

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

*In the Matter of the Naturalization  
and Granting of United States  
Citizenship to HAROLDO JOSUÉ DÍAZ,  
JOSÉ OSBALDO PEREA ARMENTA,  
SUHJEET KAUR, JARNAIL SINGH,  
ALONSO FRIAS MARTINEZ,  
DAVID SHOUQING CHEN, VANDA GRANT,  
JOSÉ ANTONIO REYES,  
KIMSAN VAN INGWERSON,  
LIUBOV SERGEEVNA FREITAG,  
FELISA BRAGANZA HILL,  
JOSÉ OSVALDO PEREA OLIVAS,  
JESÚS MARIA HERNANDEZ ESTRADA,  
LARISSA INDRA SMITH,  
CHARLOTTE CODILLA ROSAS FUNK,  
JOSÉ LUIS SOTO,  
HEIDI MARIA DONELSON,  
FLOR BATALIRAN MYERS,  
MARYJUNE BRIONES PLATON,  
TERESA BRIONES, ALY AMZAL,  
ARIELI SUSET ARMSTRONG,*

OCTOBER 21, 2011  
3:30 P.M. - 4:42 P.M.

EWING T. KERR  
FEDERAL COURTHOUSE

CASPER, WYOMING

*Petitioners.*

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

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**APPEARANCES:**

For the Government:

**David Kubichek**  
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Reported By:

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

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

6           **THE COURT:** Thank you.

7           Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to  
8 the Ewing T. Kerr Federal Courthouse for this naturalization  
9 ceremony. The Court will suspend the local rules regarding the  
10 use of cameras and recording devices. I would ask, however, if  
11 you could please turn your cell phones to "silent."

12           It has been a tradition in these ceremonies, at the  
13 opening of granting the citizenship to new citizens, to  
14 recognize those citizens and the families of those citizens who  
15 have paid the ultimate price in defending what so many in this  
16 world seek: The freedom and benefits of being a United States  
17 citizen.

18           As of today's date, 6,285 American men and women have  
19 been killed in action while involved in the military operations  
20 in Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, 46,747 citizens have  
21 been wounded in action in these military operations.

22           Lest we forget about that of World War II and the  
23 other past conflicts this country has been in, the Department  
24 of Defense announced today that the remains of ten servicemen  
25 missing in action from World War II have been identified and

1 are being returned to their families for burial with full  
2 military honors. On April 29, 1944, these ten airmen were  
3 ordered to carry out a bombing mission over Berlin, Germany, in  
4 their B-24J Liberator aircraft.

5 At the end of the war, the U.S. Government was unable  
6 to recover and identify them; but today it is noted, at the end  
7 of the conflict of World War II, approximately 79,000 Americans  
8 were killed and recovered. Today there are more than 73,000  
9 remaining unaccounted for from this conflict.

10 At this time let's go ahead and please be seated.

11 The United States District Court for the District of  
12 Wyoming is in special session for the naturalization of foreign  
13 nationals to be United States citizens. It is with great  
14 honor, pride and privilege that I am able to conduct this  
15 ceremony today, inducting 23 new United States citizens.

16 The Federal District Court for Wyoming, including  
17 Judge Freudenthal, Chief Judge Freudenthal, Judge Johnson and  
18 Judge Brimmer, extend their congratulations to you and your  
19 families and friends.

20 At this time, I would recognize Mr. David Kubichek,  
21 representing the United States Attorney General as the  
22 Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Wyoming.

23 Mr. Kubichek.

24 **MR. KUBICHEK:** Thank you, Your Honor, and may it  
25 please the Court.

1           We are here today to conduct a hearing on the  
2 naturalization of people seated to my left. They are: Haroldo  
3 Josué Díaz of Guatemala; José Osbaldo Perea Armenta of Mexico;  
4 Sukhjeet Kaur of India; Jarnail Singh of India; Alonso Frias  
5 Martínez of Mexico; David Shouqing Chen of the Republic of  
6 China; Vanda Grant of Bosnia-Herzegovina; José Antonio Reyes of  
7 Mexico; Kimsan Van Ingwerson of Cambodia; Liubov Sergeevna  
8 Freitag of Russia; Felisa Braganza Hill of the Philippines;  
9 José Osvaldo Perea Olivas of Mexico; Jesús Maria Hernández  
10 Estrada of Mexico; Larissa Indra Smith of Switzerland;  
11 Charlotte Codilla Rosas Funk of the Philippines; José Luis Soto  
12 of Colombia; Heidi Maria Donelson of Austria; Flor Bataliran  
13 Myers of the Philippines; Maryjune Briones Platon of the  
14 Philippines; Teresa Briones of the Philippines; Aly Amzal of  
15 Algeria; and Arieli Suset Armstrong of Belize.

16           Your Honor, each of these petitioners are before the  
17 Court for a hearing on their petitions for naturalization.  
18 Each has been interviewed and examined under oath by a  
19 designated examiner of the Citizenship and Immigration Service  
20 who has completed their character and background  
21 investigations.

22           The Citizenship and Immigration Service indicates in  
23 their correspondence that the petitioners have met all the  
24 requirements for naturalization and are well qualified as  
25 desirable candidates for United States citizenship. Therefore,

1 Your Honor, on the recommendation of the immigration officer  
2 and on behalf of the President and the Attorney General of the  
3 United States, it is my privilege to move that each of them be  
4 admitted to citizenship upon the taking of the requisite oath.

5 **THE COURT:** Thank you, Mr. Kubichek.

6 The Court would grant the motion and the petition,  
7 ordering and allowing these petitioners to become citizens of  
8 the United States.

9 At this time, the Court would ask that  
10 Colonel Schmotzer and the Natrona County High School  
11 Color Guard please order the posting of the colors; and, ladies  
12 and gentlemen, if you would please stand.

13 (Presentation of colors by NCHS JROTC Color Guard.)

14 **THE COURT:** Thank you.

15 Ladies and gentlemen, in the presence of the colors of  
16 the United States and of this state, if you are now ready to  
17 take your oath, please face me and raise your right hand and  
18 repeat after me.

19 I hereby declare on oath --

20 **THE PETITIONERS:** I hereby declare on oath --

21 **THE COURT:** -- that I absolutely and entirely --

22 **THE PETITIONERS:** -- that I absolutely and entirely --

23 **THE COURT:** -- renounce and abjure --

24 **THE PETITIONERS:** -- renounce and abjure --

25 **THE COURT:** -- all allegiance and fidelity --

1           **THE PETITIONERS:** -- all allegiance and fidelity --  
2           **THE COURT:** -- to any foreign prince --  
3           **THE PETITIONERS:** -- to any foreign prince --  
4           **THE COURT:** -- potentate, state or sovereignty --  
5           **THE PETITIONERS:** -- potentate, state or  
6 sovereignty --  
7           **THE COURT:** -- of whom or which --  
8           **THE PETITIONERS:** -- of whom or which --  
9           **THE COURT:** -- I have heretofore been --  
10          **THE PETITIONERS:** -- I have heretofore been --  
11          **THE COURT:** -- a subject or citizen;  
12          **THE PETITIONERS:** -- a subject or citizen;  
13          **THE COURT:** That I will support and defend --  
14          **THE PETITIONERS:** That I will support and defend --  
15          **THE COURT:** -- the Constitution and the laws --  
16          **THE PETITIONERS:** -- the Constitution and the laws --  
17          **THE COURT:** -- of the United States of America --  
18          **THE PETITIONERS:** -- of the United States of  
19 America --  
20          **THE COURT:** -- against all enemies, foreign and  
21 domestic;  
22          **THE PETITIONERS:** -- against all enemies, foreign and  
23 domestic;  
24          **THE COURT:** That I will bear true faith --  
25          **THE PETITIONERS:** That I will bear true faith --

1           **THE COURT:** -- and allegiance to the same;

2           **THE PETITIONERS:** -- and allegiance to the same;

3           **THE COURT:** That I will bear arms on behalf --

4           **THE PETITIONERS:** That I will bear arms on

5 behalf --

6           **THE COURT:** -- of the United States --

7           **THE PETITIONERS:** -- of the United States --

8           **THE COURT:** -- when required by law;

9           **THE PETITIONERS:** -- when required by law;

10          **THE COURT:** That I will perform non-combat service --

11          **THE PETITIONERS:** That I will perform non-combat

12 service --

13          **THE COURT:** -- in the Armed Forces of the

14 United States --

15          **THE PETITIONERS:** -- in the Armed Forces of the

16 United States --

17          **THE COURT:** -- when required by law;

18          **THE PETITIONERS:** -- when required by law;

19          **THE COURT:** That I will perform work of national

20 importance --

21          **THE PETITIONERS:** That I will perform work of national

22 importance --

23          **THE COURT:** -- under civilian direction when required

24 by law;

25          **THE PETITIONERS:** -- under civilian direction when

1 required by law;

2           **THE COURT:** And that I will take this obligation  
3 freely -- that I take this obligation freely --

4           **THE PETITIONERS:** That I take this obligation  
5 freely --

6           **THE COURT:** -- without any mental reservation --

7           **THE PETITIONERS:** -- without any mental reservation --

8           **THE COURT:** -- or purpose of evasion.

9           **THE PETITIONERS:** -- or purpose of evasion.

10          **THE COURT:** So help me God.

11          **THE PETITIONERS:** So help me God.

12          **THE COURT:** Congratulations.

13                 Please join me in welcoming the new citizens of the  
14 United States of America.

15                 (Applause)

16                 **THE COURT:** And newest citizens and fellow citizens,  
17 it is your obligation and ours to show our allegiance to this  
18 country; and at this time we would make the pledge of  
19 allegiance, and if you would please join me and then remain  
20 standing for the national anthem.

21                 (Pledge of Allegiance of the United States recited;  
22 national anthem played.)

23                 **THE COURT:** Thank you.

24                 Colonel Schmotzer, would you please retire the colors.

25                 (Colors retired.)

1           **THE COURT:** Ladies and gentlemen, before we take a  
2 seat, I would ask that we take a moment of silence and  
3 recognize those American heroes who have paid the ultimate  
4 sacrifice or made the ultimate sacrifice along with their  
5 families for whom we're able to have the freedoms that we have.

6           (All standing in silent tribute.)

7           **THE COURT:** At this time, go ahead and please be  
8 seated.

9           There are a number of organizations and individuals  
10 who I'd like to recognize today for comments, but first I would  
11 like to recognize the various service groups after we hear from  
12 the most important -- the first and foremost message that we  
13 need to have is from the President of the United States, and at  
14 this time I understand that we have that message available to  
15 be played.

16           (President Barack Obama addresses the new citizens via  
17 videotape.)

18           **THE COURT:** All right. There was going to be a song,  
19 but technical difficulties have stopped that.

20           At this point in time, what I would like to do is  
21 present the certificates to those new citizens of the  
22 United States of America, and with the assistance of the deputy  
23 clerk of court I would do so. If those of you family members  
24 who have cameras or want to take a picture want to come forward  
25 to get a better angle, you're welcome to do so at this time.

1 (Clerk presents certificates to the new citizens, and the  
2 Court personally congratulates each new citizen.)

3 **THE COURT:** There are a number of members of various  
4 patriotic organizations that are present here today. I wanted  
5 to recognize some of those -- well, first, I would note that  
6 there are probably a number of you that I may not recognize --  
7 and it's not because I don't wish to but I don't have your  
8 names -- that are veterans of wars and conflicts in the  
9 United States of America.

10 There are a couple I wanted to point out that are  
11 going to be participating in some presentations here: First,  
12 Mr. Stan Lowe, a World War II veteran and past district  
13 commissioner of the American Legion and involved in the  
14 World War II conflict as a Merchant Marine in the  
15 Pacific Fleet. Welcome and thank you for being here.

16 Reverend Leonard Robinson. Reverend Robinson is a  
17 World War II veteran and a survivor of the Bataan Death March.  
18 Glad to have you here, sir.

19 Mr. William Everett, a Navy veteran. Great to have  
20 you here, Mr. Everett. Mr. Everett and I used to practice law  
21 together.

22 Mr. Don Neville, United States Air Force,  
23 Disabled Veterans' past department commander.

24 Mr. Dan Gallegos. He is a veteran and is  
25 Senator Barrasso's military and veteran liaison. Welcome,

1 Mr. Gallegos. I understand this is your -- your first  
2 participation here.

3 **MR. GALLEGOS:** Yes. My wife -- second time being here  
4 but my first participation. My wife is from Russia.

5 **THE COURT:** Great to have you here in multiple  
6 capacities.

7 **MR. GALLEGOS:** Thank you.

8 **THE COURT:** Also Mr. Gary Cohee, U.S. Marine,  
9 Natrona County United Veterans Council.

10 There are other members of various organizations.  
11 Daughters of the American Revolution: Margo Everett, Anna May  
12 Conarty, Cindy Cartier and Betty Gosar. Nice to have you here,  
13 ladies. Thank you.

14 From the Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion,  
15 I noted Mr. Robinson, Mr. Neville and Mr. Cohee.

16 The Color Guard. They have escaped but the color  
17 presenters: Justin Miller, Troy Tripp, Austin Morgan and Wes  
18 Canope; and I believe it was Colonel Schmotzer that was their  
19 leader.

20 Also, I would note at this time Mr. Gallegos and --  
21 Ms. Tinsley with Senator Enzi's office and Mr. Gallegos with  
22 Senator Barrasso's office; and Jackie King was unable to be  
23 here with Senator -- or Congresswoman Lummis' office. She had  
24 to catch a plane to Washington. So they have some materials  
25 that they wish to present.

1           And at this time, I would recognize Mr. Stan Lowe to  
2 begin that presentation -- or those presentations.

3           **MR. LOWE:** Thank you, sir. Do I speak at this time,  
4 Your Honor?

5           **THE COURT:** I would welcome that.

6           **MR. LOWE:** All right. Thank you. Apologize for my  
7 hearing.

8           **THE COURT:** That's all right.

9           (Mr. Lowe salutes the American Flag.)

10          **MR. LOWE:** May it please the Court.

11          **THE COURT:** Counsel.

12          **MR. LOWE:** Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the  
13 veterans of Wyoming and particularly those of our community, we  
14 want to welcome you to our family of Americans, citizens of the  
15 United States, and congratulate you on becoming part of our  
16 American family.

17           I couldn't help but notice there are five of you from  
18 the Philippines. Would you raise your hands, please.

19          (Petitioners from the Philippines raise their hands.)

20          **MR. LOWE:** I want to commend you for the splendid part  
21 that your scouts, your Philippine scouts, had during  
22 World War II. Reverend Robinson literally lived with those men  
23 during the time he was a prisoner of war. He's always spoken  
24 highly of the bravery and the great ability of your Filipino  
25 troops who were part of our forces overseas; and it's

1 gratifying to see the recognition finally given them for the  
2 part that they had on behalf of our effort in that war.

3 I'd like to share with you a letter sent by a young  
4 United States Marine to his father. He sent his father a poem  
5 that he wrote. In his letter to his father, he said: "I  
6 welcome the opportunity to do what I do. Even though I have  
7 left behind a beautiful wife and I will miss the birth of our  
8 first-born child, I would do it 70 times over to fight for the  
9 place that God has made for my home.

10 "I love you all and I miss you very much. I wish I  
11 could be there when Sandy has our baby. Tell her that I love  
12 her and, Lord willing, I'll be coming home soon. Give Mom a  
13 great big hug for me, and give one to yourself, too, Dad.  
14 Aaron."

15 And here's the poem that this young Marine wrote. He  
16 said:

17 *We all came together,*  
18 *Both young and old,*  
19 *To fight for our freedom,*  
20 *To stand and to be bold.*  
21 *In the midst of all evil,*  
22 *We stand our ground,*  
23 *And we protect our country*  
24 *From all terror around.*  
25 *Peace and not war*

1           *Is what some people say.*  
2           *But I'll give my life*  
3           *So you can live the American way.*  
4           *I give you the right*  
5           *To talk of your peace,*  
6           *To stand in your groups*  
7           *And protest in our streets.*  
8           *But still I fight on.*  
9           *I don't bitch, I don't whine.*  
10          *I'm just one of the people*  
11          *Who is doing your time.*  
12          *I'm harder than nails,*  
13          *Stronger than any machine.*  
14          *I'm the immortal soldier.*  
15          *I'm a U.S. Marine.*  
16          *So stand in my shoes*  
17          *And leave from your home.*  
18          *Fight for the people who hate you*  
19          *With the protests they've shown.*  
20          *Fight for the stranger,*  
21          *Fight for the young,*  
22          *So they all may have*  
23          *The greatest freedom you've won.*  
24          *Fight for the sick,*  
25          *Fight for the poor,*

1           *Fight for the cripple*  
2           *Who lives next door.*  
3           *But when your time comes,*  
4           *Do what I've done.*  
5           *For if you stand up for freedom,*  
6           *You'll stand when the fight's done.*

7           As I say these moving words from one serving over in  
8 the war on terror and who has therefore given up the comforts  
9 of home to service, in that regard I know you join me in saying  
10 "thank you"; and I hope that when you see one of our troops,  
11 that you'll go up to him or her and say, "Thank you for your  
12 service to our country."

13           God bless our troops, God bless our veterans, God  
14 bless each of you and God bless America. Thank you.

15           **THE COURT:** Thank you, Mr. Lowe.

16           (Mr. Lowe salutes the American Flag.)

17           **MR. LOWE:** Thank you, Your Honor.

18           **THE COURT:** Thank you.

19           At this time, I would recognize the Daughters of the  
20 American Revolution for any presentations that they may have.

21           **MS. MARGO EVERETT:** Thank you, Your Honor.

22           Daughters of the American Revolution enjoy welcoming  
23 new citizens. We admire the time and effort that you've taken  
24 to become part of our great nation, and we have some great  
25 information for you.

1 (Daughters of the American Revolution present gifts to the  
2 new citizens.)

3 **THE COURT:** Thank you, ladies.

4 I believe that the Veterans Council or Veterans of  
5 Foreign Wars have some flags that they wish to present at this  
6 time. And Mr. Gaetano will finish passing out his flags as  
7 well.

8 (Flags presented to the new citizens by Mr. Gaetano  
9 Donatelli of the court's IT Department and Mr. Cohee,  
10 representative of the veterans.)

11 **THE COURT:** Thank you, Mr. Cohee.

12 Are there any other groups or entities that wish to  
13 present --

14 **MR. NEVILLE:** Yes, Your Honor. Disabled American  
15 Veterans would like to present a token or gift.

16 **THE COURT:** Very well. Thank you very much.

17 (Gifts presented to the new citizens by Mr. Neville and  
18 Reverend Robinson.)

19 **MR. LOWE:** Your Honor, I believe the flags were  
20 presented by the American Legion.

21 **MR. COHEE:** Those flags were from the United States  
22 Veterans. These flags are from the American Legion.

23 **MR. LOWE:** Okay. Fine. Reverse that then. The  
24 American Legion flags still have to be handed out.

25 Thank you, Mr. Cohee.

1           **MR. COHEE:** That's all right.

2           **THE COURT:** Mr. Robinson, Mr. Neville, thank you.

3           **MR. NEVILLE:** Thank you, Your Honor.

4           **REVEREND ROBINSON:** Thank you, Your Honor.

5           **THE COURT:** Mr. Cohee, do we have some additional  
6 flags from the American Legion?

7           **MR. COHEE:** Yes, sir. These are from the American  
8 Legion.

9           **THE COURT:** Very well.

10          **MR. COHEE:** The first flags were from the  
11 United Veterans.

12          **THE COURT:** Very well. Thank you. If you want to  
13 hand those out.

14          (Additional Flags presented to the new citizens by  
15 Mr. Cohee for the American Legion.)

16          **MR. COHEE:** Thank you, Your Honor.

17          **THE COURT:** Thank you, Mr. Cohee.

18          At this time I believe Senator Enzi, through  
19 Ms. Tinsley -- do you have some letters you wish to present?

20          **MS. TINSLEY:** Thank you, Your Honor.

21          **THE COURT:** You're welcome.

22          **MS. TINSLEY:** Ladies and gentlemen, I just wanted to  
23 let you know that I'm going to give each of you a folder; and  
24 since Jackie King from Representative Lummis' office is not  
25 able to be here, in the folder is a letter from

1 Representative Lummis as well as a letter from Senator Enzi.  
2 So I would be passing those out to you, and I just wanted to  
3 make you aware that both letters are in the folder. Thank you.

4 **THE COURT:** Thank you, Ms. Tinsley.

5 **MS. TINSLEY:** (To Mr. Cohee) Do you want to bring  
6 that?

7 **MR. COHEE:** Yes, ma'am.

8 **MS. TINSLEY:** Okay. Thank you.

9 **THE COURT:** Mr. Cohee, you'll be excused from your  
10 workout this evening.

11 **MR. COHEE:** Multi-tasking.

12 (Laughter)

13 (Mr. Cohee carries box with folders over to jury box.  
14 Ms. Tinsley presents folders to the new citizens.)

15 **THE COURT:** And as well, I'd recognize Mr. Gallegos on  
16 behalf of Senator Barrasso's office.

17 **MR. GALLEGOS:** It's an honor that the Senator asked me  
18 to come and pass out some letters he wrote to you; and as I  
19 reflect on how important you are to America, with a name like  
20 "Gallegos," you know that I came from a family of immigrants.  
21 My wife -- she also immigrated from Russia, and she reminds me  
22 every election day how important it is to vote because her vote  
23 didn't matter.

24 I also had a good friend who I fought with in Iraq who  
25 was asked by a reporter, "You're not an American. Why are you

1 fighting here?" And he -- he put his hand over his name tag  
2 because the -- if you put your hand over the name tag, you see  
3 "U.S. Army," and all he did was put his hand over there, and he  
4 said, "'Us.' There is no 'me.' There is no 'I.' There's only  
5 'us' in America."

6 So today is a very wonderful day for you. It's a  
7 rebirth and I just want to thank you for being so brave of  
8 becoming an American citizen.

9 Thank you, Your Honor.

10 **THE COURT:** Thank you, Mr. Gallegos.

11 (Mr. Gallegos commences presenting letters to the new  
12 citizens. Ms. Tinsley completes presenting folders to the new  
13 citizens.)

14 **MS. TINSLEY:** Thank you, Your Honor.

15 **THE COURT:** Thank you.

16 (Mr. Gallegos completes presenting letters to the new  
17 citizens.)

18 **THE COURT:** Thank you, Mr. Gallegos.

19 **MR. GALLEGOS:** Sorry about that.

20 **THE COURT:** That's all right.

21 At this time I would recognize Mr. Kubichek for  
22 remarks on behalf of the Attorney General of the United States,  
23 Mr. Eric Holder.

24 **MR. KUBICHEK:** Thank you, Your Honor.

25 **THE COURT:** Counsel.

1           **MR. KUBICHEK:** May it please the Court.

2           **THE COURT:** Counsel.

3           **MR. KUBICHEK:** Judge Downes. New citizens.

4           This is a spectacular day in your lives; and I count  
5 it as one of my most special privileges to, a couple of times a  
6 year, be able to share this day with you.

7           Now, there's some things as citizens that separates me  
8 from you, the judge from you, Judge Downes from you. All of us  
9 were born here, you know. Now, that was a fact of life, and  
10 that was a matter of enormous good fortune, but I didn't have  
11 to earn it. You know, I didn't have to study or take tests or  
12 do this or think about my citizenship. I just "was."

13           You all favor us, privilege us, with the enormous hard  
14 work and sacrifice you made to become one of us; and every time  
15 we have this ceremony, I am reminded about how much work it is  
16 and how much patience and how much dedication it takes; and I  
17 am enriched not only by the fact that you chose to join us but  
18 that you've worked so hard and you gave so much to do that. So  
19 not only do I wish to welcome you as new citizens, but I want  
20 to thank you for picking us.

21           You know, America has been at this for 240 years or  
22 so, this democracy thing; and, you know, every time I give this  
23 little talk, I'm always reminded of the fact that it's really  
24 sort of a day-to-day experiment, you know. Can we work this  
25 out?

1           Most countries and most of the countries from where  
2 you originated -- Russia probably is a good exception to  
3 that -- but for most of you, you come from a country where most  
4 of you are of the same background basically, at least in a lot  
5 of ways.

6           We're a hodgepodge here. We have always been a  
7 hodgepodge, you know. We've never been the easiest outfit to  
8 get along with at first; but we -- you know, from the beginning  
9 we had people from Ireland and Italy and every country you can  
10 imagine come here, settle, become important parts of our  
11 economy, of our country, of our culture; and every time one of  
12 you joins us, you do the same thing. You make us richer by  
13 your presence.

14           Now, the fact that we are what we are, a country of  
15 gosh knows how many different kinds of people in terms of where  
16 they're from, what they believe, what their culture is, it  
17 makes it challenging because to be an American you're making  
18 certain promises. This isn't just all kind of a one-way sort  
19 of a thing.

20           In fact, you took an oath today that requires that you  
21 support and defend the Constitution which is really the same  
22 oath I took and Judge Skavdahl took; but in order for this to  
23 work, you really have to walk the walk, not just talk the talk,  
24 and by that I mean: To be a good American requires that you  
25 not only be conscious of your own rights and liberties and

1 opportunities but you respect those of your fellow Americans as  
2 well; and, you know, that's not easy; and you can tell, if you  
3 pay attention to the news in our country on a day-to-day basis,  
4 we have all kinds of arguments and fights with each other every  
5 day, and that's part of who we are; but at the end of the day,  
6 that's okay so long as we respect each other as citizens; and  
7 while you may take a position on a political issue or a  
8 philosophical issue or a scientific issue that I take issue  
9 with and I don't agree with, still as a citizen I owe you the  
10 respect to say, "You know, that's okay. I don't agree with  
11 that but I respect you. You're a fellow citizen of my country,  
12 and I respect your right to hold that view."

13           That kind of tolerance and understanding for each  
14 other is the glue that has allowed us to do this for 240 odd  
15 years; and if we're going make it another ten years, 100, 240  
16 more, it will be the glue that allows us to keep doing it.

17           So remember that when you sign up, you're signing up  
18 sort of to a contract, and it's not a contract with the  
19 government. You know, the government -- you don't work for the  
20 government. You know, the government works for you all. So as  
21 I believe the person from Mr. Barrasso's office says every year  
22 when an election comes around his wife says "you better get out  
23 there and vote," that's part of your contract. You're going to  
24 participate because we can't make it unless people participate.  
25 You know, this isn't a country where it's the government

1 talking down to its citizens. It's your government, and so you  
2 need to be informed, and you need to be a participant.

3           Now, the other thing that has made us special from the  
4 very beginning is our commitment to be a nation of laws, and  
5 most importantly what that means is: The government isn't  
6 going to say, "You know, I don't like the ethnic group that  
7 you're from" or "I don't like the kinds of things you're  
8 talking about. So we're just going to round you up, and you'll  
9 just disappear for awhile."

10           That's not who we are. We are a nation, the most  
11 fundamentally important part of which is our dedication to the  
12 rule of law. Judge Skavdahl in this courtroom is the person  
13 who's sort of the epitome of a referee in that sense or an  
14 umpire, you know. I'm a lawyer and I practice on behalf of the  
15 United States. In other words, I work for you all, and I  
16 present cases in here or my colleagues do. I defend the  
17 United States in civil cases, and I prosecute people accused of  
18 crimes in criminal cases; but keep in mind that's an important  
19 phrase, "accused," because when you come in here you're not  
20 presumed guilty like maybe you are in some places. You're  
21 presumed not guilty, and it's the job of the government to  
22 prove to 12 people just like you that someone committed the  
23 crime. He doesn't get to decide. He gets to decide some of  
24 the legal issues. He calls some balls and strikes; but the  
25 judges of the facts, "guilty" or "not guilty" -- and

1 Judge Downes was particularly good about this during his  
2 tenure. When the jury came in or the jury left, we all had to  
3 stand because just like him they were judges; citizens decided;  
4 and if there's anything that sets us apart from a lot of other  
5 places in the world, it's that.

6           So I encourage you, now that you're one of us and now  
7 that you're our partners in this adventure, to take full  
8 opportunity to engage your citizenship to the fullest extent  
9 you can. That means vote all the time. Participate in your  
10 community. If you get a chance to serve on a jury, you take it  
11 with relish, you know, because that's one of the most  
12 important, hardest jobs of a citizen. You know, it is hard,  
13 but we would vastly prefer that citizens do that hard business  
14 of judging than just leaving it to one person. So take  
15 advantage of that because we depend on that.

16           Otherwise, I just want to say again we are blessed  
17 that you all chose us and you chose to do the hard work to  
18 become one of us. I thank you for that; and on behalf of the  
19 Attorney General, U.S. Attorney Kip Crofts and indeed the  
20 President as well, I thank you, I congratulate you and best of  
21 wishes for your future. Thank you.

22           **THE COURT:** Thank you, Mr. Kubichek.

23           And, ladies and gentlemen, some of you may not know  
24 this, but this is my first time conducting this ceremony; and  
25 I'm very, very honored and privileged to do so. Before I did

1 this, I got a video of the last ceremony that was conducted in  
2 May 2011. The ceremony was not presided by me, of course, but  
3 it was presided by another individual by the name of  
4 Honorable William F. Downes.

5           So I went through that video and prepared my outline.  
6 He didn't have to have an outline, but I suspect he still wrote  
7 it down when he did these over the many years that he was the  
8 Federal District Court Judge for the District of Wyoming. He  
9 began his tenure in that position in June of 1994. I recall  
10 that because I was his law clerk then and got the opportunity,  
11 with great pride and privilege, to serve as his law clerk for  
12 three years. I also was in practice with him for a period of  
13 time.

14           Judge Downes -- no one has ever questioned his loyalty  
15 or his patronage to the United States of America, having  
16 formerly served as a U.S. Marine in the Vietnam War. He has  
17 great passion for what this country stands for and what has  
18 been given up to have what we have in this country.

19           I, at this time, would recognize Judge Downes, retired  
20 United States District Court Judge for the District of Wyoming.

21           Your Honor.

22           **JUDGE DOWNES:** May it please the Court.

23           **THE COURT:** Counsel.

24           **JUDGE DOWNES:** Fellow citizens.

25           Your Honor, if you would permit me a moment of

1 personal privilege, I would like to say that this is the first  
2 time I've been back in this room with a coat and tie on since  
3 my retirement on July 22<sup>nd</sup>; and I would be remiss if I didn't  
4 tell you how honored I am, how proud I am to see you sitting in  
5 that place; and the people of Wyoming are going to be very  
6 specially blessed when the United States Senate finishes its  
7 business -- (turning and speaking to Ms. Tinsley and  
8 Mr. Gallegos) please convey that to the members of our  
9 delegation -- when they finish their business and confirm you  
10 as my successor, and I want you to know how honored I am that  
11 you will be that man.

12 **THE COURT:** I am as well.

13 **JUDGE DOWNES:** I want to thank a number of people, if  
14 I may, before I make my remarks to the new citizens, especially  
15 my fellow veterans who have participated in this ceremony two  
16 to three times a year since I've conducted it over the past 17  
17 years. I could not have done it without you, ladies and  
18 gentlemen, and I'm so grateful that you're here again to assist  
19 Judge Skavdahl in this effort.

20 As well, the Daughters of the American Revolution have  
21 taken on this mission of welcoming new citizens with special  
22 zeal and dedication and have always been here to welcome new  
23 citizens. It's a hallmark of that organization that they can  
24 trace their lineage to the foundation of the Republic. I  
25 can't, you can't, but they can; and yet they see it as their

1 mission, the sacred task of welcoming new citizens and  
2 recognizing them as equal in the eyes of the law and the  
3 Constitution, and I want to thank those ladies very specially;  
4 and I notice Jacquie Carrico is also here, and I don't think  
5 the judge saw you there, Jacquie, but I want you to know I know  
6 you've been there now for 17 years along with your friends, and  
7 I'm so grateful to see you there.

8           And, specially, two World War II veterans are with us.  
9 Stan Lowe who you've heard from and Reverend Robinson who has  
10 suffered terribly as a prisoner of war during World War II are  
11 two World War II veterans who have been steadfast in supporting  
12 this special mission of welcoming new citizens for my tenure on  
13 the federal bench, and I want to express my gratitude to both  
14 of you gentlemen most especially for your dedication to this  
15 task.

16           I want to thank my friend David Kubichek for his  
17 devotion to this, too, during all of those years.

18           Ladies and gentlemen, welcome, my fellow citizens, and  
19 you enrich us today by your decision, your decision borne of  
20 free will and dedication to become truly American. Now you  
21 take on this role of being citizens in this great nation at a  
22 time when we so desperately need you. We need all of your  
23 energy, all of your talent, all of your spirit and all of your  
24 guidance. In a time of world strife and economic peril, by  
25 your oath of commitment today you enrich us, and you give us

1 hope that our nation has a bright future. I've often been  
2 asked if I believe in the notion of American exceptionalism.  
3 My answer is always "yes," but I'm not referring to the  
4 jingoistic variety of exceptionalism that is so often parroted  
5 and touted in this country. I believe in a more profound  
6 concept of American exceptionalism; that is, the grace-filled  
7 ability of this nation, demonstrated in 235 years of its  
8 existence, to rejuvenate itself and to make it a more perfect  
9 union.

10           Each generation has been called upon to engage in this  
11 sacred struggle, to make this a place where the dignity of the  
12 individual is guaranteed through the rule of law. You are no  
13 doubt familiar with perhaps the most famous verse of the  
14 patriotic hymn *America the Beautiful* written by Katharine Lee  
15 Bates. The first verse ends with the words:

16           *America! America!*  
17           *God shed his grace on thee,*  
18           *And crown thy good with brotherhood*  
19           *From sea to shining sea!*

20           But, likely, you and other citizens here present are  
21 less familiar with its more profound verse:

22           *O beautiful for pilgrim feet*  
23           *Whose stern impassion'd stress*  
24           *A thoroughfare for freedom beat*  
25           *Across the wilderness.*

1           *America! America!*  
2           *God mend thine ev'ry flaw.*  
3           *Confirm thy soul in self-control,*  
4           *Thy liberty in law.*

5           Fellow citizens, it is our Constitution and our  
6 adherence to its principles that have made America a beacon of  
7 hope for 235 years. It should be remembered it's our burden as  
8 citizens to remember that liberty unfettered by a Constitution  
9 and worthy laws is a fearsome thing. Our liberty is secured by  
10 an informed and committed citizenry.

11           Remember the first three words of our Constitution  
12 separates it from anywhere else in this world and makes this  
13 nation exceptional. Those three words are "We the people."  
14 We don't take our authority from a crown or a dictator. We  
15 take it from ourselves. We vest in ourselves the right to  
16 govern. That is what makes America exceptional. It will only  
17 remain exceptional if we dedicate ourselves to the task of  
18 making this a more perfect place for ourselves and our children  
19 and immigrants to come after you.

20           Let me talk about this subject of immigrants. I don't  
21 want you thinking of yourselves anymore as immigrants. I want  
22 you to think of yourselves for what you are. By the power  
23 vested in this Court, you are now citizens of the  
24 United States. You are citizens to the marrow of your bone, to  
25 the depths of your souls. You are citizens on equal footing

1 with any other man or woman who has ever been graced with that  
2 title.

3 I've had titles all my life. I was proud a long time  
4 ago to be called a Marine and then an officer of Marines; and  
5 for many years I was a lawyer, and I was graced to be the  
6 presiding judge in this beautiful old courtroom for 17 years as  
7 judge and later as chief judge. While I carry all those  
8 memories in my heart, I am no longer any of those things, but I  
9 still carry with me my most treasured civic title: I am a  
10 citizen.

11 As one citizen to another, I welcome you. I wish you  
12 every great success and every happiness. May God bless you and  
13 your families, and may God bless the United States of America.

14 **THE COURT:** Thank you in many ways, Judge Downes.

15 Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know that I can add  
16 significantly to the remarks that have already been made. I  
17 will be brief.

18 This country was forged from a desire to form a more  
19 fair and just society and government, a government by the  
20 people and for the people. Its formation came at a great and,  
21 for many, an ultimate cost. However, that was but a down  
22 payment. As noted by the beginning of this ceremony, the price  
23 of our freedom continues to be paid.

24 I hope that all of us can recognize and appreciate we  
25 are united as Americans, and the freedoms we enjoy is not

1 because of our individuality but, rather, because of the  
2 commitment to one another as fellow citizens of the  
3 United States of America.

4 To our newest citizens, thank you for wanting to be  
5 part of that commitment; and may those of us who have already  
6 made it be reminded what we have is cherished and sought after  
7 by others throughout this world.

8 Congratulations on becoming the newest United States  
9 citizens of the United States of America, and God bless the  
10 United States of America.

11 We shall stand in recess.

12 **THE CLERK:** All rise. This court stands adjourned.  
13 Thank you.

14 (Applause)

15 **(The proceedings conclude at 4:42 p.m.)**

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|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Aaron</b> 13:14   | <b>approximately</b> 3:7   | <b>bless</b> 15:13,13,14,14<br>30:12,13 31:9                       | <b>citizen</b> 2:17 6:11,12 10:2<br>19:8 22:9,11 24:12<br>30:10,11   |
| <b>ability</b> 12:24 28:7  | <b>April</b> 3:2   | <b>blessed</b> 24:16 26:6  | <b>citizenry</b> 29:10   |
| <b>abjure</b> 5:23,24  | <b>arguments</b> 22:4  | <b>bold</b> 13:20  | <b>citizens</b> 2:13,14,14,20<br>3:13,15 5:7 8:13,16,16<br>9:16,21 10:1 12:14<br>15:23 16:2,8,17 17:14<br>18:14 19:12,13,17 20:3<br>20:7,19 22:6 23:1 24:3<br>24:13 25:24 26:14,21,23<br>27:1,12,18,21 28:20<br>29:5,8,23,24,25 31:2,4,9 |
| <b>able</b> 3:14 9:5 17:25 20:6  | <b>Arieli</b> 1:12 4:15  | <b>bombing</b> 3:3   | <b>citizenship</b> 1:3,16 2:13<br>4:19,22,25 5:4 20:12<br>24:8   |
| <b>above-entitled</b> 32:5   | <b>Armed</b> 7:13,15   | <b>bone</b> 29:24  | <b>civic</b> 30:9  |
| <b>absolutely</b> 5:21,22  | <b>Armenta</b> 1:4 4:3   | <b>born</b> 20:9   | <b>civil</b> 23:17   |
| <b>accused</b> 23:17,19  | <b>arms</b> 7:3,4  | <b>borne</b> 27:19   | <b>civilian</b> 7:23,25  |
| <b>action</b> 2:19,21,25   | <b>Armstrong</b> 1:12 4:15                                       | <b>Bosnia-Herzegovina</b> 4:6                                      | <b>clerk</b> 2:2 9:23 10:1 25:10<br>25:11 31:12  |
| <b>add</b> 30:15   | <b>Army</b> 19:3   | <b>box</b> 1:21 18:13,13   | <b>coat</b> 26:2   |
| <b>addition</b> 2:20   | <b>asked</b> 18:17,25 28:2                                       | <b>Braganza</b> 1:7 4:8  | <b>Codilla</b> 1:9 4:11  |
| <b>additional</b> 17:5,14  | <b>assist</b> 26:18  | <b>brave</b> 19:7  | <b>Cohee</b> 11:8,15 16:9,11,21<br>16:25 17:1,5,7,10,15,16<br>17:17 18:5,7,9,11,13   |
| <b>addresses</b> 9:16  | <b>assistance</b> 9:22   | <b>bravery</b> 12:24   | <b>colleagues</b> 23:16  |
| <b>adherence</b> 29:6  | <b>Assistant</b> 3:22  | <b>brief</b> 30:17   | <b>Colombia</b> 4:12   |
| <b>adjourned</b> 31:12   | <b>attention</b> 22:3  | <b>bright</b> 28:1   | <b>Colonel</b> 5:10 8:24 11:18   |
| <b>admire</b> 15:23  | <b>Attorney</b> 3:21,22 5:2<br>19:22 24:19,19                    | <b>Brimmer</b> 3:18  | <b>color</b> 5:11,13 11:16,16  |
| <b>admitted</b> 5:4  | <b>ATTORNEY'S</b> 1:20   | <b>bring</b> 18:5  | <b>colors</b> 5:11,13,15 8:24,25   |
| <b>advantage</b> 24:15   | <b>Austin</b> 11:17  | <b>Briones</b> 1:11,12 4:13,14                                     | <b>come</b> 9:24 18:18 21:3,10<br>23:19 29:19  |
| <b>adventure</b> 24:7  | <b>Austria</b> 4:12  | <b>brotherhood</b> 28:18   | <b>comes</b> 15:3 22:22  |
| <b>Afghanistan</b> 2:20  | <b>authority</b> 29:14   | <b>burden</b> 29:7   | <b>comforts</b> 15:8   |
| <b>afternoon</b> 2:7   | <b>available</b> 9:14  | <b>burial</b> 3:1  | <b>coming</b> 13:12  |
| <b>ago</b> 30:4  | <b>aware</b> 18:3  | <b>business</b> 24:13 26:7,9                                       | <b>commander</b> 10:23   |
| <b>agree</b> 22:9,10   | <b>awhile</b> 23:9   | <b>B-24J</b> 3:4   | <b>commence</b> 2:1  |
| <b>ahead</b> 3:10 9:7  |  |  | <b>commences</b> 19:11   |
| <b>Air</b> 10:22   | <b>B</b>   | <b>C</b>   | <b>commend</b> 12:20   |
| <b>aircraft</b> 3:4  | <b>baby</b> 13:11  | <b>called</b> 28:10 30:4   | <b>comments</b> 9:10   |
| <b>airmen</b> 3:2  | <b>back</b> 26:2   | <b>calls</b> 23:24   | <b>commissioner</b> 10:13  |
| <b>Algeria</b> 4:15  | <b>background</b> 4:20 21:4                                      | <b>Cambodia</b> 4:7  | <b>commitment</b> 23:4 27:25<br>31:2,5   |
| <b>allegiance</b> 5:25 6:1 7:1,2<br>8:17,19,21   | <b>balls</b> 23:24   | <b>cameras</b> 2:10 9:24   | <b>committed</b> 23:22 29:10   |
| <b>allowed</b> 22:14   | <b>Barack</b> 9:16   | <b>candidates</b> 4:25   | <b>community</b> 12:13 24:10   |
| <b>allowing</b> 5:7  | <b>Barrasso's</b> 10:25 11:22<br>18:16 22:21                     | <b>Canope</b> 11:18  | <b>completed</b> 4:20  |
| <b>allows</b> 22:16  | <b>basically</b> 21:4  | <b>can't</b> 22:24 26:25,25  | <b>completes</b> 19:12,16  |
| <b>Alonso</b> 1:5 4:4  | <b>basis</b> 22:3  | <b>capacities</b> 11:6   | <b>Conarty</b> 11:12   |
| <b>Aly</b> 1:12 4:14   | <b>Bataan</b> 10:17  | <b>Carrico</b> 27:4  | <b>concept</b> 28:6  |
| <b>America</b> 6:17,19 8:14<br>9:22 10:9 15:14 18:19<br>19:5 20:21 25:15 28:14<br>28:16,16 29:1,1,6,16<br>30:13 31:3,9,10                            | <b>Bataliran</b> 1:11 4:12                                       | <b>carries</b> 18:13   | <b>conclude</b> 31:15  |
| <b>American</b> 2:18 9:3 10:13<br>11:11,14 12:9,16 14:3<br>15:16,20,22 16:1,14,20<br>16:22,24 17:6,7,15<br>18:25 19:8 21:17,24<br>26:20 27:20 28:2,6 | <b>Bates</b> 28:15   | <b>carry</b> 3:3 30:7,9  | <b>conduct</b> 3:14 4:1  |
| <b>Americans</b> 3:7 12:14 22:1<br>30:25   | <b>beacon</b> 29:6   | <b>Cartier</b> 11:12   | <b>conducted</b> 25:1 26:16  |
| <b>Amzal</b> 1:12 4:14   | <b>bear</b> 6:24,25 7:3,4  | <b>cases</b> 23:16,17,18   | <b>conducting</b> 24:24  |
| <b>angle</b> 9:25  | <b>beat</b> 28:24  | <b>Casper</b> 1:9,21,24  | <b>confirm</b> 26:9 29:3   |
| <b>Anna</b> 11:11  | <b>beautiful</b> 13:7 28:14,22<br>30:6                           | <b>catch</b> 11:24   | <b>conflict</b> 3:7,9 10:14  |
| <b>announced</b> 2:24  | <b>becoming</b> 12:15 19:8 31:8                                  | <b>cell</b> 2:11   | <b>conflicts</b> 2:23 10:8   |
| <b>answer</b> 28:3   | <b>began</b> 25:9  | <b>ceremonies</b> 2:12   | <b>congratulate</b> 12:15 24:20  |
| <b>anthem</b> 8:20,22  | <b>beginning</b> 21:8 23:4 30:22                                 | <b>ceremony</b> 1:16 2:9 3:15<br>20:15 24:24 25:1,2<br>26:15 30:22 | <b>congratulates</b> 10:2  |
| <b>Antonio</b> 1:6 4:6   | <b>behalf</b> 5:2 7:3,5 12:12<br>13:2 18:16 19:22 23:14<br>24:18 | <b>certain</b> 21:18   | <b>congratulations</b> 3:18 8:12<br>31:8   |
| <b>anymore</b> 29:21   | <b>believe</b> 11:18 16:4,19<br>17:18 21:16 22:21 28:2<br>28:5   | <b>CERTIFICATE</b> 32:1  |  |
| <b>apart</b> 24:4  | <b>Belize</b> 4:15   | <b>certificates</b> 9:21 10:1                                      |  |
| <b>Apologize</b> 12:6  | <b>bench</b> 27:13   | <b>certify</b> 32:4  |  |
| <b>APPEARANCES</b> 1:19  | <b>benefits</b> 2:16   | <b>challenging</b> 21:17   |  |
| <b>Applause</b> 8:15 31:14   | <b>Berlin</b> 3:3  | <b>chance</b> 24:10  |  |
| <b>appreciate</b> 30:24  | <b>best</b> 24:20  | <b>character</b> 4:20  |  |
|  | <b>better</b> 9:25 22:22   | <b>Charlotte</b> 1:9 4:11  |  |
|  | <b>Betty</b> 11:12   | <b>Chen</b> 1:5 4:5  |  |
|  | <b>big</b> 13:13   | <b>cherished</b> 31:6  |  |
|  | <b>birth</b> 13:7  | <b>chief</b> 3:17 30:7   |  |
|  | <b>bitch</b> 14:9  | <b>child</b> 13:8  |  |
|  |  | <b>children</b> 29:18  |  |
|  |  | <b>China</b> 4:6   |  |
|  |  | <b>chose</b> 20:17 24:17,17  |  |
|  |  | <b>Cindy</b> 11:12   |  |

**Congresswoman** 11:23  
**conscious** 21:25  
**Constitution** 6:15,16  
 21:21 27:3 29:5,8,11  
**continues** 30:23  
**contract** 22:18,18,23  
**convey** 26:8  
**correct** 32:4  
**correspondence** 4:23  
**cost** 30:21  
**couldn't** 12:17  
**Council** 11:9 16:4  
**Counsel** 12:11 19:25 20:2  
 25:23  
**count** 20:4  
**countries** 21:1,1  
**country** 2:23 8:18 13:23  
 15:12 21:3,9,11,14 22:3  
 22:11,25 25:17,18 28:5  
 30:18  
**County** 5:10 11:9  
**couple** 10:10 20:5  
**course** 25:2  
**court** 1:1,23 2:3,5,6,9  
 3:11,16,25 4:17 5:5,6,9  
 5:14,21,23,25 6:2,4,7,9  
 6:11,13,15,17,20,24 7:1  
 7:3,6,8,10,13,17,19,23  
 8:2,6,8,10,12,16,23 9:1  
 9:7,18,23 10:2,3 11:5,8  
 12:5,8,10,11 15:15,18  
 16:3,11,16 17:2,5,9,12  
 17:17,21 18:4,9,15  
 19:10,15,18,20,25 20:1  
 20:2 24:22 25:8,20,22  
 25:23 26:12 29:23  
 30:14 31:12 32:2,3,8  
**Courthouse** 1:8,23 2:8  
**courtroom** 23:12 30:6  
**court's** 16:9  
**crime** 23:23  
**crimes** 23:18  
**criminal** 23:18  
**cripple** 15:1  
**Crofts** 24:19  
**crown** 28:18 29:14  
**CSR-RPR-CRR** 1:22  
 32:7  
**culture** 21:11,16

---

**D**


---

**Dad** 13:13  
**Dan** 10:24  
**date** 2:18 32:7  
**Daughters** 11:11 15:19,22  
 16:1 26:20  
**David** 1:5,20 3:20 4:5  
 27:16  
**day** 18:22 19:6 20:4,6  
 22:5,5  
**day-to-day** 20:24 22:3

**Death** 10:17  
**decide** 23:23,23  
**decided** 24:3  
**decision** 27:19,19  
**declare** 5:19,20  
**dedicate** 29:17  
**dedication** 20:16 23:11  
 26:22 27:14,20  
**defend** 6:13,14 21:21  
 23:16  
**defending** 2:15  
**Defense** 2:24  
**delegation** 26:9  
**democracy** 20:22  
**demonstrated** 28:7  
**department** 2:23 10:23  
 16:9  
**depend** 24:15  
**depths** 29:25  
**deputy** 9:22  
**designated** 4:19  
**desirable** 4:25  
**desire** 30:18  
**desperately** 27:22  
**devices** 2:10  
**devotion** 27:17  
**Diaz** 1:3 4:3  
**dictator** 29:14  
**didn't** 18:23 20:10,11  
 25:6 26:3  
**different** 21:15  
**difficulties** 9:19  
**dignity** 28:11  
**direction** 7:23,25  
**Disabled** 10:23 16:14  
**disappear** 23:9  
**district** 1:1,1,17,23 2:3,3  
 3:11,11,16,22 10:12  
 25:8,8,20,20 32:3,3  
**doesn't** 23:23  
**doing** 14:11 22:16  
**domestic** 6:21,23  
**Don** 10:22  
**Donatelli** 16:9  
**Donelson** 1:10 4:12  
**don't** 10:7,7 14:9,9 22:9  
 22:10,19 23:6,7 27:4  
 29:14,20 30:15  
**door** 15:2  
**doubt** 28:13  
**Downes** 20:3,8 24:1 25:4  
 25:14,19,22,24 26:13  
 30:14

---

**E**


---

**earn** 20:11  
**easiest** 21:7  
**easy** 22:2  
**economic** 27:24  
**economy** 21:11  
**effort** 13:2 15:23 26:19

**election** 18:22 22:22  
**encourage** 24:6  
**ends** 28:15  
**enemies** 6:20,22  
**energy** 27:23  
**engage** 24:8 28:10  
**enjoy** 15:22 30:25  
**enormous** 20:10,13  
**enrich** 27:19,25  
**enriched** 20:17  
**entirely** 5:21,22  
**entities** 16:12  
**Enzi's** 17:18 18:1  
**Enzi's** 11:21  
**epitome** 23:13  
**equal** 27:2 29:25  
**Eric** 19:23  
**escaped** 11:16  
**especially** 26:14 27:14  
**Estrada** 1:8 4:10  
**ethnic** 23:6  
**evasion** 8:8,9  
**evening** 18:10  
**Everett** 10:19,20,20 11:11  
 15:21  
**evil** 13:21  
**ev'ry** 29:2  
**Ewing** 1:7 2:8  
**examined** 4:18  
**examiner** 4:19  
**exception** 21:2  
**exceptional** 29:13,16,17  
**exceptionalism** 28:2,4,6  
**excused** 18:9  
**existence** 28:8  
**experiment** 20:24  
**express** 27:13  
**extend** 3:18  
**extent** 24:8  
**eyes** 27:2

---

**F**


---

**F** 25:4  
**face** 5:17  
**fact** 20:9,17,23 21:14,20  
**facts** 23:25  
**fair** 30:19  
**faith** 6:24,25  
**familiar** 28:13,21  
**families** 2:14 3:1,19 9:5  
 30:13  
**family** 9:23 12:14,16  
 18:20  
**famous** 28:13  
**father** 13:4,4,5  
**favor** 20:13  
**fearsome** 29:9  
**federal** 1:8 2:8 3:16 25:8  
 27:13 32:2,8  
**feet** 28:22  
**Felisa** 1:7 4:8

**fellow** 8:16 22:1,11 25:24  
 26:15 27:18 29:5 31:2  
**fidelity** 5:25 6:1  
**fight** 13:8,19 14:8,18,20  
 14:21,24,25 15:1  
**fighting** 19:1  
**fight's** 15:6  
**Filipino** 12:24  
**finally** 13:1  
**Fine** 16:23  
**finish** 16:6 26:9  
**finishes** 26:6  
**first** 9:10,12 10:5,11 11:1  
 11:4 17:10 21:8 24:24  
 26:1 28:15 29:11  
**first-born** 13:8  
**five** 12:17  
**Flag** 12:9 15:16  
**flags** 16:5,6,8,19,21,22,24  
 17:6,10,14  
**flaw** 29:2  
**Fleet** 10:15  
**Flor** 1:11 4:12  
**folder** 17:23,25 18:3  
**folders** 18:13,14 19:12  
**footing** 29:25  
**Force** 10:22  
**forces** 7:13,15 12:25  
**foregoing** 32:4  
**foreign** 3:12 6:2,3,20,22  
 11:14 16:5  
**foremost** 9:12  
**forged** 30:18  
**forget** 2:22  
**form** 30:18  
**formation** 30:20  
**formerly** 25:16  
**fortune** 20:10  
**forward** 9:24  
**fought** 18:24  
**foundation** 26:24  
**free** 27:20  
**freedom** 2:16 13:19 14:23  
 15:5 28:24 30:23  
**freedoms** 9:5 30:25  
**freely** 8:3,3,5  
**Freitag** 1:7 4:8  
**Freudenthal** 3:17,17  
**Frias** 1:5 4:4  
**friend** 18:24 27:16  
**friends** 3:19 27:6  
**full** 3:1 24:7  
**fullest** 24:8  
**fundamentally** 23:11  
**Funk** 1:9 4:11  
**future** 24:21 28:1

---

**G**


---

**Gaetano** 16:6,8  
**Gallegos** 10:24 11:1,3,7

11:20,21 18:15,17,20  
19:10,11,16,18,19 26:8  
**Gary** 11:8  
**General** 3:21 5:2 19:22  
24:19  
**generation** 28:10  
**gentlemen** 2:7 5:12,15 9:1  
12:12 17:22 24:23  
26:18 27:14,18 30:15  
**Germany** 3:3  
**gift** 16:15  
**gifts** 16:1,17  
**give** 13:12,13 14:2,4  
17:23 20:22 27:25  
**given** 13:1 15:8 25:18  
**Glad** 10:18  
**glue** 22:14,16  
**go** 3:10 9:7 15:11  
**God** 2:5 8:10,11 13:9  
15:13,13,13,14 28:17  
29:2 30:12,13 31:9  
**going** 9:18 10:11 17:23  
22:15,23 23:6,8 26:5  
**good** 2:7 18:24 20:10 21:2  
21:24 24:1 28:18  
**Gosar** 11:12  
**gosh** 21:15  
**govern** 29:16  
**government** 1:20 3:5  
22:19,19,20,20,25 23:1  
23:5,21 30:19,19  
**grace** 28:17  
**graced** 30:1,5  
**grace-filled** 28:6  
**grant** 1:5 4:6 5:6  
**granting** 1:3 2:13  
**grateful** 26:18 27:7  
**gratifying** 13:1  
**gratitude** 27:13  
**great** 3:13 10:19 11:5  
12:24 13:13 15:24,24  
25:11,17 27:21 30:12,20  
**greatest** 14:23  
**ground** 13:22  
**group** 23:6  
**groups** 9:11 14:6 16:12  
**guaranteed** 28:12  
**Guard** 5:11,13 11:16  
**Guatemala** 4:3  
**guidance** 27:24  
**guilty** 23:20,21,25,25

---

**H**


---

**hallmark** 26:23  
**hand** 5:17 17:13 19:1,2,3  
**handed** 16:24  
**hands** 12:18,19  
**happiness** 30:12  
**hard** 20:13,18 24:12,13  
24:17  
**harder** 14:12

**hardest** 24:12  
**Haroldo** 1:3 4:2  
**hate** 14:18  
**hear** 2:2,2,2 9:11  
**heard** 27:9  
**hearing** 1:15 4:1,17 12:7  
**heart** 30:8  
**Heidi** 1:10 4:12  
**help** 8:10,11 12:17  
**Hendrich** 1:22 32:2,7  
**heretofore** 6:9,10  
**here's** 13:15  
**HERNANDEZ** 1:8  
**Hernández** 4:9  
**heros** 9:3  
**He's** 12:23  
**High** 5:10  
**highly** 12:24  
**Hill** 1:7 4:8  
**hodgepodge** 21:6,7  
**hold** 22:12  
**Holder** 19:23  
**home** 13:9,12 14:17 15:9  
**honor** 3:14,24 4:16 5:1  
12:4 15:17,21 16:14,19  
17:3,4,16,20 18:17 19:9  
19:14,24 25:21,25  
**Honorable** 1:16 2:4,5  
25:4  
**honored** 24:25 26:4,10  
**honors** 3:2  
**hope** 15:10 28:1 29:7  
30:24  
**hug** 13:13  
**hymn** 28:14

---

**I**


---

**identified** 2:25  
**identify** 3:6  
**II** 2:22,25 3:7 10:12,14,17  
12:22 27:8,10,11  
**imagine** 21:10  
**immigrants** 18:20 29:19  
29:20,21  
**immigrated** 18:21  
**immigration** 4:19,22 5:1  
**immortal** 14:14  
**impassion'd** 28:23  
**importance** 7:20,22  
**important** 9:12 18:19,22  
21:10 23:11,18 24:12  
**importantly** 23:5  
**including** 3:16  
**India** 4:4,4  
**indicates** 4:22  
**individual** 25:3 28:12  
**individuality** 31:1  
**individuals** 9:9  
**Indra** 1:9 4:10  
**inducting** 3:15  
**information** 15:25

**informed** 23:2 29:10  
**Ingwerson** 1:6 4:7  
**interviewed** 4:18  
**investigations** 4:21  
**involved** 2:19 10:13  
**Iraq** 2:20 18:24  
**Ireland** 21:9  
**isn't** 21:18 22:25 23:5  
**issue** 22:7,8,8,8  
**issues** 23:24  
**Italy** 21:9  
**it's** 10:7 12:25 18:17 19:6  
20:23 22:18,25 23:1,21  
24:5 26:23 29:7  
**I'd** 9:10 13:3 18:15  
**I'll** 13:12 14:2  
**I'm** 14:10,12,14,15 17:23  
20:23 23:14 24:25  
26:18 27:7 28:3  
**I've** 15:4 26:2,16 28:1  
30:3

---

**J**


---

**Jackie** 11:22 17:24  
**Jacquie** 27:4,5  
**Jamie** 1:22 32:2,7  
**Jarnail** 1:4 4:4  
**JESUS** 1:8  
**Jesús** 4:9  
**jingoiistic** 28:4  
**job** 23:21  
**jobs** 24:12  
**Johnson** 3:17  
**join** 8:13,19 15:9 20:17  
**joins** 21:12  
**Josué** 4:3  
**JOSUÉ** 1:3  
**JOSÉ** 1:4,6,8,10  
**José** 4:3,6,9,11  
**JROTC** 5:13  
**judge** 1:17 2:4 3:17,17,17  
3:18 20:3,8,8 21:22  
23:12 24:1 25:8,14,19  
25:20,22,24 26:13,19  
27:5 30:6,7,7,14  
**judges** 23:25 24:3  
**judging** 24:14  
**July** 26:3  
**June** 25:9  
**jury** 18:13 24:2,2,10  
**Justin** 11:17

---

**K**


---

**Katharine** 28:14  
**Kaur** 1:4 4:4  
**keep** 22:16 23:18  
**Kerr** 1:7 2:8  
**killed** 2:19 3:8  
**Kimsan** 1:6 4:7  
**kind** 21:18 22:13  
**kinds** 21:15 22:4 23:7

**King** 11:22 17:24  
**Kip** 24:19  
**know** 15:9 17:23 18:20  
20:9,11,21,22,24 21:7,8  
22:2,10,19,20,25 23:6  
23:14 24:11,12,23 26:10  
27:5,5 30:15  
**knows** 21:15  
**Kubichek** 1:20 3:20,23,24  
5:5 19:21,24 20:1,3  
24:22 27:16

---

**L**


---

**L** 1:22 32:2,7  
**ladies** 2:7 5:11,15 9:1  
11:13 12:12 16:3 17:22  
24:23 26:17 27:3,18  
30:15  
**Larissa** 1:9 4:10  
**Laughter** 18:12  
**law** 7:8,9,17,18,24 8:1  
10:20 23:12 25:10,11  
27:2 28:12 29:4  
**laws** 6:15,16 23:4 29:9  
**lawyer** 23:14 30:5  
**leader** 11:19  
**leave** 14:17  
**leaving** 24:14  
**Lee** 28:14  
**left** 4:2 13:7 24:2  
**legal** 23:24  
**Legion** 10:13 11:14 16:20  
16:22,24 17:6,8,15  
**Leonard** 10:16  
**Lest** 2:22  
**letter** 13:3,5 17:25 18:1  
**letters** 17:19 18:3,18  
19:11,16  
**let's** 3:10  
**liaison** 10:25  
**Liberator** 3:4  
**liberties** 21:25  
**liberty** 29:4,8,9  
**life** 14:2 20:9 30:3  
**lineage** 26:24  
**literally** 12:22  
**little** 20:23  
**Liubov** 1:7 4:7  
**live** 14:3  
**lived** 12:22  
**lives** 15:2 20:4  
**local** 2:9  
**long** 22:6 30:3  
**longer** 30:8  
**Lord** 13:12  
**lot** 21:4 24:4  
**love** 13:10,11  
**Lowe** 10:12 12:1,3,6,9,10  
12:12,20 15:15,16,17  
16:19,23 27:9  
**loyalty** 25:14

Luis 1:10 4:11  
Lummis 11:23 17:24 18:1

---

**M**

---

machine 14:13  
MAGISTRATE 1:17  
making 21:17 29:18  
man 26:11 30:1  
March 10:17  
Margo 11:11 15:21  
Maria 1:8,10 4:9,12  
Marine 10:14 11:8 13:4  
13:15 14:15 25:16 30:4  
Marines 30:4  
marrow 29:24  
Martinez 1:5 4:5  
Maryjune 1:11 4:13  
materials 11:24  
matter 1:2 18:23 20:10  
32:5  
ma'am 18:7  
mean 21:24  
means 23:5 24:9  
members 9:23 10:3 11:10  
26:8  
memories 30:8  
men 2:18 12:22  
mend 29:2  
mental 8:6,7  
Merchant 10:14  
message 9:12,14  
met 4:23  
Mexico 4:3,5,7,9,10  
midst 13:21  
military 2:19,21 3:2 10:25  
Miller 11:17  
mind 23:18  
missing 2:25  
mission 3:3 26:21 27:1,12  
Mom 13:12  
moment 9:2 25:25  
Morgan 11:17  
motion 5:6  
move 5:3  
moving 15:7  
multiple 11:5  
Multi-tasking 18:11  
Myers 1:11 4:13

---

**N**

---

nails 14:12  
name 18:19 19:1,2 25:3  
names 10:8  
nation 15:24 23:4,10  
27:21 28:1,7 29:13  
national 7:19,21 8:20,22  
nationals 3:13  
Natrona 5:10 11:9  
naturalization 1:2,16 2:8  
3:12 4:2,17,24  
Navy 10:19

NCHS 5:13  
need 9:13 23:2,2 27:22,22  
never 21:7  
Neville 10:22 11:15 16:14  
16:17 17:2,3  
new 2:13 3:15 8:13 9:16  
9:21 10:1,2 15:23 16:2,8  
16:17 17:14 18:14  
19:11,12,16 20:3,19  
26:14,21,22 27:1,12  
newest 8:16 31:4,8  
news 22:3  
Nice 11:12  
non-combat 7:10,11  
note 10:5 11:20  
noted 3:6 11:15 30:22  
notice 12:17 27:4  
notion 28:2  
number 9:9 10:3,6 26:13

---

**O**

---

O 28:22  
oath 4:18 5:4,17,19,20  
21:20,22 27:25  
Obama 9:16  
obligation 8:2,3,4,17  
OCTOBER 1:6  
odd 22:14  
office 1:20 11:21,22,23  
17:24 18:16 22:21  
officer 5:1 30:4  
Official 1:23 32:2,8  
okay 16:23 18:8 22:6,10  
old 13:18 30:6  
Olivas 1:8 4:9  
one-way 21:18  
opening 2:13  
operations 2:19,21  
opportunities 22:1  
opportunity 13:6 24:8  
25:10  
order 5:11 21:22  
ordered 3:3  
ordering 5:7  
organization 26:23  
organizations 9:9 10:4  
11:10  
originated 21:2  
Osbaldo 1:4 4:3  
Osvaldo 1:8 4:9  
outfit 21:7  
outline 25:5,6  
overseas 12:25  
owe 22:9

---

**P**

---

Pacific 10:15  
paid 2:15 9:3 30:23  
parroted 28:4  
part 12:15,20,25 13:2  
15:24 22:5,23 23:11

31:5  
participant 23:2  
participate 22:24,24 24:9  
participated 26:15  
participating 10:11  
participation 11:2,4  
particularly 12:13 24:1  
partners 24:7  
parts 21:10  
pass 18:18  
passing 16:6 18:2  
passion 25:17  
patience 20:16  
patriotic 10:4 28:14  
patronage 25:15  
pay 22:3  
payment 30:22  
peace 13:25 14:5  
people 4:2 14:1,10,18  
21:9,15 22:24 23:17,22  
26:5,13 29:13 30:20,20  
Perea 1:4,8 4:3,9  
perfect 28:8 29:18  
perform 7:10,11,19,21  
peril 27:24  
period 25:12  
permit 25:25  
person 22:21 23:12 24:14  
personal 26:1  
personally 10:2  
petition 5:6  
petitioners 1:13 4:16,23  
5:7,20,22,24 6:1,3,5,8  
6:10,12,14,16,18,22,25  
7:2,4,7,9,11,15,18,21,25  
8:4,7,9,11 12:19  
petitions 1:15 4:17  
Philippine 12:21  
Philippines 4:8,11,13,14  
4:14 12:18,19  
philosophical 22:8  
phones 2:11  
phrase 23:19  
picking 20:20  
picture 9:24  
pilgrim 28:22  
place 13:9 26:5 28:11  
29:18  
places 23:20 24:5  
plane 11:24  
Platon 1:11 4:13  
played 8:22 9:15  
please 2:11 3:10,25 5:11  
5:12,17 8:13,19,24 9:7  
12:10,18 20:1 25:22  
26:8  
pledge 8:18,21  
poem 13:4,15  
point 9:20 10:10  
political 22:7  
poor 14:25

position 22:7 25:9  
posting 5:11  
potentate 6:4,5  
power 29:22  
practice 10:20 23:14  
25:12  
prefer 24:13  
prepared 25:5  
presence 5:15 21:13  
present 9:21 10:4 11:25  
16:1,5,13,15 17:19  
23:16 28:20  
presentation 5:13 12:2  
presentations 10:11 12:2  
15:20  
presented 16:8,17,20  
17:14  
presenters 11:17  
presenting 19:11,12,16  
presents 10:1 18:14  
presided 25:2,3  
President 5:2 9:13,16  
24:20  
presiding 2:4 30:6  
presumed 23:20,21  
price 2:15 30:22  
pride 3:14 25:11  
prince 6:2,3  
principles 29:6  
prisoner 12:23 27:10  
privilege 3:14 5:3 20:13  
25:11 26:1  
privileged 24:25  
privileges 20:5  
probably 10:6 21:2  
proceedings 2:1 31:15  
32:5  
profound 28:5,21  
promises 21:18  
prosecute 23:17  
protect 13:23  
protest 14:7  
protests 14:19  
proud 26:4 30:3  
prove 23:22  
purpose 8:8,9  
put 19:1,2,3  
p.m 1:6,6 2:1 31:15  
P.O 1:21

---

**Q**

---

qualified 4:24  
questioned 25:14

---

**R**

---

raise 5:17 12:18,19  
ready 5:16  
really 20:23 21:21,23  
rebirth 19:7  
recall 25:9  
recess 31:11

**recited** 8:21  
**recognition** 13:1  
**recognize** 2:14 3:20 9:3  
     9:10,11 10:5,6 12:1  
     15:19 18:15 19:21  
     25:19 30:24  
**recognizing** 27:2  
**recommendation** 5:1  
**record** 32:5  
**recording** 2:10  
**recover** 3:6  
**recovered** 3:8  
**referee** 23:13  
**referring** 28:3  
**reflect** 18:19  
**regard** 15:9  
**regarding** 2:9  
**rejuvenate** 28:8  
**relish** 24:11  
**remain** 8:19 29:17  
**remaining** 3:9  
**remains** 2:24  
**remarks** 19:22 26:14  
     30:16  
**remember** 22:17 29:8,11  
**remembered** 29:7  
**reminded** 20:15,23 31:6  
**reminds** 18:21  
**remiss** 26:3  
**renounce** 5:23,24  
**repeat** 5:18  
**Reported** 1:22  
**reporter** 1:23 18:25 32:1  
     32:2,8  
**representative** 16:10  
     17:24 18:1  
**representing** 3:21  
**Republic** 4:5 26:24  
**required** 7:8,9,17,18,23  
     8:1  
**requirements** 4:24  
**requires** 21:20,24  
**requisite** 5:4  
**reservation** 8:6,7  
**respect** 22:1,6,10,11,12  
**retire** 8:24  
**retired** 8:25 25:19  
**retirement** 26:3  
**returned** 3:1  
**Reverend** 10:16,16 12:22  
     16:18 17:4 27:9  
**Reverse** 16:23  
**Revolution** 11:11 15:20  
     15:22 16:1 26:20  
**Reyes** 1:6 4:6  
**richer** 21:12  
**right** 5:17 9:18 12:6,8  
     14:4 17:1 19:20 22:12  
     29:15  
**rights** 21:25  
**rise** 2:2 31:12

**Robinson** 10:16,16 11:15  
     12:22 16:18 17:2,4 27:9  
**role** 27:21  
**room** 1:24 26:2  
**Rosas** 1:9 4:11  
**round** 23:8  
**rule** 23:12 28:12  
**rules** 2:9  
**Russia** 4:8 11:4 18:21  
     21:2

---

**S**

---

**S** 32:7  
**sacred** 27:1 28:11  
**sacrifice** 9:4,4 20:14  
**salutes** 12:9 15:16  
**Sandy** 13:11  
**save** 2:5  
**saw** 27:5  
**saying** 15:9  
**says** 22:21,22  
**Schmotzer** 5:10 8:24  
     11:18  
**School** 5:10  
**scientific** 22:8  
**Scott** 1:16 2:4  
**scouts** 12:21,21  
**sea** 28:19,19  
**seat** 9:2  
**seated** 3:10 4:2 9:8  
**second** 11:3  
**secured** 29:9  
**see** 13:1 15:10 19:2 26:4  
     26:25 27:7  
**seek** 2:16  
**self-control** 29:3  
**Senate** 26:6  
**Senator** 10:25 11:21,22  
     11:23 17:18 18:1,16,17  
**sense** 23:13  
**sent** 13:3,4  
**separates** 20:7 29:12  
**Sergeevna** 1:7 4:7  
**serve** 24:10 25:11  
**served** 25:16  
**service** 4:19,22 7:10,12  
     9:11 15:9,12  
**servicemen** 2:24  
**serving** 15:7  
**session** 2:4 3:12  
**sets** 24:4  
**settle** 21:10  
**share** 13:3 20:6  
**shed** 28:17  
**shining** 28:19  
**shoes** 14:16  
**Shouqing** 1:5 4:5  
**show** 8:17  
**shown** 14:19  
**sick** 14:24  
**sign** 22:17

**significantly** 30:16  
**signing** 22:17  
**silence** 9:2  
**silent** 2:11 9:6  
**Singh** 1:4 4:4  
**sir** 10:18 12:3 17:7  
**sitting** 26:4  
**Skavdahl** 1:16 2:4 21:22  
     23:12 26:19  
**Smith** 1:9 4:10  
**society** 30:19  
**soldier** 14:14  
**song** 9:18  
**soon** 13:12  
**Sorry** 19:19  
**sort** 20:24 21:18 22:18  
     23:13  
**Soto** 1:10 4:11  
**sought** 31:6  
**soul** 29:3  
**souls** 29:25  
**South** 1:24  
**sovereignty** 6:4,6  
**speak** 12:3  
**speaking** 26:7  
**special** 3:12 20:5 23:3  
     26:21 27:12  
**specially** 26:6 27:3,8  
**spectacular** 20:4  
**spirit** 27:23  
**splendid** 12:20  
**spoken** 12:23  
**Stan** 10:12 12:1 27:9  
**stand** 5:12 13:20,22 14:6  
     14:16 15:5,6 24:3 31:11  
**standing** 8:20 9:6  
**stands** 25:17 31:12  
**state** 5:16 6:4,5  
**States** 1:1,3,16,17,20 2:3  
     2:5,16 3:11,13,15,21,22  
     4:25 5:3,8,16 6:17,18  
     7:6,7,14,16 8:14,21 9:13  
     9:22 10:9,22 12:15 13:4  
     16:21 19:22 23:15,17  
     25:15,20 26:6 29:24  
     30:13 31:3,8,9,10 32:3  
**steadfast** 27:11  
**stern** 28:23  
**stopped** 9:19  
**stranger** 14:20  
**streets** 14:7  
**stress** 28:23  
**strife** 27:24  
**strikes** 23:24  
**Stronger** 14:13  
**struggle** 28:11  
**study** 20:11  
**subject** 6:11,12 29:20  
**success** 30:12  
**successor** 26:10  
**suffered** 27:10

**Sukhjeet** 1:4 4:4  
**support** 6:13,14 21:21  
**supporting** 27:11  
**survivor** 10:17  
**Suset** 1:12 4:15  
**suspect** 25:6  
**suspend** 2:9  
**Switzerland** 4:10

---

**T**

---

**T** 1:7 2:8  
**tag** 19:1,2  
**take** 5:17 8:2,3,4 9:1,2,24  
     20:11 22:7,8 24:7,10,14  
     27:21 29:14,15  
**taken** 15:23 26:21  
**takes** 20:16  
**talent** 27:23  
**talk** 14:5 20:23 21:23,23  
     29:20  
**talking** 23:1,8  
**task** 27:1,15 29:17  
**technical** 9:19  
**tell** 13:11 22:2 26:4  
**ten** 2:24 3:2 22:15  
**tenure** 24:2 25:9 27:12  
**Teresa** 1:12 4:14  
**terms** 21:15  
**terribly** 27:10  
**terror** 13:24 15:8  
**tests** 20:11  
**thank** 2:6 3:24 5:5,14  
     8:23 10:15 11:7,13 12:3  
     12:6 15:10,11,14,15,17  
     15:18,21 16:3,11,16,25  
     17:2,3,4,12,16,17,20  
     18:3,4,8 19:7,9,10,14,15  
     19:18,24 20:20 24:18,20  
     24:21,22 26:13 27:3,16  
     30:14 31:4,13  
**that's** 12:8 17:1 19:20  
     22:2,5,6,10,23 23:10,18  
     24:11  
**thee** 28:17  
**there's** 19:4 20:7 24:4  
**they're** 21:16  
**they've** 14:19  
**thine** 29:2  
**thing** 20:22 21:12,19 23:3  
     29:9  
**things** 20:7 23:7 30:8  
**think** 20:12 27:4 29:22  
**thinking** 29:21  
**thoroughfare** 28:24  
**three** 25:12 26:16 29:11  
     29:13  
**thy** 28:18 29:3,4  
**tie** 26:2  
**time** 3:10,20 5:9 8:18 9:7  
     9:14,20,25 11:3,20 12:1  
     12:3,23 14:11 15:3,19

15:23 16:6 17:18 19:21  
20:14,22 21:11 24:9,24  
25:13,19 26:2 27:22,24  
30:3  
**times** 13:8 20:5 26:16  
**Tinsley** 11:21 17:19,20,22  
18:4,5,8,14 19:12,14  
26:7  
**title** 30:2,9  
**titles** 30:3  
**today** 2:24 3:6,8,15 4:1  
9:10 10:4 19:6 21:20  
27:19,25  
**today's** 2:18  
**token** 16:15  
**tolerance** 22:13  
**touted** 28:5  
**trace** 26:24  
**tradition** 2:12  
**transcript** 1:15 32:4  
**treasured** 30:9  
**tribute** 9:6  
**Tripp** 11:17  
**troops** 12:25 15:10,13  
**Troy** 11:17  
**true** 6:24,25  
**truly** 27:20  
**turn** 2:11  
**turning** 26:7  
**two** 26:15 27:8,11

---

**U**


---

**ultimate** 2:15 9:3,4 30:21  
**umpire** 23:14  
**unable** 3:5 11:22  
**unaccounted** 3:9  
**understand** 9:14 11:1  
**understanding** 22:13  
**unfettered** 29:8  
**union** 28:9  
**united** 1:1,3,16,17,20 2:3  
2:5,16 3:11,13,15,21,22  
4:25 5:3,8,16 6:17,18  
7:6,7,14,16 8:14,21 9:13  
9:22 10:9,22 11:9 12:15  
13:4 16:21 17:11 19:22  
23:15,17 25:15,20 26:6  
29:24 30:13,25 31:3,8,9  
31:10 32:3  
**use** 2:10  
**U.S** 1:23,23 3:5 11:8  
14:15 19:3 24:19 25:16

---

**V**


---

**Van** 1:6 4:7  
**Vanda** 1:5 4:6  
**variety** 28:4  
**various** 9:11 10:3 11:10  
**vastly** 24:13  
**verse** 28:13,15,21  
**vest** 29:15

**vested** 29:23  
**veteran** 10:12,17,19,24,25  
**veterans** 10:8,23 11:9,14  
12:13 15:13 16:4,4,10  
16:15,22 17:11 26:15  
27:8,11  
**video** 25:1,5  
**videotape** 9:17  
**Vietnam** 25:16  
**view** 22:12  
**vote** 18:22,22 22:23 24:9

---

**W**


---

**W** 1:16 2:4  
**walk** 21:23,23  
**want** 9:24,24 12:14,20  
17:12 18:5 19:7 20:19  
24:16 26:10,13 27:3,5  
27:13,16 29:21,21  
**wanted** 10:4,10 17:22  
18:2  
**wanting** 31:4  
**war** 2:22,25 3:5,7 10:12  
10:14,17 12:22,23 13:2  
13:25 15:8 25:16 27:8  
27:10,10,11  
**wars** 10:8 11:14 16:5  
**Washington** 11:24  
**way** 14:3  
**ways** 21:5 30:14  
**welcome** 2:7 9:25 10:15  
10:25 12:5,14 13:6  
17:21 20:19 26:22  
27:18 30:11  
**welcoming** 8:13 15:22  
26:21 27:1,12  
**went** 25:5  
**Wes** 11:17  
**we're** 9:5 21:6 22:15 23:8  
**We've** 21:7

**whine** 14:9  
**who's** 23:13  
**wife** 11:3,4 13:7 18:21  
22:22  
**wilderness** 28:25  
**William** 10:19 25:4  
**willing** 13:12  
**wish** 10:7 11:25 13:10  
16:5,12 17:19 20:19  
30:11  
**wishes** 24:21  
**Wolcott** 1:24  
**woman** 30:1  
**women** 2:18  
**won** 14:23  
**wonderful** 19:6  
**words** 15:7 23:15 28:15  
29:11,13  
**work** 7:19,21 20:14,15,24  
21:23 22:19 23:15  
24:17

**worked** 20:18  
**workout** 18:10  
**works** 22:20  
**world** 2:16,22,25 3:7  
10:12,14,17 12:22 24:5  
27:8,10,11,24 29:12  
31:7  
**worthy** 29:9  
**wounded** 2:21  
**written** 28:14  
**wrote** 13:5,15 18:18 25:6  
**Wyoming** 1:1,9,21,24 2:3  
3:12,16,22 12:13 25:8  
25:20 26:5 32:4

---

**Y**


---

**ye** 2:2,2,2  
**year** 20:6 22:21 26:16  
**years** 20:21 22:15,15 25:7  
25:12 26:17 27:6,17  
28:7 29:7 30:5,6  
**young** 13:3,15,18 14:21  
**you'll** 15:6,11 18:9 23:8  
**you're** 9:25 17:21 18:25  
21:17 22:11,17,23 23:7  
23:7,19,20 24:6,7 26:18  
**you've** 14:23 15:23 20:18  
27:6,9

---

**Z**


---

**zeal** 26:22

---

**1**


---

**100** 22:15  
**11.17.11** 32:7  
**111** 1:24  
**12** 23:22  
**17** 26:16 27:6 30:6  
**1944** 3:2  
**1994** 25:9

---

**2**


---

**2011** 1:6 25:2  
**21** 1:6  
**217** 1:24  
**22<sup>nd</sup>** 26:3  
**22211** 1:21  
**23** 3:15  
**235** 28:7 29:7  
**240** 20:21 22:14,15  
**265-5280** 1:25  
**29** 3:2

---

**3**


---

**3:30** 1:6 2:1  
**307** 1:25

---

**4**


---

**4:42** 1:6 31:15  
**46,747** 2:20

---

**6**


---

**6,285** 2:18

---

**7**


---

**70** 13:8  
**73,000** 3:8  
**79,000** 3:7

---

**8**


---

**82601** 1:24  
**82602** 1:21