IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF WYOMING

In the Matter of the Naturalization and **Granting of United States** Citizenship to FILIBERTO RUIZ RUIZ, MIGUEL OLIVAREZ, GERARDO ESCARSEGA ORTIZ, JIANGHONG MITTON, **OPHET SENGCHANH**, DOUGLAS GRANT WOOKEY,
ADRIANA MARIA PEREZ SMITH,
CASPER, WYOMING

JANUARY 9, 2012 3:30 P.M. - 4:24 P.M.

EWING T. KERR FEDERAL COURTHOUSE

Petitioners.

TRANSCRIPT OF HEARING ON PETITIONS FOR UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND NATURALIZATION CEREMONY BEFORE THE HONORABLE SCOTT W. SKAVDAHL UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

APPEARANCES:

For the Government: David Kubichek

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Official U.S. Court Reporter U.S. District Courthouse 111 South Wolcott, Room 217

Casper, Wyoming 82601

(307) 265-5280

(The proceedings commence at 3:30 p.m.)

THE CLERK: Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye. The
United States District Court for the District of Wyoming is now
in session, the Honorable Scott W. Skavdahl, Judge, presiding.
God save the United States and this Honorable Court.

THE COURT: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen of the jury. Welcome to the Ewing T. Kerr Federal Courthouse for this naturalization ceremony. The Court will suspend the local rules on cameras and recording devices. I would ask, however, that if you have a cell phone or a Smartphone, if you would turn the Smartphone to "off" or turn it to "silent."

The United States District Court for the District of Wyoming is in special session for the naturalization of foreign nationals to be United States citizens. It is with great honor, pride and privilege that I am able to conduct this ceremony today, inducting seven new United States citizens.

The federal district court for Wyoming, including Chief Judge Freudenthal, Judge Johnson and Judge Brimmer, extend their congratulations to you and your families and friends.

At this time, I would recognize Mr. Kubichek, representing the Attorney General of the United States, Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Wyoming, for his petition.

MR. KUBICHEK: Thank you, Your Honor, and may it

please the Court.

THE COURT: Counsel.

MR. KUBICHEK: The United States today will be moving the admission of the following petitioners to citizenship: Filiberto Ruiz Ruiz of Mexico; Miguel Olivarez from Mexico; Gerardo Escarsega Ortiz from Mexico; Jianghong Mitton from the People's Republic of China; Ophet Sengchanh of Laos; Douglas Grant Wookey from Canada; and Adriana Maria Perez Smith from Venezuela.

Your Honor, each of these petitioners is before the Court for a hearing on their petition for naturalization. Each has been interviewed and examined under oath by a designated examiner of the Citizenship and Immigration Service who has completed their character and background investigations.

The Citizenship and Immigration Service indicates in their correspondence that the petitioners have each met all the requirements for naturalization and are well qualified as desirable candidates for United States citizenship. Therefore, Your Honor, on the recommendation of the immigration officer, it is my privilege to move that each of them be admitted to United States citizenship upon taking the requisite oath.

THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Kubichek.

MR. KUBICHEK: Thank you, Your Honor.

THE COURT: The petition of the United States -- the Court grants the motion and grants the order, allowing these

petitioners to become citizens of the United States. The Court 1 would ask that these individuals stand when their name is 2 3 called, and I would ask for the clerk to call the roll of citizens. 4 5 THE CLERK: Gerardo Escarsega Ortiz. Miquel Olivarez. Ophet Sengchanh. Douglas Grant Wookey. Filiberto Ruiz Ruiz. 6 7 Jianghong Mitton. Adriana Maria Perez Smith. 8 THE COURT: All right. Thank you. Congratulations. 9 You may be seated. At this time, I would ask the Natrona County 10 High School Color Guard, Colonel Schmotzer, to post the colors. 11 Please rise. 12 (Presentation of colors by NCHS JROTC Color Guard.) 13 14 THE COURT: Fellow citizens, it is your obligation and ours to show our allegiance to this country at this time by 15 16 making our pledge of allegiance and then remain standing for the playing of our national anthem. Would you please join me 17 18 in the pledge of allegiance. 19 (Pledge of Allegiance of the United States recited; 20 Star-Spangled Banner played.) 21 THE COURT: Thank you. 22 (Colors retired.) 23 THE COURT: Thank you, Colonel Schmotzer, and the Color Guard. 24

At this time, the remainder of you may be seated.

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will administer the oath to our new citizens.
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             If you'd please raise your right hand and face me.
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             I hereby declare on oath --
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             THE PETITIONERS: I hereby declare on oath --
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             THE COURT: -- that I absolutely and entirely --
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- that I absolutely and entirely --
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             THE COURT: -- renounce and abjure --
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- renounce and abjure --
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             THE COURT: -- all allegiance and fidelity --
             THE PETITIONERS: -- all allegiance and fidelity --
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             THE COURT: -- to any foreign prince or potentate --
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- to any foreign prince or
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    potentate --
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             THE COURT: -- state or sovereignty --
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- state or sovereignty --
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             THE COURT:
                        -- of whom or which I have --
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- of whom or which I have --
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             THE COURT: -- heretofore been a subject or citizen;
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- heretofore been a subject or
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    citizen;
             THE COURT: That I will support and defend --
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             THE PETITIONERS: That I will support and defend --
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             THE COURT:
                        -- the Constitution and laws of the
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    United States of America --
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- the Constitution and the laws of
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the United States of America --
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             THE COURT: -- against all enemies, foreign and
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    domestic;
             THE PETITIONERS: -- against all enemies, foreign and
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   domestic;
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             THE COURT: That I will bear true faith and allegiance
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    to the same --
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             THE PETITIONERS: That I will bear true faith and
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    allegiance to the same --
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             THE COURT: -- when required by the law;
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- when required by the law;
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             THE COURT: That I will perform non-combat service --
             THE PETITIONERS: That I will perform non-combat
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   service --
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             THE COURT: -- in the Armed Forces of the
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   United States --
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- in the Armed Forces of the
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   United States --
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            THE COURT: -- when required by the law;
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- when required by the law;
             THE COURT: That I will perform work of national
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22
    importance --
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             THE PETITIONERS: That I will perform work of national
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   importance --
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             THE COURT: -- under civilian direction when required
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    by law;
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- under civilian direction when
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    required by law;
             THE COURT: And that I take this obligation freely --
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             THE PETITIONERS:
                               That I take this obligation
    freely --
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             THE COURT: -- without any mental reservation --
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- without any mental reservation --
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             THE COURT: -- or purpose of evasion.
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             THE PETITIONERS: -- or purpose of evasion.
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             THE COURT: So help me God.
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             THE PETITIONERS: So help me God.
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             THE COURT: Congratulations.
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             THE PETITIONERS: Thank you.
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             THE COURT: At this time, we will present the
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   certificates of citizenship. Please join me in welcoming our
   newest citizens.
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        (Applause)
        (Certificates presented and shaking of hands of the new
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    citizens by the Court and the clerk.)
             THE COURT: At this time, please be seated.
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             First and foremost, we would have a message from the
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    President of the United States.
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        (President Obama addresses the new citizens via videotape.)
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             THE COURT: I always want to make sure I don't
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mis-anticipate the music. 1 2 (Laughter) 3 THE COURT: All right. I would recognize our congressional delegation of Congresswoman Lummis, 4 Senators Barrasso and Enzi. I believe there are 5 representatives of their office that may have some 6 7 presentations to make to our new U.S. citizens. 8 (Packets presented to the new citizens by the congressional 9 and senatorial representatives.) 10 THE COURT: Thank you. Please be seated. 11 Thank you. At this time I would also recognize 12 various patriotic organizations and Mr. Lowe. 13 (Mr. Lowe salutes the American Flag.) 14 MR. LOWE: May it please the Court. 15 THE COURT: Counsel. 16 MR. LOWE: On behalf of the veterans of our community and our state and nation, we are happy to welcome you as part 17 18 of our American family. It's a great honor to know that people still want to come to America instead of going to the countries 19 20 from which you came, and this tells us a strong message about the greatness of America and its continuation as a world 21 22 leader. So we congratulate you on this. 23

I'd like to visit with you today about the veterans.

You hear a lot about veterans because we're getting so many of them. There was a time when we didn't always call up our

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National Guard in wars like in Vietnam and so on. Therefore, the National Guard didn't have the exposure to overseas duty and responsibility in time of war which would qualify them to be called a full-fledged veteran, although they certainly were in the fact that they served our country.

But what is a veteran? Well, by law it is defined as someone who has served during a conflict in which the country is engaged; and by virtue of this, that entitles them to membership in veterans organizations. The VFW is a little more exclusive in that they require that you be overseas in the area of conflict whereas the other veterans organizations are not quite so restrictive in their membership. While most of us in the American Legion are persons who have served overseas, still it isn't required for membership in the American Legion, for example.

There are a total of some 40 different veterans organizations in the country. They even have a Jewish veterans organization and that sort of thing. You'll find this is very common to have groups like that that are sort of separate and distinct; but the national ones, of course, are the American Legion, the largest; the VFW, the next; and then there are others besides like Ambes, but they aren't as large as either of those two organizations.

Now, what do the veterans do? Well, mostly they're involved, of course, in supporting veterans and supporting the

families of veterans in time of war. They are also engaged in supporting legislation for veterans in order to carry out the promise made by our government when we enlisted and when we were drafted to be entitled to benefits and see to it that those benefits are received.

The veterans organizations maintain what they call "service officers" who see to it that the veterans who need the help healthwise or whatever they need can get them. They have several privileges accorded them by law. They have special loans, for example, in buying a home. They have scholarships to go to college; and they have, of course, healthcare which is the big item, plus, of course, burial rights when they pass away.

Now, in the community, the organizations vary in what they do. Both the VFW and the American Legion have oratorical contests, and this trains young people in the skill of public speaking and being able to stand up before a group and to speak and do it effectively so as to get across the thoughts and messages they have.

The American Legion is entitled -- their program is entirely devoted to a discussion of the Constitution of the United States. Also, the American Legion has Boys State, and the auxiliary of the American Legion has Girls State. This is a program where these kids, in the summertime, go over to Worland and -- or not Worland but go over here to the town to

the east, Douglas; and the boys go there, and the girls usually meet up in the bowl -- in the basin country up north, up at around Cody, in that area; and they have an experience in government, and they end up down in Cheyenne. They go in and take over the governor's office for a day and the legislature and that sort of thing so as to get their idea of what government is all about and how it functions and where it functions.

Then they have the high school rodeo that the

American Legion -- in fact, this is the only American Legion
here in the United States that has a high school rodeo program.

The American Legion also has baseball. This is where about
40 percent of the Major League players come from. They get
their initial training in the American Legion baseball program.

Also they have a youth rifle training program, shooting rifles, so as to do it safely and not endanger themselves as well as others. And then, of course, many of the posts individually sponsor Boy Scout troops which is another activity.

Now, patriotic programs, these programs here in Natrona County, are conducted by the Natrona County United States Veterans Council. Now, this is a group -- this is an organization in which all veterans organizations belong and participate through, this United Veterans Council; and the principal holidays that the United Veterans Council conduct

are, of course, Memorial Day in May. That's when we go to the cemetery for those who have passed on and particularly to honor those who died in service of our country. Then on Flag Day. That's in June and all these things are advertised in the press for you to watch for so that you can come out and participate in these programs.

Patriot Day, of course, remembers the attack on September 11^{LII} which is the second time that we've been attacked as a nation since we became a nation, following Britain's attack on us in the 1812 War, and then came the September 11^{LII} event of which we're all acquainted.

And then comes Veterans Day on November 11^{LII}. This used to be called "Armistice Day" because that was the day that ended World War I; but since that honors veterans generally who have served and are serving yet, they naturally have changed the name, and so the name now is called "Veterans Day." Now, some posts also observe the 4^{LII} of July, and they do that by having ceremonies or at least having a picnic or a dinner or something like that for their members. So that goes on.

Now, I should tell you that another day that we observe is Pearl Harbor Day; and Pearl Harbor comes, of course, December the 7^{tn} every year. That's the date that Japan attacked our fleet in Pearl Harbor and sank many of our ships, killing many of our sailors at that time, and that's what launched us into World War II, a war that many Americans didn't

think would be necessary because during World War I

President Wilson said that we were fighting the war to end all
wars.

Well, I don't think President Wilson was thinking too clearly that day because we all know that as long as America is what it is and people like you want to come to it and be part of us, we know that people are going to want to take what we have away if they can or if they can't take it away, that they're going to destroy us, and we have a lot of Muslims running around today that think that they can do that.

So anyway that's basically some of the things that I think you should be aware of. I urge you to come out for these events and participate in them and be a part of us now and share the opportunities we have to remember our country and those who have served.

As the judge has told you today, we've given a lot of lives again. A lot of American blood has been spilled in this war on terror and continues to be spilled and probably will continue for some time. We all knew that when it started the terrorists said they wouldn't give up; and, of course, we're not about to give up. So consequently this thing is going to go on and on and on.

Now, what can you do personally so as to have a part in this? First of all, I want to urge you when you see soldiers -- and I don't know care whether they're in overseas

service or whether they're serving right here at the armory out here with the National Guard. Anybody in uniform, when you see them, go up to them, shake their hand and thank them for what they're doing for our country. Don't be shy about it. Don't even bother worrying about interrupting them if they're talking. They are most appreciative of that show and that courtesy that you do when you come up to shake their hands and to thank them for their service.

Another thing you can do if you like is you can send packages of things over to the troops. Now, I just learned that we have deployed now another group of troops overseas. We have -- these are all Army National Guard or Air National Guard. We have both Army and Air National Guard here in Wyoming which isn't always true in all states, but we have both here. Now, the Army has something like 20 to 30 that are deployed overseas today, and the Air Force has just recently deployed a number somewhere between 40 and 60. I don't have the exact figures on these, but that's roughly the number that there are.

Now, how do you do this? Well, of course, the best bet is to look in the telephone directory for my name,

R. Stanley Lowe, and get my telephone number, 265-1585, and call me, but let me tell you how this works. We have here in town for this district -- we have the headquarters of the Family Support Group. The Family Support Group now is an

organization that not only takes your donations or your packages if you have them for the troops, but they also will take any of your contributions that you might want to make to help the families of our troops.

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Now, I think you realize that a lot of these troops today are married. That wasn't true when I was in World War II. Most of us were single. We were teenagers and so consequently we didn't have a military of 14 million of us that were married and that sort of thing; but most of the troops that are serving overseas today are married, and they have families here at home that are "maintaining the home fire" so to speak until daddy gets back or when mother gets back from overseas duty; and so in that regard, the Family Support Group here will be very happy to assist you in anything you want to do to help the families or to help the troops; and if you do have the name and address of some friend or relative or perhaps a relative of some of your friends and you get the name and address of that soldier or sailor or airman or whatever or Marine and you want to send something over, the post office now has a flat rate, and they have a box that you pick up at the post office, and all the stuff that you can put in that box goes to the person that you're sending it to at the same rate, regardless of the weight, and you get a discount on that besides. I think it's something like a two-dollar discount or something. You'll have to ask the post office about that more

specifically, but that's something that you might want to do, and you might want to consider that.

The person here, Daniela Hamilton, is the person who handles the Family Support Group here locally, and then we have Debbie Russell in Cheyenne who is statewide, and so she can handle packages going to soldiers or sailors or Marines or what have you from Laramie or Jackson or from anyplace in the state; and I should tell you that this Family Support Group not only takes care of donations to the troops that are in the National Guard, but it takes care of donations to troops and their families in any service, whether it's the Navy or the Army or the Air Force or Coast Guard or whatever, and so you can make your donations.

Now, let me tell you about another program that's been very popular, and this is what we call the "Welcome Home Troops" thing. Now, let me explain how that works. This is a program designed to have a group of people here at home at the airport to welcome home any of the soldiers and sailors and Marines, airmen and so on that are coming home on leave or coming home when they are discharged from the service; and so we try to get a group out there to the airport so as to welcome them home.

Now, I have to tell you it's great fun because there's a lot of happiness and people are very happy about seeing the troops come home. We also see people off when they go back to

duty after they've been home on leave, and so we go out there, and we see them off, and I think that's where they're probably just as appreciative, if not perhaps more, at the prospect of leaving as they were when they came home when everybody was quite happy about seeing them coming home.

So we have flags but bring your own flags if you like so as to have a lot of flags out there at the time. We try to get this in the paper if people give us advance notice. If you ever know of any friend or youngster or friend or something or a person who -- anybody that's in the service who's connected with your friends or your relatives or anything like that, why, let us know, call me, and that's fine, and we'll set this up.

We will need to know, though, in time, as early as you can get it, the day that they're coming and the time that you expect them to arrive and, if possible, the flight number of the plane they are coming in on, and so that is quite important.

Now, I have to tell you that there are so many other side rewards of this sort of thing. Now, we have a family here now who's very much a part of our community, Dan and Emily White. Dan was in the Marine Corps. He first served in Kosovo and over in the Balkans there in Europe. Then he ended up in Afghanistan, and he was in charge of training an Afghan military unit. He was embedded with them; that is, they all lived together, and so they had an opportunity to talk about

this training when they're sitting around in the evening after they were out active and that sort of thing, and they talk about how to best improve their tactics in dealing with the enemy.

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Then he would take his men out when they had been trained sufficiently, and they'd go out into the areas where they knew the Taliban, the name of the enemy they're fighting there in Afghanistan -- where they knew they were, but he tells us about one episode -- and, of course, they had several episodes, but one that I've always found interesting was they were driving along with their trucks with the Afghan troops in the back, of course, and they started drawing fire from the Taliban. They were up on a ridge, and so he had the truck stopped, and he got the troops out, and they returned the fire on the Taliban, and he ordered the charge, and he led the charge. They ran up the hill; and as they ran up the hill, the Taliban's eyes just got as big as saucers. They threw down their rifles, and they started to run. Well, the Afghan troops that he had trained chased them down and killed them all, and so this is the way the Afghan troops take care of the situation in matters of that sort.

Now, his wife Emily is a nurse now. She was with the hospital in San Diego as a hospitalman, and she was there treating the troops and the sailors and Marines and so on that came into that hospital, and so she had guite a bit of

experience; but when she -- they met there in San Diego, by the way, and were married there; but when they came home -- I should explain to you that the military now has a policy that when a couple are in service -- and they naturally prefer to be in an area -- when they're deployed overseas, they like to be in the same general area.

So in this case the decision was made to deploy them to Okinawa. That's an island, as you know, south of Japan and just off the coast of China. That was the last island I was in toward the end of World War II, and this is where the last big battle was fought. That was the major landing for a major military operation was landing in Okinawa because the Japanese were defending that a great deal because it put our airplanes in close range to bomb Japan, you see.

So anyway, they were in Okinawa, and Emily was over there at the hospital, Navy hospital; and, of course, Dan was with the Marine Corps unit which was there, and so they got to see each other that way, and that was a very nice arrangement.

Well, Emily came home first, and in the meantime, while she was gone, her parents moved here from Minnesota, and so they made this their home, and so she came here and waited for him, and Dan came home about -- a few months later, and so by then they got in touch with me. We had some people out at the airport to meet Dan. We would have done it for Emily, but we didn't know she was coming. Anyway, we went out there, and

here came Dan home, and he was very impressed and, in fact, 2 Emily's family was rather impressed with the hospitality shown them here, and so they've settled in here, too. 3 She went to Casper College and took her nursing 4 training school, and she's a full-fledged nurse now out here at 5 the Wyoming medical hospital and downtown here, and they have a 6 7 new young man, a new baby, Nolan Thomas, and I was hoping Emily 8 could be here today, but Nolan Thomas had to have shots today. So consequently she wasn't able to come and neither could Nolan 9 10 Thomas. But anyway, Dan is here. Dan, would you stand, please, and be recognized here. 11 12 (Applause) 13 MR. LOWE: And, Dan, why don't you come up here and 14 sit with the veterans, would you, please. 15 I apologize to Dan back there. 16 (Dan White comes forward.) MR. LOWE: Yeah, by the Reverend, yeah. Why don't you 17 18 sit here. So this just tells you now a little something. 19 20 gives you an idea of what some of our troops have been going through over there in Afghanistan, in Iraq and those countries 21 22 like that. 23 So with that, I just wanted to tell you again how 24 pleased we are to have you part of our American family and to

ask you once again to participate with us in observing the

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holidays, our patriotic holidays for this country, and show 1 your gratitude and appreciation to our troops and their 2 3 families. Thank you very much. (Applause as Mr. Lowe salutes the America Flag.) 4 5 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Lowe. There are also some other patriotic organizations that 6 7 are here today. I'd recognize the Daughters of the American Revolution: Ms. Margo Everett, Susan Haines, Sue Haines, Betty 8 Gosar and Jackie Carrico. Did I say that name correctly? 9 10 MS. CARRICO: Yes, sir. 11 **THE COURT:** All right. I believe that they may have something they wish to present today. And, ladies, if you 12 would be so kind as to do so. 13 (Gifts presented to the petitioners by the Daughters of 14 American Revolution.) 15 16 **THE COURT:** Thank you, ladies. 17 I believe, Mr. Johnson, you and the American Legion have some flags that you intend to present. Is that correct? 18 (Mr. Cohee saluting the American Flag.) 19 20 MR. COHEE: Gary Cohee, United Veterans, also 21 representing the American Legion. 22 **THE COURT:** All right. Mr. Cohee, I apologize. I had "Ken Johnson." 23 24 MR. COHEE: These flags are from the American Legion. 25 (Flags presented by Mr. Cohee to the petitioners who stand

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to received them.)
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             THE COURT: Thank you. Please be seated.
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             Thank you, Mr. Cohee.
             MR. COHEE: Thank you, sir.
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             THE COURT: I believe as well that Reverend Robinson,
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   Leonard Robinson of the Disabled Veterans -- I recognize you,
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   sir.
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             REVEREND ROBINSON:
                                 I apologize, sir. I didn't hear
   what Mr. Lowe was saying a little while ago. So I apologize to
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    the Court for that.
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             THE COURT: No apologies necessary.
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             MR. ROBINSON: I also represent the Disabled American
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   Veterans which is also a part of the United Veterans Council,
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    and I have a little token to these that are being naturalized
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    today. We have a pin of the State of Wyoming.
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        (Pins presented by Reverend Robinson to the new citizens
   who stand to receive them.)
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             THE COURT: Thank you. Please be seated.
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             Thank you, Reverend.
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             I would also recognize Mr. Johnson who is seated over
    here next to Reverend Robinson.
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             At this time, I would recognize Mr. Kubichek on behalf
    of the Attorney General of the United States for remarks.
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             MR. KUBICHEK: May it please the Court.
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             THE COURT: Counsel.
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MR. KUBICHEK: Ladies and gentlemen, welcome. This is a large pleasure and privilege for me to be able to be with you today and, on behalf of the Attorney General of the United States and the President, to welcome you officially as members of our American family.

It wasn't easy, I know; and, you know, one of the things that saddens me on these occasions is that I know to a moral certainty each of you has an amazing story to tell us about how it is you are here with us today; and I should love to hear those stories, how do you get here from Laos or from Argentina or from China, Mexico. It fascinates me and it's not easy, you know. I know it's not easy. It takes commitment, it takes study, it takes effort, all of that, to join us.

Now, most of us here, Judge Skavdahl, me, we didn't have to do any work. We just drew the lucky card. We got born here; and if you're born here, you're automatically a citizen. Anybody can do that pretty much, just a matter of luck. But you all made a commitment. You came here. You came here legally. You went through a difficult process, answered questions about yourself. You disclosed all there was to disclose about yourself. You had to learn about our country. You had to take a test. I didn't have to take a test. He didn't have to take a test.

(Laughter)

MR. KUBICHEK: We just got signed up. You guys had

to pass a test, and then you had to be ultimately approved by this dude that I referred to earlier who's the immigration officer, and all of that had to happen before you get to come here today and be with us and sign up, and that's what you did. You signed up today, and suddenly you became my boss and became his boss because, see, one of the things that's different about our country and certainly historically many other countries in the world is government works for you, and we are a government of laws, not a government of people.

And are we fallible? Do we make mistakes? Yes, we do; but when we began our little adventure back in 1776, our founders determined that the only way that a country could exist here with, even back then, so many different kinds of people and religions and the like was that we went forward based on an agreement, and that's what our Constitution is. It's an agreement between all of the original 13 states and the people who lived in them that hence forward we would be governed by certain principles; that as citizens we would enjoy certain rights and liberties, and we would also be responsible for certain kinds of obligations and responsibilities.

Now, that hasn't been easy. You know, we are a 235/36-year-old experiment that so far is still going, but it hasn't been easy. You know, we started in a revolution. We had to secure our freedom from the British. We had an initial try at a constitution called the "Articles of Confederation."

Total bust. Didn't work at all. So then in 1787, a bunch of really smart and amazing people came together in Philadelphia and decided what we need to do is form a real constitution that binds us all together as Americans, and they did. In a sweaty, hot, humid, disease-ridden town back then, these guys worked day and night, and they came up with the biggest chunk of that document you all had to commit to memory and study in order to become citizens.

Since they did that, we had a civil war in 1864 which almost tore us completely apart, but we were lucky. We had, at the time, an amazing man as our leader, Abraham Lincoln, who said, "There is one thing that I will not do. I took an oath to support and defend the Constitution and maintain this Union, and that I will do." And that he did, but he recognized -- he made perhaps the most famous speech in all of American history at the Battlefield of Gettysburg in 1863 which is after the battle concluded. Ten of thousands of Americans, clearly falling on both sides of the question, died; and Lincoln posed a question. He said, "You know, this country, since its founding" -- at the time, "four score and seven years ago" -- you've all probably heard that. We know we were a country founded on a set of shared principles and ideals.

But the question that remains is: Can a nation founded, based solely on shared understandings and commitments to each other, a "social contract," if you will, not on shared

ethnicity -- I mean, look at yourselves. You're from all over the place. I'm from all over the place. I'm a mongrel from Czechoslovakia and God knows where else, Austria, you know.

(Laughter)

MR. KUBICHEK: We're from all over the place. So we're not a homogeneous society where everybody kind of looks the same, thinks the same and all of that. We had to come together. We had to sacrifice. We had to be able to say, "Okay. I'm going to give up some of this to get some of this." We made agreements. The question is: Can we survive based only on those shared principles?

Well, we survived the Civil War, and we became stronger because out of that conflict we recognized, "Look, America can't just be for White people or it doesn't work, and ultimately it will collapse upon itself." In the Civil Rights movement in the 1950s and '60s, we had to revisit that question: Can you treat people of different races and different religions/ethnicities as inferior citizens? And in a lot of countries in the world, that is so. Come from a different cast, for example, in India, you don't have the same status.

The question was: In America can we survive and treat each other that way? The answer ultimately was "no." And did we make progress? We did. We made progress in the '60s and '70s. And whether you liked him or not misses the point; but

to show how much progress we made, we elected a mixed-race, part Black/part Polynesian guy to be President. We elected him to be President. That is a remarkable thing.

And the person who was most competitive against him to run the nomination of the Democratic Party was a woman; and Senator John McCain who was running for the presidency for the Republicans had a woman as his vice presidential candidate. So are we perfect? Heck no, heck no. But we are moving, I hope, in the right direction in terms of learning to keep the promises we make in our Constitution, and that's the best we can hope for; and why we're go glad you're here is because you will help us keep those promises.

It is so good for us to incorporate new people from different cultures into our melting pot. It makes us richer. It makes us more diverse. It makes us ultimately stronger. You bring so much to the table. So when you join us -- have joined us as Americans, don't forget where you came from and the culture you came from or cook some of the foods where you came from. We love that, you know.

(Laughter)

MR. KUBICHEK: Keep some of that because pieces of that are what contribute to make us the country that we are. We're not all going to look the same ever, you know, not all going to go to the same church or any church necessarily, but we're all going to agree on one thing: That we are Americans.

We love America. We believe in its promise. We believe in our responsibilities to it which you have now, too. You not only have inherited all these new rights, but you have responsibility. You have to vote. You have to understand your right to speak and to assemble; and the counterpart of that right is you have to understand that you have an obligation to listen and that you not interfere with any other citizens' rights to express themselves.

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That's all very hard. It's easy to talk about in the theoretical; but on the day-to-day "walking the walk" sort of thing it's not always easy, but to be a good American you have to do that. You're going to have to -- and it's wonderful that we gather here in this special, sacred place to me because if America is about anything it is about our commitment to a country of laws, not men; and this is where we administer those laws, we apply those laws; and sometimes we will call upon you to come join us because in the most sacred of obligations that we carry out here, we have a jury system. We don't just let one guy up there decide "up" or "down" on a citizen's liberty or property or all of that. We bring six or we bring 12 American citizens down here; and Judge Skavdahl, who is the arbiter of what the law is, will instruct you after you hear the case, and you'll be the ultimate judges. You'll decide what the facts are. You'll decide. Should this party win the civil lawsuit? Should this defendant be convicted? That is an enormous responsibility of citizenship, but it is one of the core values that makes us who we are because for the most part -- again, we're not perfect, but for the most part that system is one that operates amazingly, it operates fairly, and it separates us from a lot of the rest of the world because we take it so seriously, and it's one of the things that we need you to take seriously.

So if you get a summons for jury duty from

Judge Skavdahl, don't blow it off. Don't say, "I'm sorry. I

can't come. I got this. I got that." One of the things

you've got to do is to participate as a participant. That's

what you signed up for today. You signed up for all the

liberties, and you signed up for some duties.

So anyway, enough of me. Thank you all again. It is an honor to be here with you and to celebrate this very special day with you. I wish you the best. Godspeed and God bless each of you, and God bless the United States. Thank you again.

THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Kubichek.

(Applause)

THE COURT: I don't know that I can add significantly to the remarks that have already been made, but this country was forged from a desire to form a more fair and just society and government, a government by the people and for the people. You are part of it. Its formation came at a great and, for many, an ultimate cost. However, that was but a down payment.

As noted at the beginning of this ceremony, the price of our 2 freedom continues to be paid on a daily and hourly basis. 3 I hope that all of us can recognize and appreciate we are united as Americans, and the freedoms we enjoy is not 4 because of our individuality but, rather, because of our 5 commitment to one another as fellow citizens of the 6 7 United States of America. To our newest citizens, thank you for wanting to be a 8 9 part of that commitment; and may those of us who have already made it or have been gifted it be reminded that what we have is 10 11 cherished and sought after by others throughout the world. 12 God bless the United States of America. We'll stand 13 in recess. 14 THE CLERK: All rise. Court will stand in recess. 15 (The proceedings conclude at 4:24 p.m.) 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

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1	REPORTER CERTIFICATE			
2	I, JAMIE L. HENDRICH, Official Federal Court Reporter			
3	in the United States District Court for the District of			
4	Wyoming, certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript			
5	from the record of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.			
6				
7				
8	01.17.12 /S//SDate JAMIE L. HENDRICH, CSR-RPR-CRR			
9	Date JAMIE L. HENDRICH, CSR-RPR-CRR Official Federal Court Reporter			
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