is no single American way to think or believe.

18 As a citizen of the United States you are free to
19 follow your own path wherever it may lead you, but with that
20 freedom comes responsibility. The freedom of democracy comes
21 with the responsibility to participate in the democratic
22 process by voting this week, but not casually or carelessly,
23 but in a way that is thoughtful and informed.

24 You have a responsibility to educate yourself so you
25 can make good choices for yourself, your family, and this

1 country that is now your country.

2 This democracy so hard fought only works when its
3 people participate fully by helping to choose who will govern
4 us all, and by taking that process seriously.

5 The freedom of democracy also carries a
6 responsibility to your community and to your country. You
7 must be willing to serve this country as you can. Use your
8 talents, be active in your community, give back to your new
9 country through civic participation and service.

10 I am sure all of you have someone whose help made it
11 possible for you to be here today; a friend, a family member,
12 a mentor, a teacher, a sponsor. Maybe they are even here with
13 you today. As you celebrate your new citizenship, make sure
14 that you let them know how much their help has meant to you,
15 and perhaps a wonderful way to honor them for their service to
16 you is for you to reach out to someone else that may need your
17 help. Your new country, our country will only continue to
18 thrive if we care about our fellow citizens as human beings.

19 Again, congratulations and welcome to each of you.
20 You have worked incredibly hard, I know, to earn your
21 citizenship. And I know that I speak for all of your Wyoming
22 neighbors when I say we are grateful to have you.

23 (Applause.)

24 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Well, I'll join in the
25 many, many voices and more to come, congratulating you as new

1 citizens. For those of you who followed the oath of
2 citizenship, there's some unusual words in that oath. You
3 know, the renounce and abjure. I'd like you to reflect the
4 last time you used the word abjure in a sentence. These new
5 citizens were asked to absolutely renounce and abjure their
6 allegiance to any foreign state or sovereignty. Think about
7 that. Turn your back on that foreign state or sovereignty.
8 But I do want to remind you that that is all you promise to
9 renounce and abjure, your allegiance to a government. Hold in
10 your hearts the love that you carry for your country and its
11 citizens, for its culture and its people. Preserve that
12 always. You enrich that by bringing that culture, that sense
13 of place here to America, as so many prior immigrants enriched
14 our country.

15 Now, in naturalization remarks we talk about or tend
16 to talk about how great a country the United States of America
17 is, and I agree with that, but I think today it's more
18 important to stress how thankful we as Americans should be to
19 people such as you, to people who stood in your shoes in the
20 past, and will come here yet in the future.

21 We can never forget that, with the exception of
22 Native Americans, we each have an immigrant in our family just
23 as Dr. Schaffer remarked. Whether it's German -- and I too
24 have that German stubbornness -- Italian, Swedish, English,
25 Russian, African, or other immigrant, we owe a real debt of

1 gratitude to these immigrants in our past, a debt that we
2 should never forget. They, as you, have and will enrich
3 America and all of us living here. For over 200 years this
4 country has been blessed with a constant infusion of new
5 people from all over the world who brought their languages,
6 their heritage and their cultural values with them. Today we
7 need to all remember that it's you who bless us.

8 You've heard from our speakers that America, the land
9 of the free, is a place where you can hold the religion of
10 your choice. You can hold the values and thoughts and
11 opinions, whether it's on political matters, economic matters,
12 social matters. It may earn you a night on the couch, but you
13 can hold those thoughts and views in your heart.

14 You can openly adhere to political, economic and
15 social views, whether they're shared by many, a few, or no one
16 but yourself.

17 I was reminded of that point at the last
18 naturalization ceremony. I gave my usual speech about how
19 there are -- there's no one true American value, one true
20 American way to think. There's no one true American religion
21 or opinion. And yet I went to the tea that was so graciously
22 hosted by the members of our patriotic organizations, and I
23 was talking about a recent jury selection, and that jury was
24 for a criminal case, and it was trying to go through that jury
25 selection process during these times. I pulled a number of

1 people out of the jury box because, frankly, I was afraid of
2 what they were going to say.

3 I brought them over to the bench and I talked to them
4 about the question that was pending, whether they had issues
5 with the IRS, whether they had issues with citizens of other
6 countries, whatever question was pending that caused them to
7 raise their hand. And I thought, I don't know, I'd just like
8 to hear this privately at the bench rather than have it said
9 aloud, and I was surprised by what I heard. And during that
10 tea I was remarking about that process, and how disappointed I
11 was with what I had to hear. And you know a member of that
12 organization looked at me and she said, something to the
13 effect of, Remember what you said. There is no true American
14 way to think; a very polite and gracious way she was reminding
15 me that my opinion, critical of this juror, had no place that
16 day; no place. I couldn't be critical of her or him because
17 of what they had to express. They were Americans, and they
18 had the right and freedom to hold those opinions and I needed
19 to respect that. And I thank -- I thank you for that
20 conversation.

21 We all need to be reminded that conformity of thought
22 and belief is contrary to the underlying principles of this
23 country.

24 Now, changing gears, I'd like to comment a bit about
25 Felix Franfurter. He came to this country as an immigrant

1 from Austria in 1894. When he was twelve years old he became
2 a naturalized citizen. Felix Franfurter went on to become a
3 justice of the United States Supreme Court. Justice
4 Franfurter commented, "In this country the highest office is
5 citizen."

6 You have now each assumed that high office. And your
7 office, like my office, has duties. And you've heard some of
8 the duties. You have the duty to be informed. You have a
9 duty to participate in the political process.

10 You have a duty to serve on a jury. You have a duty
11 to vote, and, yes, you have a duty to pay taxes.

12 You also have a duty to work hard, to make the United
13 States the country that you hoped to find when you came here,
14 and that you want it to be.

15 Again, I welcome you as a fellow citizen with all the
16 rights and duties of that high office.

17 And I thank you again for the enrichment that each of
18 you brings to this great country.

19 (Applause.)

20 CHIEF JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Dr. Schaffer, is there
21 anyone here you wish to recognize? I give you the privilege
22 of the last word. I know we're in your facility. I thank you
23 very much for hosting us. And I understand, hoping to host
24 the tea for our new fellow citizens.

25 Dr. Schaffer? No?

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

Any business of the Court?

Hearing none, we'll stand adjourned until call.

(Proceedings concluded 10:52 a.m.,
November 7, 2011.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, MERISSA RACINE, Substitute Official Court Reporter
for the United States District Court for the District of
Wyoming, a Registered Diplomate Reporter, do hereby certify
that I reported by machine shorthand the 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 2nd day of December, 2016.

/s/ Merissa Racine

MERISSA RACINE
Substitute Official Court Reporter
Registered Diplomate Reporter