

1                                   **IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
2                                   **FOR THE DISTRICT OF WYOMING**

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

6       Gina Hlavnicka, Jaimon Dominic,                   Wyoming State Capitol  
7       Aysenur Bicer, Ali Bicer,                        Cheyenne, Wyoming

7       Giselle Mastrosanti, Tran Thuy  
8       Thi Tran, Alondra Meneses,                   July 10, 2024

8       Charise Brumley, Sulastri Utama,  
9       Lucyana Posumah, Timothy  
10      Ahumuza, Maria Kiela Ortinero,  
11      Bir Raut, Ezekiel Odonkor, Sher  
12      Baduwal, Shu Yi Eagle, Elizabeth  
13      Lozano, Cinthia Ramirez, Eric  
14      Lopez Vidal, Alexander  
15      Ricciardi, Mariam Bebedjian,  
16      Elena Neumiller, Ratna Hadi, Ani  
17      Gasparyan, Annamaria Mathe,  
18      Kevin Muela Solis.

14               Petitioners.

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

18                                   **BEFORE THE HONORABLE NANCY D. FREUDENTHAL**  
19                                   **UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE**

20                                   **THE HONORABLE ALAN B. JOHNSON**  
21                                   **UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE**

22                                   **THE HONORABLE KELLY H. RANKIN**  
23                                   **UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE**

24                                   **THE HONORABLE MARK L. CARMAN**  
25                                   **UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

**THE HONORABLE GREGORY A. PHILLIPS**  
                                  **UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS JUDGE**

1 APPEARANCES:

2 For the United States: Office of the United States Attorney  
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24 *Proceedings reported by realtime stenographic reporter;*  
25 *transcript produced with Computer-Aided Transcription.*

1 (Proceedings commenced 10:01 a.m., July 10, 2024.)

2 CHIEF CLERK BOTKINS: All rise.

3 Oyez, Oyez, Oyez: The Honorable United States  
4 District Court for the District of Wyoming is now open for the  
5 transaction of business, sitting in the Wyoming State Capitol,  
6 pursuant to adjournment. The Honorable Nancy D. Freudenthal,  
7 Senior United States District Judge, presiding; along with the  
8 Honorable Alan B. Johnson, United States District Judge, the  
9 Honorable Kelly H. Rankin, United States District Judge, the  
10 Honorable Gregory A. Phillips, United States Circuit Judge,  
11 and the Honorable Mark L. Carman, United States District  
12 Magistrate Judge.

13 All having business before this Honorable Court draw  
14 near, give attention, and now be heard. God save the United  
15 States of America and this Honorable Court.

16 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Please be seated.

17 We have a full house today. Welcome, everybody. I  
18 figured out how the microphone works, so we might be off to a  
19 bit of a shaky start.

20 I'm sorry for those left standing. We have a robust  
21 number of applicants for citizenship. We will go through the  
22 naturalization ceremony today.

23 A warm, warm welcome, particularly to all of you and  
24 the family members that you've brought.

25 This is an official court proceeding. Normally we ban

1 photographs and recording devices, but for purposes of today  
2 and this ceremony, feel free to take photographs. I would just  
3 ask if you have a cell phone, please mute it or turn your cell  
4 phone off.

5 Let me introduce my colleagues who have joined me on  
6 the bench. I feel like we should make use of some of these  
7 three chairs, but we'll go forward as is.

8 To my far left is retired Magistrate Judge Mark  
9 Carman. The District of Wyoming is particularly pleased to  
10 have him back in service. He's performing the full-time  
11 magistrate judge duties here in this district, awaiting the  
12 completion of the process for the new -- our new  
13 soon-to-be-sworn-in magistrate judge, at least we hope.

14 We're happy to have you, Judge Carman.

15 To my immediate left is Alan Johnson, the longest-  
16 serving district judge for the district.

17 To my immediate right is our newly sworn in district  
18 judge, Judge Kelly Rankin. Previously he was our full-time  
19 magistrate judge, so we're truly, truly pleased to have him  
20 elevated to the district judge bench.

21 And then to my far right is our appellate circuit  
22 court judge, Judge Greg Phillips. Judge Phillips is part of  
23 the appellate court that reviews decisions from the district  
24 court.

25 And so welcome. Thank you for joining us today, Judge

1     Phillips. He's a regular participant in naturalization  
2     proceedings which are our most treasured and happy events in  
3     court.

4             I'd also like to recognize the representative from the  
5     U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office in Denver who  
6     joins us today. Her name is Lillian Vasquez Ratcliff. Lily --  
7     there you are. You're way down there.

8             And the individual who convened court is our clerk of  
9     court, Maggie Botkins.

10            I'd like to also thank the State of Wyoming, through  
11     the Legislative Service Office, for the use of this meeting  
12     room. We didn't realize we'd have so many new citizens here  
13     and their families, so we may have booked too small of a space,  
14     but it seems like space in the Capitol is either too big or too  
15     small, so that's kind of the way it is.

16            But it is really wonderful to be here in the state  
17     capitol on Wyoming Day, statehood day. This was the day that  
18     Wyoming was officially admitted into the union. And so it is a  
19     special day for all of us to be here in the state capitol, seat  
20     of government for the state of Wyoming.

21            With that, we'll invite Jasmine Peters, Assistant  
22     United States Attorney, to do the roll call and motion for  
23     admission.

24            Ms. Peters. I'm happy to have Ms. Peters. She's a  
25     former law clerk of mine, so every time I see her in court it

1 reminds me how old I am and how young she still looks.

2 MS. PETERS: You're too kind.

3 Good morning. May it please the Court. My name is  
4 Jasmine Peters, and I am here today as a representative of the  
5 United States Attorney's Office for the District of Wyoming and  
6 in proxy for the Attorney General of the United States.

7 It is my pleasure and my privilege to introduce to the  
8 Court today 26 individuals who have appeared in person for a  
9 hearing on their petition for naturalization as United States  
10 citizens: Ms. Gina Hlavnicka, native and former inhabitant of  
11 the Philippines; Mr. Jaimon Dominic, a native and former  
12 inhabitant of India; Ms. Aysenur Bicer, a native and former  
13 inhabitant of Turkey; Mr. Ali Bicer, a native and former  
14 inhabitant of Turkey; Ms. Giselle Mastrosanti, a native and  
15 former inhabitant of the United Kingdom; Ms. Tran Thuy Thi  
16 Tran, a native and former inhabitant of Vietnam; Ms. Alondra  
17 Meneses, a native and former inhabitant of Mexico; Ms. Charise  
18 Brumley, a native and former inhabitant of the Philippines;  
19 Ms. Sulastri Utama, a native and former inhabitant of  
20 Indonesia; Ms. Lucyana Posumah, a native and former inhabitant  
21 of Indonesia; Mr. Timothy Ahumuza, a native and former  
22 inhabitant of Uganda; Ms. Maria Kiela Ortinero, a native and  
23 former inhabitant of the Philippines; Mr. Bir Raut, a native  
24 and former inhabitant of Nepal; Mr. Ezekiel Odonkor, a native  
25 and former inhabitant of Ghana; Mr. Sher Baduwal, a native and

1 former inhabitant of Nepal; Ms. Shu Yi Eagle, a native and  
2 former inhabitant of Taiwan; Ms. Elizabeth Lozano, a native and  
3 former inhabitant of Mexico; Ms. Cinthia Ramirez, a native and  
4 former inhabitant of Mexico; Mr. Eric Lopez Vidal, a native and  
5 former inhabitant of Mexico; Mr. Alexander Ricciardi, a native  
6 and former inhabitant of Italy; Ms. Mariam Bebedjian, a native  
7 and former inhabitant of Armenia; Ms. Elena Neumiller, a native  
8 and former inhabitant of Russia; Ms. Ratna Hadi, a native and  
9 former inhabitant of Indonesia; Ms. Ani Gasparyan, a native and  
10 former inhabitant of Armenia; Ms. Annamaria Mathe, a native and  
11 former inhabitant of Hungary; and Mr. Kevin Muela Solis, a  
12 native and former inhabitant of Mexico.

13           These individuals have been interviewed and examined  
14 under oath by a designated examiner for the United States  
15 Citizenship and Immigration Services who have also completed  
16 their character and background investigations. Citizenship and  
17 Immigration Services indicates that these individuals have met  
18 all requirements for naturalization and are well-qualified,  
19 desirable candidates for United States citizenship.

20           While I was born in the United States, my father went  
21 through the very process you are going through now many years  
22 ago. I have great respect and admiration for each of you, and  
23 I appreciate your time and effort in obtaining citizenship  
24 today. As a fellow United States citizen, I want to welcome  
25 you and congratulate all of you on this very special occasion.

1           Your Honor, at this time, on the recommendation of the  
2 immigration officer, I move for these petitioners to be granted  
3 United States citizenship upon taking the oath.

4           JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you.

5           We have the motion, and the motion is granted.

6           I think at this time, to facilitate handing out the  
7 certificates, I would like to ask my fellow judges to come  
8 around the bench -- no, we're not doing that?

9           (Discussion held.)

10          JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: So why don't we all depart the  
11 bench. We'll do the oath for admission. At that time we'll  
12 ask the applicants to stand, and then we'll be ready to present  
13 your certificates.

14          This might seem a little cozy, but, again, we can do  
15 this without too much movement back and forth.

16          If individuals wish to reposition to -- for this or,  
17 again, we will be handing out the certificates, and just make  
18 yourself -- be a nuisance if you need to, but get the moment  
19 that you want to capture.

20          So please stand -- just the applicants. I'm sorry.  
21 Everybody might enjoy standing. If you want to just stand,  
22 feel free.

23          Please raise your right hand and repeat after me: I  
24 hereby declare on oath that I absolutely and entirely renounce  
25 and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince or

1 potentate, state or sovereignty, of whom or which I have  
2 heretofore been a subject or citizen;

3 That I will support and defend the Constitution and  
4 laws of the United States against all enemies, foreign and  
5 domestic, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the  
6 same;

7 That I will bear arms on behalf of the United States  
8 when required by the law;

9 That I will perform noncombatant service in the armed  
10 forces of the United States when required by the law;

11 That I will perform work of national importance under  
12 civil direction when required by the law;

13 And that I take this obligation freely, without any  
14 mental reservation or purpose of evasion, so help me God.

15 Welcome, everybody.

16 (Applause.)

17 COURTROOM DEPUTY: The Judge will give you your  
18 certificate and give you -- your certificates, but,  
19 unfortunately, there are mistakes. They have "Cheyenne,  
20 Colorado," on them. Denver is preparing the certificates right  
21 now. They will send them overnight, and I will send them to  
22 each of you tomorrow. For the photo op you can have them, but  
23 then you have to return them.

24 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: You can't make money selling them.  
25 It is like a mistake on a trading card or something. I guess

1 they just want them back.

2 She bosses me around all the time. Kellie is my  
3 judicial assistant. She's bossing you around so the  
4 certificates can be replaced.

5 MS. PETERS: Gina Hlavnicka, Jaimon Dominic, Aysenur  
6 Bicer, Ali Bicer, Giselle Mastrosanti, Tran Thuy Thi Tran,  
7 Alondra Meneses, Charise Brumley, Sulastri Utama, Lucyana  
8 Posumah, Timothy Ahumuza, Maria Kiela Ortinero, Bir Raut,  
9 Ezekiel Odonkor, Sher Baduwal, Shu Yi Eagle, Elizabeth Lozano,  
10 Cinthia Ramirez, Eric Lopez Vidal, Alexander Ricciardi, Mariam  
11 Bebedjian, Elena Neumiller, Ratna Hadi, Ani Gasparian,  
12 Annamaria Mathe, Kevin Muela Solis.

13 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Well, as all of you are getting  
14 settled, we will be saying the Pledge of Allegiance, the first  
15 Pledge of Allegiance to your new home country. So everybody  
16 please stand and join our new citizens in the Pledge of  
17 Allegiance.

18 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

19 (Applause.)

20 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Please be seated.

21 At this time we will hear the President's message.

22 (President's message played.)

23 (Applause.)

24 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: We are pleased to be joined by  
25 representatives of our delegation back in Washington. We have

1 letters from the representatives of those offices.

2 We also have presentations to our new citizens from  
3 the League of Women Voters and the Daughters of the American  
4 Revolution.

5 At this time I would like to invite the  
6 representatives of Senator -- our senior senator, John  
7 Barrasso; our senator, Cynthia Lummis, and our U.S. state  
8 representative, Harriet Hageman, for distribution of welcome  
9 and congratulatory letters.

10 (Delegation presentation.)

11 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you for joining us again  
12 today. It is always an honor. Please pass along our thanks to  
13 your bosses for their congratulatory and welcome letters.

14 Now I would invite the representatives of the service  
15 organizations that join us at these ceremonies, the League and  
16 representatives of DAR.

17 I would also like to particularly thank the members of  
18 the Daughters of the American Revolution as they are hosting  
19 some refreshments after this ceremony outside in the main  
20 corridor. So thank you for that extra welcome.

21 Would the League and DAR please step forward, if  
22 they're in the room.

23 There you are.

24 So the citizens know, the League members have the  
25 Wyoming State Constitution and the DAR members have the United

1 States Constitution.

2 Well, we often have new citizens that wish to share  
3 some remarks about their experience through the process or  
4 their excitement or the like. We've heard -- we've heard a  
5 number of different remarks. Really, if you have something in  
6 your heart that you would like to share with us and the  
7 audience, you're certainly welcome to come forward. Kellie has  
8 the microphone.

9 Is there anyone that wishes to break the ice? Oh,  
10 yes. Good. Okay. Please know, these really are meaningful.  
11 The ceremony is about you.

12 MS. MATHE: My name is Annamaria Mathe, and I'm from  
13 Hungary. This is my 21st anniversary being in the United  
14 States. Thank you for being in front of you. This ceremony  
15 couldn't be any more surreal. I haven't taken any of the 20  
16 years for granted, not even when I have to drive I-80 in the  
17 winter.

18 Thank you for everything. Thank you for the  
19 opportunity this country has to offer. I'm coming from a small  
20 town in eastern Europe and little Anna Maria couldn't be any  
21 more proud of me. I have someone very special here with me who  
22 has been standing by my side for the hardest times. So thank  
23 you. I love you. Thank you all. This is an honor.

24 (Applause.)

25 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Alexander, I saw you stand. If

1 you want to step forward.

2 MR. RICCIARDI: Hello. My name is Alexander Samuel  
3 Ricciardi, formerly known as Alexander Ricciari. President  
4 Biden says "Thank you for choosing us," and I feel like the  
5 privilege to be here and be allowed today to become a U.S.  
6 citizen, so thank you very much.

7 I want to thank you, my family members, my friends. I  
8 have some people, if that's okay, I want to thank you. I've  
9 been here for 27 years. So 27 years ago, my wife came back to  
10 the States after spending three years in Switzerland with this  
11 guy. I was 24 at the time. I did not speak any English. I  
12 had no diploma. And in looking back at my in-laws, mother and  
13 David, they opened their home and accepted me.

14 Also want to thank you, Chris Knapp and Jerome Klein.  
15 Chris Knapp is my good friend for the last 14 years, and he's  
16 been with me through hard times and good times, and he's an  
17 example for me what it means to be American.

18 Another person that I want to thank you today is Bill  
19 Morton. I can't say -- I'm sorry. I feel fortunate he's been  
20 with me in good times and bad times. He's a veteran of the  
21 war, the Vietnam War, and he represents to me the spirit what  
22 it means to be American.

23 So thank you for allowing me to be here today.

24 (Applause.)

25 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Is there anybody else?

1 MS. MASTROSANTI: My name is Giselle Mastrosanti. I  
2 was born in Brazil. I moved to the UK many, many years ago and  
3 after 30 years there, I became a registered citizen. I lived  
4 in China. I lived in Africa, and I ended up in Cheyenne.

5 I would like to thank my wife who is the one who  
6 brought me here. I would like to thank our friends who  
7 supported us the whole time, Beth and Karla. And I would like  
8 to thank this country for the protection to the LGBT rights.  
9 If it was not for that, I would not be here. And I'm very,  
10 very happy that I will be able to vote in the next election and  
11 hopefully keep protecting those rights. Thank you very much.

12 (Applause.)

13 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Any others among our new citizens?

14 Well, thank you for the meaningful comments. We  
15 have -- we have some comments as well. If the spirit moves  
16 you, just raise your hand and we can call you forward.

17 At this time I am happy to call on Judge Johnson who  
18 has been a mentor of mine all my years on the bench. He's  
19 representing the panel of judges here, and then I'll have some  
20 short remarks. But, similarly, if they want to speak, they  
21 can -- they've got microphones, so they'll just butt in.

22 Judge J.

23 JUDGE JOHNSON: Feel free to butt in, colleagues.

24 As a matter of personal privilege and on behalf of my  
25 colleagues who are seated up here with me, I want to take a

1 moment to tell a story.

2 Judge Freudenthal came to us 14 years ago, I'm proud  
3 to say, and made an immediate impact on our federal court here  
4 in Wyoming. This will probably be her last citizenship  
5 ceremony, but she was the leader in taking our citizenship and  
6 naturalization ceremonies to places like our beautiful state  
7 capitol building and to grade schools and high schools around  
8 the city and county of Laramie and Cheyenne. It was her  
9 leadership that made that happen, assisted always by her  
10 judicial assistant, Kellie Erickson.

11 And I want to say, everything that has been done has  
12 been done to make this ceremony more meaningful for our new  
13 citizens and to create memories that you can take with you of  
14 this important day in your lives, even to this program which is  
15 something that is worth keeping. And it was designed by Kellie  
16 Erickson.

17 And I just want to express the appreciation of each of  
18 us for your leadership, your kindness, your guidance and effort  
19 in making these ceremonies more meaningful and more special for  
20 all of us, as well as those who are new citizens. I think a  
21 round of applause would be appropriate.

22 (Applause.)

23 JUDGE JOHNSON: A famous storyteller, historian, and  
24 moviemaker is a man by the name of Ken Burns. Mr. Burns has  
25 made presentations on our Civil War, our history; some of it

1 very pleasant, some of it not so pleasant. Like every human  
2 endeavor, our government has made mistakes; people have made  
3 mistakes, as well as great successes and exceptional  
4 achievements many times through history.

5 On May 19th of this year, Ken Burns was asked to make  
6 the commencement address -- that's an address or a speech  
7 that's made to the new graduates of Brandeis University here in  
8 the United States. And he started with a story, which I will  
9 repeat.

10 He said: *Listen. Listen. In January of 1838 --*  
11 *that's almost 200 years ago -- shortly before his 29th*  
12 *birthday, a tall, thin lawyer, prone to bouts of depression,*  
13 *addressed a young men's organization in Springfield, Illinois,*  
14 *and said, At what point shall we expect the approach of danger?*  
15 *He asked his audience, Shall we expect some trans-Atlantic*  
16 *military giant to step the earth and crush us at a blow?*

17 *And he answered his own question: Never. All the*  
18 *armies of Europe, Asia, and Africa could not by force take a*  
19 *drink from the Ohio River or make a track on the Blue Ridge*  
20 *Mountains in a trial of a thousand years. If destruction be*  
21 *our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher.*

22 Burns went on to say: *As a nation of free men, we*  
23 *must live through all times or die by suicide.*

24 So each of us -- what he's saying to us is each of us  
25 as a citizen has a responsibility to do our duty as citizens

1 because the danger to this country lies from within, regardless  
2 of what political party or persuasion you may follow.

3 He went on to quote another author: *Mercy Otis*  
4 *Warren, a philosopher and historian during our revolution, put*  
5 *it this way: The study of the human character at once opens a*  
6 *beautiful and informed picture of us all. We there find a*  
7 *noble principle implanted in the nature of the people that,*  
8 *when the checks of conscience are thrown aside, humanity is*  
9 *obscured.*

10 He said: *I've had the privilege for nearly half a*  
11 *century of making films about the United States, but I have*  
12 *also made films about US, spelled U-S. That is to say, the*  
13 *two-letter, lower case, plural pronoun. All of the intimacy of*  
14 *"US" is also of "we" and "our," with all the majesty,*  
15 *complexity, contradiction, and even controversy of the U.S.,*  
16 *United States. And if I have learned anything over the years,*  
17 *it is only there is us. There is no them. And whenever*  
18 *someone suggests to you, whoever it may be in your life, that*  
19 *there is a them, run away. Othering or speaking of others is*  
20 *the simplistic binary way to make and identity enemies here in*  
21 *this country.*

22 Now, I think what Burns is trying to talk about really  
23 is a spirit of liberty. And that same spirit was discussed  
24 when Europe was at war in World War II in 1944, at a ceremony  
25 just like this one in New York City, presided over by a judge,

1 like us, by the name of Learned Hand, famous judge.

2           And he attempted to find liberty as best he could in  
3 his own mind, because it lives within each of us and we each  
4 think about it in our own way. But I think it is worth  
5 repeating what Judge Hand said at that time: *What, then, is*  
6 *the spirit of liberty? I cannot define it. I can only tell*  
7 *you my own faith. The spirit of liberty is a spirit which is*  
8 *not too sure that it is right. A spirit of liberty is a spirit*  
9 *which seeks to understand the minds of other men and women. A*  
10 *spirit of liberty is a spirit which weighs their interest*  
11 *alongside its own without bias. The spirit of liberty*  
12 *remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded.*

13           Well, those are words that were heard back 80-some  
14 years ago in New York City before a group like this one. I was  
15 pleased that our citizen from -- former citizen from Great  
16 Britain spoke today about voting, and I think that is important  
17 because it is one of the first things as new citizens that you  
18 can do and take on that responsibility of educating yourself  
19 and would say this -- Historian Burns said this: *Remember what*  
20 *Louis Brandeis, who was a Supreme Court justice, said: The*  
21 *most important political office is that of the private citizen.*

22           President Biden said that a few minutes ago to you as  
23 well. Vote. You indelibly have that duty to vote. *Please*  
24 *vote. You indelibly underscore your citizenship and, most*  
25 *important, our kinship with each other when you do.*

1           We recognize the sacrifices that you have made at this  
2 moment and the congratulations that you deserve for those  
3 sacrifices and the challenges that you have faced of learning  
4 an unfamiliar language, of finding a way to support yourself  
5 and your family in a complex society that exists here in the  
6 United States. We salute you. We are honored to be here with  
7 you today as fellow citizens. We in no way take for granted  
8 your achievement that is honored by your citizenship and your  
9 choice to be citizens of our great nation.

10           We wish you great success in life and happiness, and  
11 we hope that you will exercise and use all of the opportunities  
12 that are available to you as citizens of this great nation.

13           JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you, Judge Johnson.

14           (Applause.)

15           JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Well, I, again, welcome and  
16 congratulate you all. It thrills me to know that the ranks of  
17 citizens here in our country blossoms and grows through these  
18 naturalization ceremonies. We have, as has been announced, 26  
19 new citizens here today from 17 different countries, and they  
20 come to us here in Cheyenne from six communities. We have some  
21 who live here; we have some who have traveled from Rawlins,  
22 Casper, Lander, Laramie and Torrington.

23           And that -- Annamarie, you talked about traveling to  
24 work toward the citizenship journey, and I wish our weather was  
25 a little more accommodating, but Wyoming is a big state.

1 You've got a lot more traveling to do. But thank you for  
2 traveling down to join us.

3 The journey that's brought you here is exciting and  
4 interesting for each of you. A challenge, I'm sure. There  
5 were, I think as Alexander said, good times and hard times  
6 through that journey. For me it is more exciting the journey  
7 ahead. So I am excited about that journey on your behalf, and  
8 congratulations.

9 And you're in a country that is facing its own  
10 challenges. But with challenges come great opportunities. And  
11 I am a firm believer, or we may all be resigned to just being  
12 depressed about the challenges and divisions. Always remember  
13 there are these wonderful opportunities.

14 And this ceremony reminds us to reflect on those. We  
15 all have the opportunity as citizens in this country to teach  
16 and learn. You by your own presence teach us. We learn from  
17 you. We need to be constantly reminded that our country is  
18 just as good as its citizens, and no better and no worse.

19 And we have so much to learn from you. We can learn  
20 from your past customs, traditions, practices, ways of life.  
21 Nothing about the oath of allegiance allows or should be seen  
22 by you to offload those. Those enrich us. And through you we  
23 are enriched and our country is enriched with its diverse  
24 melting pot of different cultures, histories and experiences.

25 We all also have the opportunity to speak and learn.

1 Through your voices, we can remember that our country is a  
2 representative democracy. "We, the people" that is the  
3 preamble to our Constitution isn't a phrase that's narrow by  
4 definition. It is not we, the white people; it is not we, the  
5 men. It is not we, the women. It is "We, the people." We.  
6 We. Could there be a more inclusive word? And, fortunately,  
7 our naturalization process is no longer limited to free white  
8 persons, which was the law originally in 1790. We welcome men,  
9 women, children of every race, gender, sexual orientation and  
10 nationality, and we need to speak about that.

11 Now, our immigration history is far from perfect, as  
12 this country is far from perfect. But we can, with your help,  
13 make this country the shining city on the hill that we want it  
14 to be and that our children and grandchildren deserve and that  
15 we strive for through voting, volunteering, serving on juries,  
16 doing the service within our communities, whether they're the  
17 organizations like the League of Women Voters, Daughters of the  
18 American Revolution, or it's service in the armed forces or  
19 otherwise.

20 If we remember our obligation to improve our country,  
21 to make it the country you hoped to find when you arrived and  
22 the country that, as I said, your children and grandchildren  
23 deserve.

24 And speaking of grandchildren, seeing as this may be  
25 one of my last, if not my last ceremonies, I'm really tickled

1 to have my oldest grandchild. Wave your hand.

2 (Applause.)

3 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: It is a joy. I had a long text  
4 about swimming practice and all with my son, and I said, I  
5 can't get Albany to swimming and really do justice to this  
6 ceremony, and then I got a text after I went to sleep -- she's  
7 kind of more the late night; I am the early riser -- saying she  
8 wanted to come. And so she's missing swimming practice to be  
9 here. She's been at naturalization ceremonies at our schools,  
10 which Judge Johnson spoke about, which is really a wonderful  
11 opportunity to let our students appreciate and welcome our new  
12 citizens.

13 But back to opportunities: We have an opportunity to  
14 make this representative democracy reflect what President  
15 Lincoln referred to as the "better angels of our nature." He  
16 was president during an even more divided time, and he  
17 observed: *We're not enemies, but friends.* And we're not  
18 enemies today; we're friends. Our country, our citizens are  
19 our friends. *Though passion may have strained, it must not*  
20 *break our bonds of affection.* And that was President Lincoln's  
21 words during that difficult and tragic time.

22 And consider the oath that you took today your bond of  
23 affection to this country. I was really humbled by Alexander's  
24 opening comments that he thanked us for choosing him. The  
25 reality is you have chosen us. So thank you.

1           And you each are role models as new citizens to  
2 encourage others that may be thinking about going through the  
3 citizenship process. You're role models in every walk of life,  
4 through voting, service and the like. Your presence and  
5 contribution to our country helps us all remember that we are  
6 not a country that picks up the welcome mat and shuts the door.  
7 You help us remember and speak the words at the base of the  
8 Statue of Liberty which reads: *Give me your tired, your poor,*  
9 *your huddled masses yearning to breathe free. The wretched*  
10 *refuse of your teeming shore, send these, the homeless,*  
11 *tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.*  
12 So the Statue of Liberty reminds us that this country is -- our  
13 golden door is welcoming the wretched masses.

14           Now, none of you look wretched to me, but nobody  
15 should think that the country only welcomes the rich and  
16 powerful, that it only welcomes people that look like us or  
17 people that look like our neighbor, or people that think like  
18 us or people that are sort of, you know, kind of, quote, our  
19 view of this country. The Statue of Liberty, like "We, the  
20 people," is a broad, inclusive, open door with a lamp lighting  
21 the way.

22           So, in welcoming you, to reflect on Judge Johnson's  
23 comments, you've assumed this high office of citizen that Felix  
24 Frankfurter referred to.

25           Please speak and listen, teach and learn, be informed,

1 participate in the political process, work to make the United  
2 States the shining city on the hill.

3 Thank you. Congratulations.

4 (Applause.)

5 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Any other remarks?

6 JUDGE CARMAN: Briefly.

7 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Judge Carman.

8 JUDGE CARMAN: Two and a half years ago I did what I  
9 described as my last naturalization ceremony because I was  
10 looking retirement in the eye. And thinking about that today  
11 brings back a truth which I think each of you knows: Never say  
12 never.

13 And I just want to say how honored I am to share  
14 citizenship with you today. Thank you.

15 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you.

16 (Applause.)

17 JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Any new citizen want to kick us  
18 off to refreshments with anything further to say?

19 I guess let's eat.

20 (Proceedings concluded 11:03 a.m., July 10, 2024.)

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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 Diplomate 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 16th day of August, 2024.

/s/ *Janet Davis*

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