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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF WYOMING

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

Michelle Smith, Lanietta Kula	Cheyenne, Wyoming
Vovakasiga Ratuwaqa, Olga	March 12, 2026
Gennadyevna Gates, Jorge Luis	10:11 a.m.
Valverde Valverde, Victor Hugo	
Castillo Valle, Takashi Leo	Joseph C. O'Mahoney
Suyama, Sharon Abey Mathew,	Federal Center
Ulrike Krick, Torisha Shenovia	
Brown, Valeria Idali Castillo	
Martinez, Marlen Natalia Lowell,	
Natalia Mikolaivna Bell, Mazhar	
Mumtaz Abbasi, Simon Peter	
Alexander,	
 Petitioners.	

**TRANSCRIPT OF HEARING PROCEEDINGS ON PETITIONS FOR
UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND NATURALIZATION**

**BEFORE THE HONORABLE ALAN B. JOHNSON
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE, presiding**

**Honorable Kelly H. Rankin
Chief United States District Judge**

**Honorable Scott P. Klosterman
Chief United States Magistrate Judge**

**JANET DAVIS, RDR, FCRR, CRR
Federal Official Court Reporter
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*Proceedings reported by realtime stenographic reporter;
transcript produced with Computer-Aided Transcription.*

1 APPEARANCES:

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3 District of Wyoming
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5 Assistant United States Attorney
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1 (Proceedings commenced 10:11 a.m., March 12, 2026.)

2 JUDGE JOHNSON: Welcome, everyone who has blown in on
3 Wyoming's winds today.

4 Please be seated, and we will commence.

5 I see that we have present from East High School its
6 color guard which will present the colors as we begin.

7 From East High School we have Cadet Major Connor
8 MacLeod, the rifle bearer; Cadet Color Guard Commander Captain
9 Andrew Escajeda carrying the U.S. flag; Cadet Senior Master
10 Sergeant Clayton Damron carrying the state flag, and Cadet
11 Senior Master Sergeant Kaylee Phillips, state charge -- state
12 flag.

13 Please all rise for the colors.

14 (Presentation of colors.)

15 (National Anthem.)

16 JUDGE JOHNSON: Please be seated.

17 I wish to thank the preeminent choir, the Centralaires
18 from Cheyenne Central High School, who so beautifully performed
19 our National Anthem for us.

20 And, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of my colleagues,
21 Chief District Judge Kelly Rankin and Chief Magistrate Judge
22 Scott Klosterman, I wish to welcome you all for this important
23 ceremony in the lives of our new citizens-to-be on taking the
24 oath today.

25 It is a celebration that all of us are able to share

1 in this important event, the diversity that they bring to this
2 nation, their skills, their lives, their cultures, and all the
3 beautiful things in their lives that they have produced for
4 America and our nation.

5 So I'm pleased to see that so many of you have braved
6 the dangers of the wind, the Wyoming wind that is pummelling us
7 today from out in the west, and we hope that everyone will be
8 especially careful. The corner of this building right out the
9 door, the northeast corner, is the most dangerous corner in the
10 entire city when the wind blows.

11 We have had several occasions when individuals have
12 stepped out of the doors and found themselves laying out in the
13 middle of Capitol Avenue and even had trips to the hospital.
14 So watch those children very carefully as you leave and make
15 sure that no injury should occur on this day of celebration as
16 we proceed.

17 I think everyone should have one of these, which is
18 our schedule of events today.

19 First announcement I wish to make is this is an
20 important event, and we suspend the normal rule that applies in
21 this ceremonial courtroom that does not allow cameras or
22 digital device to be used for images to be preserved.

23 We suspend those rules today. Family members that
24 wish to take pictures throughout the proceedings today should
25 feel free to use their cameras and recording devices to be able

1 to preserve this important moment in your loved one's life as
2 they take this important oath and begin their new journey as
3 citizens of the United States of North America.

4 Now, there are double doors, or swinging doors, that
5 mark the well of the courtroom from the spectator area. Feel
6 free, if you need to move to a better position to capture a
7 photograph, to step through those double doors and take
8 photographs.

9 At the end of this proceedings, I know that Chief
10 Judge Rankin and Chief Judge Klosterman will be pleased to
11 stick around and we can have photographs taken next to the flag
12 individually with the families and those who are new citizens
13 today.

14 With that, I see a familiar face with us seated at
15 counsel table, as she is often there, representing the United
16 States. She is Assistant United States Attorney Jasmine
17 Peters.

18 Ms. Peters.

19 MS. PETERS: Thank you, Your Honor, and good morning.
20 May it please the Court. My name is Jasmine Peters, and here
21 today I am a representative of the United States Attorney's
22 Office for the District of Wyoming and in proxy for the
23 Attorney General of the United States.

24 It is my pleasure and my privilege to introduce to the
25 Court today 14 individuals who appear in person today for a

1 hearing on their petitions for naturalization as United States
2 citizens:

3 Michelle Smith, a native and former inhabitant of
4 Mexico; Lanjeta Kula Vovakasiga Ratuwaqa, a native and former
5 inhabitant of Fiji.

6 JUDGE JOHNSON: I neglected -- please stand as your
7 name is called so that we can see you.

8 MS. PETERS: Olga Gennadyevna Gates, a native and
9 former inhabitant of Russia; Jorge Luis Valverde Valverde, a
10 native and former inhabitant of Equador; Victor Hugo Castillo
11 Valle, a native and former inhabitant of El Salvador; Takashi
12 Leo Suyama, a native and former inhabitant of Japan; Sharon
13 Abey Mathew, a native and former inhabitant of India; Ulrike
14 Krick, a native and former inhabitant of Germany; Torisha
15 Shenovia Brown, a native and former inhabitant of Jamaica;
16 Valeria Idali Castillo Martinez, a native and former inhabitant
17 of Mexico; Marlen Natalia Lowell, a native and former
18 inhabitant of Mexico; Natalia Mikolaivna Bell, a native and
19 former inhabitant of Ukraine; Mazhar Mumtaz Abbasi, a native
20 and former inhabitant of Pakistan; Simon Peter Alexander, a
21 native and former inhabitant of the United Kingdom.

22 These individuals have been interviewed and examined
23 under oath by a designated examiner for the United States
24 Citizenship and Immigration Services who has also completed
25 their background and character investigations. Citizenship and

1 Immigration Services indicates that these individuals have met
2 all requirements for naturalization and are well-qualified,
3 desirable candidates for United States citizenship.

4 While I was born in the United States, my father went
5 through the very same process that you all are going through
6 now. My father came to the United States as a young adult. He
7 did not know English and it was not his first language. I
8 remember attending his ceremony as a little girl, not
9 understanding what was happening at the time, but knowing that
10 he was really happy that day. I understand that now.

11 I have great respect and admiration for each of you
12 and appreciate your time and effort in obtaining citizenship.
13 As a fellow United States citizen, I want to welcome you and
14 congratulate you on this very special occasion.

15 Your Honor, at this time and on recommendation of the
16 immigration officer, I move for these petitioners to be granted
17 United States citizenship upon taking of the oath.

18 Thank you.

19 JUDGE JOHNSON: Thank you, Ms. Peters.

20 The Court is pleased to grant the motion that you have
21 made before the Court, subject to the taking of the oath, which
22 we will proceed with at this time.

23 Departing a little bit from tradition, I will ask that
24 each of our new applicants for citizenship stand to take the
25 oath and respond to me verbally by repeating the oath as I give

1 it to you.

2 And I would also invite those who are able in the
3 audience to stand. You need not speak the oath with me as I
4 recite it, but listen carefully to these obligations that each
5 of these applicants for citizenship are taking today because
6 they are the same obligations that each of you have received as
7 citizens by birth and obligations that you have as -- having
8 citizenship by birth, just as they are taking today. And it is
9 always, I think, important for us in our own minds to reinforce
10 and rethink these obligations as we go forward in this
11 ceremony, this important ceremony.

12 So I invite our applicants to stand and take this
13 important oath, and those who are able, if you wish, to stand
14 with them.

15 Please raise your right hand and repeat after me: I
16 here by declare on oath that I absolutely and entirely renounce
17 and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince or
18 potentate, state or sovereignty, of whom or which I have
19 heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and
20 defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of
21 America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will
22 bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear
23 arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that
24 I will perform noncombatant service in the armed forces of the
25 United States when required by law; that I will perform work of

1 national importance under civil direction when required by law;
2 and that I take this obligation freely without any mental
3 reservation or purpose of evasion, so help me God.

4 Congratulations. I am pleased to declare that you are
5 all new citizens of the United States of America. I think that
6 deserves a hand.

7 (Applause.)

8 JUDGE JOHNSON: Please be seated, ladies and
9 gentlemen, and thank you for standing.

10 To celebrate this event before we all take our first
11 official act of the Pledge of Allegiance, I believe we have a
12 message from the President of the United States, Donald J
13 Trump.

14 (Presidential message played.)

15 JUDGE JOHNSON: Ladies and gentlemen, let us all now
16 stand and join together in the Pledge of Allegiance to this
17 nation.

18 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

19 JUDGE JOHNSON: It has now come time for each of us to
20 present the certificates that represent the tangible evidence
21 of citizenship that has been achieved today.

22 Join me, please, Colleagues.

23 (Presentation of certificates.)

24 JUDGE JOHNSON: Traditionally, it has been a tradition
25 in these ceremonies that patriotic organizations have played an

1 important role in making presentations of gifts that are
2 valuable reminders of your duties as citizens and of this
3 ceremony in your lives.

4 And, first of all, I would like to invite the -- those
5 who represent the congressional delegation from Wyoming to come
6 forward and pass out their gifts -- did they get that done --
7 and thank them for their presence here today.

8 And also we want to thank the League of Women Voters
9 for their presentation today. They have been here at each and
10 every ceremony for the last few years, and we are very grateful
11 to them.

12 Please be seated, new citizens.

13 Well, it is your turn. Each of you has a story to
14 tell about the adventure that has brought you to this courtroom
15 here in Cheyenne, Wyoming. And I know that your family members
16 and the guests who are here would like to hear from you any
17 remarks that you wish to make or thoughts that you wish to
18 express today about this important event in your life.

19 I know that everyone is a little reticent about or a
20 little shy about speaking in public, but you shouldn't worry
21 about it in this courtroom. Nobody is going to face any
22 criticism at all, regardless of what you may say. We would
23 invite you all to feel free to make any remark that you wish to
24 make today. And I think we have a microphone here that Brandi
25 is carrying.

1 Olga is going to take the -- be the first.

2 MS. GATES: I'm probably going to break down in tears,
3 but God has brought me to America and he brought me here to
4 faith in Jesus. And it is such a privilege to be called a
5 citizen of this wonderful country. God bless America.

6 (Applause.)

7 JUDGE JOHNSON: Thank you.

8 Come now. There are others that have something to
9 say.

10 MS. MATHEW: Good morning, all. I'm really grateful
11 to have to be here after -- coming to the U.S. was a
12 13-year-long wait for me, and it wasn't something I even
13 thought was going to be possible. But after six years of being
14 here in the United States, I am grateful to have been given
15 this privilege of being here. I am so much grateful to God for
16 that.

17 Again, thank you so much for letting me be a part of
18 this country and to love this country and to serve this
19 country. Hopefully, I can do more. Thank you.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. SUYAMA: Thank you very much. I'm really inspired
22 by these speeches I just heard. This is also the land where I
23 met Jesus, and I'm really grateful for this place.

24 And with me today we have our adopted daughter Laura.
25 So this coming election season it is going to be kind of

1 interesting. She's going to be 18. I've never actually voted
2 in any country before, so I think that we have a date set to
3 the two of us to go vote for the first time.

4 (Applause.)

5 MR. VALVERDE: Good morning, everyone. Being from a
6 country like Ecuador in South America, I am very grateful to be
7 here. I came to the States because my family -- I have a
8 really great family. My family here has been very helpful.

9 So we are bringing, I think, more things to the
10 States, culture. Myself, I am an artist. I am a graphic
11 designer, so I'm looking for more opportunities to explore
12 things over here. I think the United States have that kind of
13 environment that proposes to be humans, to be ourselves, to
14 be -- the freedom, I think. So I am very grateful for that.

15 I want to thank all the people that have been with me
16 today who are here. It is really -- I have been meeting really
17 great people in the States. We have a small community, but
18 very thoughtful, very supportive. So I am really thankful
19 about that. I think the United States, it is a country that
20 offers that kind of things that every -- everywhere else is
21 kind of difficult to find. So I think that's a big opportunity
22 right here. So I am looking for that.

23 And thank you, everybody. Thank you, my friends and
24 family.

25 (Applause.)

1 JUDGE JOHNSON: Anyone else? Don't be shy.

2 Thank you very much. And I'm sure your colleagues
3 share those as well as they affect their own lives.

4 It is time that we have a chance to speak, and I'll
5 start with our Chief Judge.

6 CHIEF JUDGE RANKIN: Well, Judge Johnson, thank you so
7 much.

8 And congratulations to each of you, and welcome. You
9 all are just beaming with pride. I can see the families' faces
10 and friends' faces out in the audience. And we don't get many
11 happy days collectively, and so we cherish these moments just
12 as much as you do.

13 And it is a special honor to have Mrs. Gates, our
14 friends and neighbors and her family. I can see them in the
15 back corner. So what a wonderful occasion for you. I know it
16 has been a long haul for many of you, so thank you all for your
17 dedication to make this day happen.

18 It is a special honor for each of us to welcome each
19 of you as fellow citizens. Today is a significant day, not
20 just for each of you, but for this great country. This
21 country, now your country, was founded on the customs and
22 traditions of so many, and today each of you add to that rich
23 heritage and history. You are now a part of the great American
24 story.

25 While today is a day of celebration for you, your

1 loved ones, friends and colleagues and neighbors, we cannot
2 underappreciate the long journey many of you have taken to get
3 you to this day. For some of you, you left family and friends
4 to make a better life, and no doubt that was not an easy task.
5 Each of you has brought with you stories of courage and
6 resilience. Some of those stories we heard today.

7 You have sacrificed; you have worked; you have
8 studied; you have waited, and no one can take lightly your
9 place as a full and equal member of this great nation.

10 Together, all of you bring to us the diversity and the
11 differences that make this country so unique. We are a nation
12 of immigrants. Our first president, George Washington, said
13 about welcoming people to America, quote: *America is open to*
14 *receive not only the opulent and respected stranger, but the*
15 *oppressed and persecuted of all nations and religions, whom we*
16 *shall welcome to a participation of all our rights and*
17 *privileges*, close quote.

18 That's what we do and that's what we've done
19 throughout the history of America.

20 So together you are not just becoming a citizen
21 through a formal legal process, although that is certainly
22 important, but you are also helping to shape who we are. You
23 are helping to shape who we will be. Through your voice, your
24 actions, your talents, and your values, you will help to
25 sustain and mold what this country is all about: freedom,

1 democracy, equality and perseverance.

2 As a new citizen, you have responsibilities, not just
3 to your own family, but to your fellow citizens. These
4 responsibilities include your right to vote, not carelessly,
5 but informed; your right to speak, not hurtfully, but
6 productively, and your right to contribute to help your fellow
7 neighbors. Together, with your new responsibilities, with all
8 your dreams, we can build on this great story of country and
9 freedom.

10 So as we welcome you, we also say thank you: Thank
11 you for who you are, who you will become, and thank you for
12 sharing in this great American story.

13 (Applause.)

14 JUDGE JOHNSON: Thank you.

15 Judge Klosterman.

16 CHIEF MAGISTRATE JUDGE KLOSTERMAN: Thank you, Judge
17 Johnson.

18 Good morning and welcome to all of you and to all of
19 your families. We are honored to have you here today and
20 welcome you as now fellow citizens of the United States.

21 I would like to -- before I say some more comments
22 here, I see out in the gallery here this morning lots of
23 children. And I think it is important to mention the fact that
24 these children, they are our future, and they are, I'm sure,
25 the love and light of your lives, and they bring the energy and

1 the enthusiasm to our country, along with yourselves. And all
2 of these children are inspiring, not only to all of their
3 family members, but to the teachers and neighbors and all of us
4 who are part of this community. The children, they inspire me,
5 and I'm sure to you as parents they are the best part of your
6 day. They are the light or the beacon of each of your days,
7 and they bring the promise of peace into the future.

8 And so I would like to welcome all of the children
9 that are here today.

10 But turning to you as our newest citizens, we all
11 recognize the tremendous sacrifices that each of you have made
12 to become United States citizens, and we want to congratulate
13 you on this wonderful accomplishment. Many of you, I'm sure,
14 have faced significant challenges to become United States
15 citizens. Many of you, I'm sure, have had to learn new
16 languages. You've had to learn new cultural differences. And
17 I want to commend your courage and your commitment to make such
18 sacrifices.

19 The United States is a country that is facing its own
20 challenges, but with those challenges come great opportunities.
21 We all have the opportunity in this country to teach and learn
22 from one another. I myself had an opportunity when I was in
23 college to study abroad in Japan and got to learn about the
24 culture and the people. Now as United States citizens, it is
25 important that you share with us your cultures and your

1 traditions. We can all learn from each other about our
2 customs, traditions, and practices, and the way of life that
3 helps us enrich one another as well as our communities and our
4 countries.

5 And through this process, you have now become a part
6 of a representative democracy. It is your job to make sure
7 that you are involved in your community.

8 In thinking about what I would say this morning, one
9 of the things that came to my mind was in the Preamble to the
10 United States Constitution, there are the words, quote, "We the
11 people," close quote, and those words couldn't be more
12 inclusive. "We the people" includes every man, woman, and
13 child of every race, gender, and nationality.

14 So congratulations on becoming a citizen of the United
15 States and being a part of "We the people."

16 But as citizens, I ask that each of you love and
17 cherish this country, that you honor and protect it, and that
18 you embrace all of the possibilities and the responsibilities
19 that you now have.

20 So once again, on behalf of the Court, we would all
21 like to welcome you and congratulate you on this
22 accomplishment. Thank you.

23 (Applause.)

24 JUDGE JOHNSON: We are always in Cheyenne, the city,
25 so proud of our three high schools: East High School, you met

1 the ROTC students this morning at the beginning of this
2 ceremony; and you also met from our high school to the north,
3 Central High School, this amazing singing group who are ready
4 to come at the beck and call of this Court or other
5 organizations within our community to perform. These amazing
6 students give up additional time from their usual studies and
7 work at Central to participate in this really very special
8 group of singers and musicians.

9 And we're so proud of the Centralaires and the
10 contribution they make to the music history of Cheyenne and how
11 they enhance these ceremonies by giving up their time in school
12 to come down here and participate in these naturalization
13 ceremonies.

14 I think they have one more song for us, and let's
15 listen.

16 *(God Bless America performed.)*

17 *(Applause.)*

18 JUDGE JOHNSON: Thank you, Centralaires.

19 And these things wouldn't occur if it wasn't for the
20 director, the teachers, and the accompanist that plays so
21 beautifully and make these presentations sync. So thank you
22 for your presence today.

23 By taking the oath and accepting the benefits and
24 duties of citizenship, you strengthen this nation with your
25 presence, your energy, and all that you have brought from your

1 homeland to contribute to the work and culture of our land, the
2 United States. History confirms the benefits society receives
3 from the diverse population coming here to better themselves
4 and for their families. Those benefits may be witnessed in the
5 work, education, and services provided each day in this nation
6 by its citizens.

7 However, I can't help but wonder. Like you, I am
8 bewildered by the issues that affect our lives and
9 responsibilities as citizens. We are bombarded each day with
10 information from many sources, often conflicting, often
11 questionable, sometimes seeking to take advantage of us or stir
12 us up; other times helpful.

13 How to sort through it all is a challenge, and to make
14 decisions that we as citizens should make as part of our civic
15 duty is a challenge to each of us.

16 Historian John Mecham has stated this: *Nationalism is*
17 *a declaration of loyalty to one's own group or tribe or kind*
18 *while patriotism is loyalty to an idea.*

19 *What are the ideas that deserve loyalty? one might*
20 *ask. I suggest that we might consider these: We, the people*
21 *of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union,*
22 *establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the*
23 *common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the*
24 *blessings of the liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do*
25 *ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States.*

1 Now, that's an idea. "We the people" establishes the
2 power of the government, that it comes from the people, from
3 the citizens of this land, from you.

4 Making a "more perfect union" aims to improve upon the
5 weaknesses of the articles that formerly governed this nation
6 before we had a constitution and our continuing duty to improve
7 and to perfect the union that we live in; to "establish
8 justice" where persons can have fair answers to the problems
9 that they face in their daily life and the contracts and the
10 issues that they confront in their employment and elsewhere.

11 To "provide for common defense in the military" goes
12 without saying, and to "promote the general welfare of the
13 citizens," that's everyone. Why do we have a government if it
14 is not for the citizens and the benefit of our citizens and the
15 blessings of liberty that were referred to by you today in the
16 speeches that you made here in this room and your appreciation
17 of that liberty?

18 Another idea comes from this: *We hold these truths to*
19 *be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are*
20 *endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, and*
21 *among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*

22 On July 4th, 1976, we're celebrating this year the
23 sesquicentennial -- that's a long word for me -- of that great
24 event when America declared its independence from British rule
25 and struck out on its own through great sacrifice. We almost

1 lost that in this nation and fought a great battle. And these
2 words in part were spoken in a very short 220-word speech: *It*
3 *is, rather, for us to be here, dedicated to the great task*
4 *remaining before us. From these honored dead we take increased*
5 *devotion to the cause for which they gave the last full measure*
6 *of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall*
7 *not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have*
8 *a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by*
9 *the people, for the people shall not perish from this earth.*

10 That's President Lincoln speaking at Gettysburg.

11 And, finally, an invitation that we all received in
12 1961 from a new president whose entire inaugural speech took
13 only 15 minutes, but towards the end of the speech, he said
14 this short phrase that we should all think about each day.
15 President Kennedy said, *And so, my fellow Americans, ask not*
16 *what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your*
17 *country.*

18 Famous people in history have expressed the belief
19 that the status of citizen in the United States of America is
20 very important to this nation. Perhaps Supreme Court Justice
21 Lewis D. Brandeis was the first when he said: *The most*
22 *important political office is that of the private citizen.*
23 Later another revered justice, Felix Frankfurter, who was an
24 immigrant from Germany, said: *In a democracy the highest*
25 *office is the office of citizen.*

1 What do these remarks mean to each of us who are
2 living our lives each day and facing the challenges of putting
3 bread on the table, finding jobs and a good place for our
4 families to thrive in our communities? What were Brandeis and
5 Frankfurter thinking when they made these statements about the
6 importance of being a citizen?

7 Every citizen knows that we're expected to obey the
8 laws: local, state, and federal. We pay taxes on our income.
9 If we're fortunate to have property, we pay taxes on property
10 too. We're told that we should vote, but many fail to exercise
11 that important duty. And we might consider running for public
12 office or participating in the life of our communities in other
13 ways.

14 The 44th president, Barack Obama, in his farewell
15 speech expressed this concern: *For too many of us it has*
16 *become safer to retreat into our own bubbles, whether in our*
17 *neighborhoods or on college campuses or places of worship or*
18 *especially our social media feeds, surrounded by people who*
19 *look like us and share the same political outlook and never*
20 *challenge our assumptions. And, increasingly, we become so*
21 *secure in our bubbles that we start accepting only information,*
22 *whether it is true or not, that fits our opinions instead of*
23 *basing our opinions on the evidence that is out there.*

24 That former president was concerned that if the
25 citizen does not actively reach out, educate oneself, seeks

1 truth, and speaks to others outside of one's group, our shared
2 democracy will fail and we may lose in the daily battle of
3 ideas.

4 According to another author, Joel Goldstein, stated
5 about Justice Brandeis that he believed that living in civil
6 society imposed obligations on citizens that went well beyond
7 the basic duties to obey the law, pay taxes, and vote. He
8 thought engagement to be an obligation of citizenship and
9 knowledge an obligation and a likely consequence of being
10 engaged.

11 Like Obama, Brandeis envisioned the duty of each
12 citizen to become engaged in their community as a means to
13 broaden knowledge and experiences, leading to better
14 appreciation of others and as a means of societal growth.

15 It is the duty of the citizen to use the time that we
16 have and are let alone by government to learn, to find true
17 facts, and to move out of our personal bubbles. Remember, a
18 president once said: *For all our outward differences, we, in*
19 *fact, all share the same proud type. The most important office*
20 *in a democracy is that of citizen.*

21 *So, you see, that what our democracy demands, it needs*
22 *you, not just when there's an election, not just when your own*
23 *narrow interest is at stake, but over the full span of your*
24 *lifetimes. If you're tired of arguing with strangers on the*
25 *Internet, try talking to one of them in real life. If*

1 *something needs fixing, then lace up your shoes and do some*
2 *organizing. If you're disappointed by your elected officials,*
3 *grab a clipboard, get some signatures, and run for office*
4 *yourself. Show up. Dive in. Stay at it.*

5 That's also President Obama.

6 There are 519,682 public offices in the United States
7 of America and countless nonprofit organizations that need your
8 support. Just consider the amazing opportunities that exist
9 for service, for engagement, for learning, as we perform our
10 shared duties as citizens.

11 Thank you, fellow citizens, for the sacrifices and
12 commitment that has brought you to this country today. May
13 this happy celebration grow in your hearts as your
14 understanding of the power and importance of your citizenship
15 grows. Godspeed.

16 (Applause.)

17 JUDGE JOHNSON: Everyone knows that we have a jury
18 assembly room that's located just down the hallway, and I think
19 a tea has been prepared for you hosted by the Daughters of the
20 American Revolution. So if we can enjoy some more red, white,
21 and blue today, that would be a good place to share it with
22 your family with a nice refreshment.

23 And we thank the Daughters for their service to these
24 ceremonies throughout the years.

25 Thank you, again, to the Centralaires, to the East

1 High School Honor Guard for their services and how they enhance
2 these ceremonies that are so important to our citizens and to
3 our society.

4 And thank you, family members and guests who are here
5 to support your new citizens who we're so proud to greet and
6 honor today.

7 We'll stand in recess.

8 (Proceedings concluded 11:08 a.m., March 12, 2026.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Dated this 7th day of May, 2026.

/s/ Janet Davis

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