

say, you got to pay a fine for being here illegally. You've got to learn the English language. In other words, you got to pay—repay a debt to society and learn the skills necessary to assimilate into our society. Show us you've been working hard. In other words, there's a way to verify your contributions to our society. And then, if you want to be a citizen, you can get in line to be a citizen, but not at the head of the line—you get to get at the back of the line.

And to me, that is a humane, decent way of addressing a very difficult problem that Congress is going to have to wrestle with. I believe we ought to differentiate between those who've been here for a long period of time and those who are newly arrived. I know we need to treat people with respect and dignity. I think the best way to assure the American people that we're a nation of laws and a compassionate nation at the same time is to say, "Pay your debt to society, and if you choose to be a citizen, you can; just you wait in line at the back, not in the beginning."

See, there are lines for people who want to become a citizen, and they're based upon nationality. And Congress can determine the length of the line if they want. If the line is too long for Irish people or people from different countries or Mexicans, then increase the number of green cards. If the people are worried about the number of citizens all of a sudden becoming eligible for citizenship, you can decrease the number of green cards. But in the meantime, we need to treat people with respect.

This is a tough debate for America; it really is. It's a tough debate because it's one in which the language can sometimes send the wrong signals about what we're about. People are very emotional about this issue. And my admonition to people who are concerned about the immigration debate is to remember that language can send signals about who we are as a nation, that harsh, ugly rhetoric on the debate tends to divide our country. It tends to forget the values that have made us great.

The values that made us great is that we're a nation that have been united by common ideals, proud of our history, proud of our flag, understanding of the need to have a common language, and at the same time, a society

whose soul has been uplifted constantly by the fact that people have come to our country to realize a dream—the dream of working hard and improving their lot in life, the dream of putting food on the table, and at the same time, hoping the child goes to college, the dream of owning their own businesses. That's uniquely American. It enables me to say to the American people that "one Nation under God" means something. And we must never lose that spirit.

For people in Washington, DC, now's the time to get something done. It's important for our elected leaders to understand, if you're going to address the issue of immigration, you've got to address all aspects of the immigration. It's got to be a comprehensive bill if we want there to be an effective bill.

People say, "Well, you know, Mr. President, it looks impossible that something's going to happen." I disagree. American people want something to happen. They expect us as people elected to office to work together to get something done in a positive way. That's what they expect of us. And I'm going to continue traveling this country reminding the people that we have got an opportunity to put together a comprehensive package to reform the system to make it work, a system that will enforce our border and a system that will reinforce our values.

I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come and talk to you about this important issue. I'm really glad to be back in Omaha, Nebraska. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:32 a.m. in the Metropolitan Community College—South Omaha Campus. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Dave Heineman of Nebraska and his wife, Sally; and Jo Ann C. "Jody" McDowell, president, and Heather Fowler, student ex officio, Metropolitan Community College.

Executive Order 13404—Task Force on New Americans

June 7, 2006

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to strengthen the efforts of the Department of

Homeland Security and Federal, State, and local agencies to help legal immigrants embrace the common core of American civic culture, learn our common language, and fully become Americans, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. The Secretary of Homeland Security (Secretary) shall immediately establish within the Department of Homeland Security (Department) a Task Force on New Americans (Task Force).

Sec. 2. Membership and Operation. (a) The Task Force shall be limited to the following members or employees designated by them at no lower than the Assistant Secretary level or its equivalent:

- (i) the Secretary of Homeland Security, who shall serve as Chair;
- (ii) the Secretary of State;
- (iii) the Secretary of the Treasury;
- (iv) the Secretary of Defense;
- (v) the Attorney General;
- (vi) the Secretary of Agriculture;
- (vii) the Secretary of Commerce;
- (viii) the Secretary of Labor;
- (ix) the Secretary of Health and Human Services;
- (x) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development;
- (xi) the Secretary of Education;
- (xii) such other officers or employees of the Department of Homeland Security as the Secretary may from time to time designate; and

(xiii) such other officers of the United States as the Secretary may designate from time to time, with the concurrence of the respective heads of departments and agencies concerned.

(b) The Secretary shall convene and preside at meetings of the Task Force, direct its work, and as appropriate, establish and direct subgroups of the Task Force that shall consist exclusively of Task Force members. The Secretary shall designate an official of the Department to serve as the Executive Secretary of the Task Force, and the Executive Secretary shall head the staff assigned to the Task Force.

Sec. 3. Functions. Consistent with applicable law, the Task Force shall:

(a) provide direction to executive departments and agencies (agencies) concerning

the integration into American society of America's legal immigrants, particularly through instruction in English, civics, and history;

(b) promote public-private partnerships that will encourage businesses to offer English and civics education to workers;

(c) identify ways to expand English and civics instruction for legal immigrants, including through faith-based, community, and other groups, and ways to promote volunteer community service; and

(d) make recommendations to the President, through the Secretary, from time to time regarding:

(i) actions to enhance cooperation among agencies on the integration of legal immigrants into American society;

(ii) actions to enhance cooperation among Federal, State, and local authorities responsible for the integration of legal immigrants;

(iii) changes in rules, regulations, or policy to improve the effective integration of legal immigrants into American society; and

(iv) proposed legislation relating to the integration of legal immigrants into American society.

Sec. 4. Administration. (a) To the extent permitted by law, the Department shall provide the funding and administrative support the Task Force needs to implement this order, as determined by the Secretary.

(b) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) authority granted by law to an agency or the head thereof; or

(ii) functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(c) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(d) This order is intended to improve the internal management of the Federal Government. This order is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity against the United States, its departments,

agencies, entities, instrumentalities, officers, employees, agents, or any other person.

George W. Bush

The White House,
June 7, 2006.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., June 9, 2006]

NOTE: This Executive order will be published in the *Federal Register* on June 12.

Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for Dirk Kempthorne as Secretary of the Interior

June 7, 2006

Thank you all. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. Laura and I are thrilled you are here to witness the swearing-in of Dirk Kempthorne as our Nation's 49th Secretary of the Interior.

We welcome Dirk's family, particularly his wife, Patricia, and his children, Heather and Jeff. Thank you all for being here. I'm really happy Dirk's dad, Jim, is with us. I sure appreciate you being here, Mr. Kempthorne. I want to thank all the other friends of the Kempthorne family and members of the family who have joined us here today.

I found it interesting that when Dirk and Patricia were married, they chose a wedding ceremony at sunrise high atop Idaho's Moscow Mountain. It's an interesting commitment to make, isn't it? [*Laughter*] And an interesting place to make the commitment. It shows a love of—Dirk's love for his wife and their mutual love for nature. And one of the reasons I picked Dirk Kempthorne is because of his love of the beautiful country that we are fortunate to call America. That's why I picked him.

I want to appreciate the Vice President joining us today. Mr. Vice President, welcome. Thank you for being here, sir. I want to thank Justice Scalia for joining us, to administer the oath of office.

Dirk, you must be given a lot of these, kind of, swearing-in ceremonies, and we generally don't have a man of such esteem join us in a situation like this. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate Lynn Scarlett, the Deputy Secretary of the Interior, joining us, as well as all those who work for the Secretary of the Interior. I want to thank members of my Cabinet for being here. Thank you all for coming. Appreciate you taking time out of your day to be here, and I know Dirk does as well. I appreciate Members of the United States Senate who join us, starting with the Senate President pro tem, Ted Stevens. Thank you, Senator, proud you're here; as well as the two Senators from Idaho, Larry Craig and Mike Crapo. Thank you both for joining us. We have the House majority whip with us, Roy Blunt. I see former colleagues of Dirk Kempthorne have joined us as well. Thank you all for coming.

We have the privilege of living in a land of unparalleled beauty. We've got vast mountain ranges and mighty rivers and open plains and spectacular coastlines. These open spaces are shared—are the shared heritage of everybody. They just don't belong to a few people; they belong to all of us. It's the job of the Secretary of the Interior to manage these natural resources in such a way that we can pass them on to future generations, in good shape. That's Dirk's job. There's no doubt in my mind he'll be able to do it well.

Dirk Kempthorne is uniquely qualified for this important position. He is the first Secretary of the Interior to serve as a Governor, a Senator, and a mayor. And each of these positions prepared Dirk well for his new responsibilities.

As Governor of Idaho, Dirk was responsible for managing Idaho's 30 State parks and recreational trails. He proved himself to be an outstanding steward of his State's open spaces. He launched a statewide initiative to fund improvements in the State's parks and public spaces. He created the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. He established the Governor's Office of Species Conservation. He's a true conservationist, with a track record to prove it.

As a United States Senator, Dirk chaired the Subcommittee on Drinking Water, Fisheries, and Wildlife, and built bipartisan support to enact comprehensive reforms to the Safe Drinking Water Act.

As a former mayor of Boise, Dirk understands that those who live closest to the land