

Administration of Donald J. Trump, 2019

Remarks at a Naturalization Ceremony

January 19, 2019

The President. Well, I might begin by saying that, to the best of our knowledge—it goes back a long way—this is the first such swearing-in that we've ever had in the great Oval Office. So that's a pretty big honor right there. That's pretty good. Now, they may find something back a hundred years ago, I don't know. But we looked, and we couldn't find it. So—and please, sit down. Please.

Secretary Nielsen, thank you very much.

Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen. Absolutely.

The President. I really appreciate it. And I am truly thrilled to welcome the five newest members of our great American family. That's what you are, an American family. Right? [Applause] Thank you very much. Congratulations.

You are now officially United States citizens. You have just earned the most prized possession anywhere in the world. We know that. There is no higher honor or greater privilege than becoming an American citizen. Our whole Nation embraces you with open arms and joyful hearts. And I know that you will treasure this day forever. And it's my honor to be with you, I will say that.

Each of you worked hard for this moment. You followed the rules, upheld our laws, and contributed to the strength and success and vitality of our Nation. Now each of you stands here today, before your proud and beaming families—look at those families, huh?—in the Oval Office of the White House, a very special place. I look, and sometimes, I say, "Wow, this is it." Right? The Oval Office. So congratulations.

I'd like to share a few brief words about each of our new citizens. Estabraq Adel Al Sayyad came with her husband to the United States—please. That's a good idea. I wasn't going to do that, but I like that. Please. [Laughter]

Secretary Nielsen. All of you, stand up please.

The President. That's very nice. With her husband to the United States from Iraq in 2013. She is the proud mother of two children and is expecting a third. Since coming to America, she has become a teacher's assistant in our public schools—doing a fantastic job, I might add—preparing the next generation of young Americans to make the most of this magnificent country that she, too, now enjoys. And I want to just congratulate you, Estabraq. Thank you.

Matthew Hemsley is from the United Kingdom. Thank you, Matthew. He is an Anglican pastor who came to the United States in 2006 and earned a master's degree from Gordon Conwell Seminary in North Carolina. Fine place. His grandmother was an American citizen whose ancestors first came to North America in 1637—that means you beat us—[laughter]—you beat all of us—as part of the Plymouth Colony. Now the Hemsley family history of the United States is renewed, and the next chapter of their American story begins. Matthew, it's an honor. Great luck. Great luck.

Yookyoung Choi is from South Korea and came to the United States in 1992 to pursue a master's degree. She earned a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland and is now a professor at

Azusa Pacific University. Her husband teaches statistics at George Mason, and—it's a great school too, by the way—and they are proud parents of two sons. I want to congratulate you, and you're going to have a great time. Great time. Thank you very much. We really appreciate it. Appreciate you being a member of the family. Thank you.

Robert Castle is from Jamaica, and he immigrated to the United States in 2009 as the husband of a then–Active Duty servicemember of the United States Army. Robert is a warehouse supervisor—a strong guy, a smart guy—and they have a beautiful 4-year-old son who was born here in the United States. Robert, congratulations. Thank you.

Marcelo Ramos Ramirez is from Bolivia and has—a beautiful, lawful permanent resident of the United States and has been since 2013. He is the co-owner of a staffing company with his son Marcio. The business is thriving. He's doing really well. And it's expanding in all different ways. He says, "I know that in the [United States] you can achieve anything that you want, and I am a perfect example." In another words, he's making a lot of money. *[Laughter]* Marcelo, thank you very much. Thank you. Congratulations.

You're all at the beginning of a new and extraordinary adventure. With the rights and freedoms you enjoy as Americans, there is nothing you cannot achieve. But citizenship is also a profound responsibility. Each year, over 700,000 new Americans take the oath and allegiance, and inherit a legacy of liberty and justice that generations of Americans fought and died to secure.

By taking this oath, you have forged a sacred bond with this Nation, its traditions, its culture, and its values. This heritage is now yours to protect, promote, and pass down to the next generation and to the next wave of newcomers to our shores. Our history is now your history. Our traditions are now your traditions. And our Constitution is now yours to safeguard, celebrate, and cherish.

As Americans and American citizens, we are bound together in love and loyalty and friendship and affection. We must look out for each other, care for each other, and always act in the best interests of our Nation and all citizens living here today. We love each other. We're proud of each other.

The beauty and majesty of citizenship is that it draws no distinctions of race or class or faith or gender or background. No matter where our story begins, whether we are the first generation or the tenth generation, we are all equal. We are one team and one people proudly saluting one great American flag.

Again, I want to congratulate you and welcome you to the family. It's a family. It's a beautiful family. It's a family doing very well. We're setting records economically. Our economy is the hottest in the world, and it's continuing and continuing upward.

Our unemployment is the best it's been in more than 50 years. And for certain individuals, it's the best it's ever been, historically. It will probably soon be now for everybody. It's an honor to have you. God bless you. God bless America. Congratulations. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:18 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

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