

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF WYOMING

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IN THE MATTER OF THE  
NATURALIZATION AND GRANTING  
OF UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP  
TO: Cheyenne, Wyoming  
November 18, 2019  
1:24 p.m.  
South High School

IRENE CHECA-GARCIA, SYLVIE LIM,  
JORGE LAOS, CARLA PADILLA SANCHEZ,  
ENGIN DONMEZ, POOJA GUPTA, SONG HUANG,  
SHAO LI, LIVIA PAMPU, EUSEBIO  
HUEITRA, MARINA ASBEL, ISIELI VEI,  
CYNING MEADOWCROFT, KATERYNA  
TROFIMOVA, PRINCIKA KC,  
ROSALINE TAH, RIYAD SAIF,

Petitioners.

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TRANSCRIPT OF HEARING ON PETITIONS FOR  
UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND NATURALIZATION CEREMONY

BEFORE THE HONORABLE NANCY D. FREUDENTHAL  
United States District Judge, Presiding  
THE HONORABLE ALAN B. JOHNSON  
United States District Judge  
THE HONORABLE KELLY H. RANKIN  
Chief United States Magistrate Judge  
THE HONORABLE KATHLEEN D. PARKER  
Chief United States Bankruptcy Judge

APPEARANCES:

For the United States: JEREMY GROSS  
Assistant United States Attorney  
DISTRICT OF WYOMING  
2120 Capitol Avenue, Suite 4000  
P.O. Box 668  
Cheyenne, WY 82003-0668

Court Reporter: MONIQUE GENTRY, RPR, CSR  
Federal Official Court Reporter  
2120 Capitol Avenue, Room 2228  
Cheyenne, WY 82001  
(307)274-4661/mkg.gentry@gmail.com

(Proceedings commenced 1:44 p.m., November 18, 2019.)

(Presentation of colors.)

(The Star-Spangled Banner.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you. Please be seated.

Welcome to everyone attending our naturalization ceremony. A particular welcome to the new citizens who will take the nationalization oath today.

A few introductions, reminders and another big thank you. Thank you very much to South High School for accommodating Federal Court today for this naturalization ceremony. I would like to thank South and East High ROTC and the commanding officers for their color guard presentation, and the South High Choir and choir director for The Star-Spangled Banner production, as well as the production later on in the program. We so appreciate being here in our community for the nationalization ceremony. I appreciate the students taking time out of their busy day to be here to welcome the new citizens and to watch an official government ceremony. Thank you all.

In terms of introduction, let me start here at the table to my left, as previously introduced, Judge Alan Johnson, U.S. District Court for the District of Wyoming. To my right is Chief Bankruptcy Judge Casey Parker who presides not only here in Wyoming, but is a cooperating judge in the District of Colorado, as well as a service judge when called upon in the

District of Utah. My name is Nancy Freudenthal, and I will be presiding over the ceremony today.

We have a representative of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Office in Denver, Colorado, Carolyn Sweeney. Are you here? There you are. Thank you very much for being here and representing that office and helping us through these proceedings.

Because this is Federal Court Session, our general rules normally apply. We are waiving those in terms of cameras and the accompanying photographs. We encourage people to feel free to take photographs of the ceremony today. I will be introducing other people here at the tables.

Maggie Botkins, our Clerk of Court who opened court today for us. Thank you very much, Maggie.

At this time, I will call upon Jeremy Gross, Assistant U.S. Attorney, to do the role call of citizens to be naturalized and to make the motion.

MR. GROSS: Thank you, Your Honor. I am here today appearing as a representative of the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Wyoming, and as a proxy for the Attorney General of the United States, William Barr.

It is my privilege to introduce to the Court the following individuals who appear in person for a hearing on their petitions for naturalization as United States citizens.

Irene Checa-Garcia, a native and former inhabitant of

Spain; Sylvie Lim, a native and former inhabitant of Taiwan; Jorge Laos, a native and former inhabitant of Peru; Carla Sanchez, a native and former inhabitant of Mexico; Engin Donmez, a native and former inhabitant of Turkey; Pooja Gupta, a native and former inhabitant of India; Song Huang, a native and former inhabitant of China; Shao Li, a native and former inhabitant of China; Livia Pampu, a native and former inhabitant of Romania; Eusebio Hueitra, a native and former inhabitant of Chile; Marina Asbel, a native and former inhabitant of Russia; Isilei Vei, a native and former inhabitant of Tonga; Cyning Meadowcroft, a native and former inhabitant of the United Kingdom; Kateryna Trofimova, a native and former inhabitant of the Ukraine; Princika Kc, a native and former inhabitant of Nepal; Rosaline Tah, a native and former inhabitant of Cameroon; Riyad Saif, a native and former inhabitant of Yemen.

Each of these individuals has been interviewed and examined under oath by a designated examiner for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services who has also completed their character and background investigation.

Immigration Services indicates that each of these individuals has met all requirements for naturalization and are each well-qualified candidates for United States citizenship.

As a fellow citizen of the United States, I want to welcome and congratulate each of these petitioners on this very

special occasion.

At this time, Your Honor, it is my distinct honor to move that each of these petitioners be granted United States citizenship upon taking the oath.

(Applause.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you, Mr. Gross.

At this time, I would ask the new citizens to stand for the administration of the oath. I encourage those in the audience to follow along. The oath is on the back side of this three-page booklet.

Please, repeat after me: I, state your name, hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, or potentate, state or sovereignty, of whom or which, I have heretofore been a subject or citizen. That I will support and defend the Constitution and Laws of the United States of America, against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms, on behalf of the United States, when required by law; that I will perform noncombatant services in the armed forces of the United States when required by law; that I will perform work of national importance under civil direction when required by the law; and that I will take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of the evasion, so help me God.

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Let's all give our new citizens a round of applause.

(Applause.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: As part of this ceremony this will be the first time these new citizens have taken the Pledge of Allegiance. I ask all of us to please stand to join with them in the Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Please be seated.

At this time, it is my pleasure to introduce our speaker today, Secretary of State Ed Buchanan. I hope he will forgive me if I either refer to him as Representative or Mr. Speaker. He truly is a public servant having served in those capacities as well as in the armed forces of the United States and as a lawyer serving and having pledged to uphold and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Wyoming, but let me begin with his more formal biography.

Secretary Buchanan grew up in Goshen County, Wyoming, on his family's farm and ranch on Raw Hide Creek. He received a bachelor's degree in political science, and was commissioned in United States Air Force and served as an intelligence briefer for senior command.

While in uniform, he received a master's degree in public administration from the University of Colorado. Upon

his return to civilian life, Secretary began and attended UW College of Law, where he was awarded a place on the Board of Advocates. Mr. Secretary returned to Goshen County upon graduation where he started and grew a successful law practice in Torrington.

In 2002, our Secretary of State was elected to the Wyoming House of Representatives, and he represented Goshen County for 10 years while continuing to run his law practice in Torrington. That is no easy feat.

During his tenure in the legislature, he served as Chairman of the Judiciary, as Majority Floor Leader and, ultimately, as Wyoming Speaker of the House, the highest position in the House of Representatives.

Secretary Buchanan enjoys time with his wife and four children. He remains actively involved in the community. He decided to abandon his time in the legislative branch and join the executive branch. When he was appointed, first, by Governor Mead on March 1, 2018, he ran for statewide office and was elected. He served in that capacity as State's Chief Elections Officer, State's Chief Security Commissioner and the Head of Corporations and Administration and Notary Public Commissioner. The Secretary of State chairs the State Candidacy Board. He, along with the Governor and the other elected officials, serve on many other important state boards and commissions, including the State Loan and Investment Board,

the Board of Land Commissioners and the State Building Commission.

I very much appreciate your willingness to speak to our new citizens, Secretary Buchanan.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY BUCHANAN: Thank you for the privilege of speaking to you today, and special thanks to Judge Freudenthal and Judge Johnson and Judge Parker. It is an honor and privilege to be asked to be here today, because this is a rather momentous occasion and appearing before you, a new group of dedicated and patriotic citizens, so congratulations to you.

I want to first start by saying how much I appreciate the effort and the commitment that each of you have shown in deciding to become citizens of the United States of America. You know, citizenship is an honor that is beyond words. It is really something that is hard to describe. I don't think many stop to consider the true honor, the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship, but I know that you are not among those, and never will be for you have committed a considerable amount of time and effort to go through the legal and prescribed process to become United States Citizens, and you are to be applauded for that.

Many natural born citizens of this country do not take the time, I feel, to stop and truly marvel and wonder at the blessings and liberties, the rights and the



responsibilities that come with citizenship. These are derived, as you know, from our United States Constitution from the contemplative founders of this country, protected by the brave men and women who volunteer to serve in our armed forces.

It is in the spirit of the founding of this country that you have taken the steps to enjoy the benefits of citizenship; that you would take an oath and follow in the tradition of many past Americans pledging to dedicate your lives to defend this nation if called upon is exactly what our founders imagined. They imagined a citizenry who would respect their fellow citizens, work to uphold the laws of this country and build upon the success of every citizen who came before them.

I am sincerely touched by the dedication that you have shown in taking the oath today and to your understanding that now you will enjoy the greatest that the world has to offer: Freedoms of assembly, religion and speech; the right to due process and fair trials; the ability to vote and to hold elected office.

You are now shining examples to your fellow citizens, to each other and perhaps, most importantly, to your children. Many will look to you and will admire your tenacity and your patriotism.

And in your future endeavors, I have a few requests for you: Hold this nation and its values close to your heart.

Cherish each day in this land of freedom. Take pride in being an American and be patriotic. Thank the veterans that you might come into contact with from time to time who keep us free, and always remember those that have given their very lives to protect that which you will now enjoy and that which we all enjoy as Americans. Contribute to your communities and be charitable. Be kind and faithful to your fellow citizens.

I sum that up with the words of the 35th President of the United States, John F. Kennedy who once famously asked, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country."

Further, I ask that you be involved; Civically, you be involved. In my position as Wyoming Secretary of State, I act as Wyoming's Chief Elections Official. I take pride in that responsibility. My office works tirelessly to ensure fair and free elections so that all citizens may participate in the future of this great nation. But sadly, many do not participate. Many fail to fulfill their civic duty as citizens.

So with that in mind, I request of you to become informed and to vote and to vote with pride and a sense of purpose. Elections are the foundation of our democracy. They allow us to sustain a republican form of government where each person has a voice and may express that voice without fear of intimidation or harassment.

And, finally, I would say to you that I am proud of each one of you. And as a veteran and as a citizen of the United States of America, it has been my sincerest honor to address you today, my fellow Americans. Thank you.

(Applause.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

At this time, I would invite my fellow judges as well as Secretary Buchanan, if you would like to join us, in front of the table, to welcome the citizens individually. We have some certificates for them. They will receive quite a bit today.

As always, a very enjoyable experience, and you are certainly welcome.

(Presentation of the certificates.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: And from here, I would like to recommend our patriotic and service organizations, as well as representatives of our congressional delegations, Senator Enzi and Senator Barrasso, Representative Cheney's office, they have some additional materials and handouts and letters for our new citizens.

As the presentations are being made, let me identify our patriotic organizations who join us at every naturalization ceremony.

We have the American Legion No. 6 Auxiliary, Colonial Dames of America, the Colonial Dames of the 17th Century; the

Daughters of the American Revolution, League of Women Voters, Veterans of Foreign Wars 1881 Auxiliary and the Veterans of Foreign Wars 4343 Auxiliary. As I indicated, we have our congressional delegation's offices representatives and letters from those individuals.

Let's give our citizens another round of applause.

(Applause.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Now, we are happy to show the President's message to our new citizens.

(President's message.)

(Applause.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Let's welcome back the South High School Choir under the direction of Janet Wiserbooke for the song, "My Country."

(My Country performance.)

(Applause.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: Thank you, again, Ms. Wiserbrooke, and thank you to the members of the choir. That was lovely.

It is my privilege on behalf of the Court to offer some closing comments. So let me begin with everyone's beginning, which is: Welcome to our Country. Welcome to my fellow Americans. Congratulations. This process has been long, difficult, long-awaited, but you have a wonderful journey ahead of yourselves.

For indeed, you have come to our country at a time of great opportunity. You have the opportunity here in our country to teach and to learn. Please, teach us to remember that a country is only as good as its citizens, and that we have as much to learn from you, as you may learn from us. We can learn about your practices, culture, traditions and ways of life. Through you, we indeed are enriched, as is our country's national diverse culture.

Some people call our country a melting pot, others a large mosaic. Justice Sonia Sotomayor referred to it as a mixed salad, which I think is a nice metaphor for our country. We have our individual identities, radishes, tomatoes, lettuce and onion, but we blend together and make more than individually.

You also have the opportunity to speak and listen through your voices. We can remember that we live in a representative democracy. The quote, "We, the People," which begins the preamble to the United States Constitution is not a limiting phrase. It doesn't describe a people of a particular race, gender or nationality or age or history or culture or type.

Fortunately, our naturalization process is no longer limited to quote, We, white people, as it was in the original law passed in 1790. We welcome men, women and children, as I mentioned, from every race, gender and country.

Our Immigration and Naturalization History is far from perfect, but we can, with your help, by you joining with us speaking and voting. Continue to strive to be the country where the test for naturalization is love, devotion and service to our country and Constitution, not fear or hatred for those some may consider different or less desirable.

We have here a mixed salad in the form of 18 new United States Citizens who renounced their commitment and service to 15 countries and joined with us to embrace our country. Thank you.

You also have the opportunity to work to make our representative democracy reflect what Abraham Lincoln referred to as "The better angels of our nature."

During an even more divided time in our country than today, President Lincoln observed, "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may be strained, it must not break our bond of affection."

I encourage you each to consider the oath today, and for those of who you were lucky to be born here, re-reveal the considerate of the bond of affection for our country which has extended its hand of friendship and welcome back to you.

Finally, you have the opportunity to welcome and encourage others like you to undertake this long process by your contributions and presence in our country. You help us all remember that we are not a country which picks up its

welcome mat and closes the door after every Naturalization Ceremony. You each can help us remember to live and speak the words at the base of the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe freely. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

I encourage each of you and all of us today to remember that we are very, very fortunate to live in a country that has a golden door, a door lit by the Lamp of Liberty, preserved by the lives given and lost by our military, and cherished by those people, people in every respect who were born here and those who chose America as naturalized citizens.

Let us all reflect friendship, respect and service so that our words and actions might diminish those who would otherwise tarnish or close our wonderful golden door.

Again, congratulations to each of you; a job well done. Thank you for your devotion and your choice of America as your home. You have spectacular opportunities ahead of you. Explore the choice and chance to make the most of it. Thank you.

(Applause.)

JUDGE FREUDENTHAL: I would like to announce that we have refreshments down the hall in Room 106. My notes say it is out the side door and down the hall. I have no idea which

side door, so good luck to you in trying to find Room 106. I am hoping someone would direct us all.

Speaking on behalf of my fellow judges, we are often in a hurry, but we are happy to join you if you want photos up here with any of us. We have the United States flag. We had one earlier, but it was taken at the colors. We still have one up here. We would like to, again, welcome you on an individual base.

With that, is there anything else for business by the Court?

I think we will stand in recess subject to call.

(Applause.)

(Proceedings concluded at 2:27 p.m.; November 18, 2019.)



