

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AMERICANISM

LESSON 03 SESSION 02

2.1.3 Naturalization

Under the Articles of Confederation, the power of naturalization was in the States, thereby creating confusion through the lack of uniformity in conferring citizenship.

The authority for naturalization is to be found in the Constitution and Federal laws.

*“The Constitution has accordingly, with great propriety * * * authorized the General Government to establish a uniform rule of naturalization throughout the United States.”* — Madison.

Constitution, Article I, Sect. 8, Para. 4; Fourteenth Amendment. Naturalization Laws.

Under the Constitution two methods of naturalization have grown up:

- (1) By the general act of Congress conferring citizenship upon a whole class of persons, such as tribes of Indians, and the inhabitants of a new territory, like Hawaii, acquired by the United States.
- (2) The general and more usual method is prescribed by the Revised Statutes, which requires the fulfillment of certain conditions before final admission into citizenship.

Oath renouncing foreign allegiance and to support constitution and laws. — He shall, before he is admitted to citizenship, declare on oath in open court that he will support the Constitution of the United States, and that he absolutely and entirely renounces and abjures all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, State, or sovereignty, and particularly by name to the prince, potentate, State, or sovereignty of which he was before a citizen or subject; that he will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and bear true faith and allegiance to the same. — *June 29, 1906, ch. 3592, sec. 4. 34 Stat. 596.*

Evidence of residence, character, and attachments to principles of Constitution; evidence of witnesses. — It shall be made to appear to the satisfaction of the court admitting any alien to citizenship that immediately preceding the date of his application he has resided continuously within the United States, five years at least, and within the State or Territory where such court is at the time held one year at

least, and that during that time he has behaved as a man of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well-disposed to the good order and happiness of the same.

In addition to the oath of the applicant, the testimony of at least two witnesses, citizens of the United States, as to the facts of residence, moral character, and attachment to the principles of the Constitution shall be required, and the name, place of residence, and occupation of each witness shall be set forth in the record. — *June 29, 1906, ch. 3592, sec. 4, 34 Stat. 596.*

2.1.4 No dual allegiance.

Every alien should become a citizen in order that he may vote and hold office, and in all ways take an active part in developing, building and maintaining the Government — national and local — that protects him.

There can be no divided allegiance here. Any man who says he is an American, but something else also, isn't an American at all. We have room for but one flag, the American flag, and this excludes the red flag, which symbolizes all wars against liberty and civilization, just as much as it excludes any foreign flag of a nation to which we are hostile.

“We have room for one sole loyalty and that is loyalty to the American people.” - Roosevelt.

Dual citizenship. — The Supreme Court declares that there are two kinds of citizenship, State and National. Citizens of the United States residing in any State enjoy the rights of both State and United States citizenship.

In the protection thereof we look to the National Government if the source of such rights lies in the Constitution and laws of the United States; and to the State government if such rights are based upon the constitution and laws of the State.

Dual citizenship does not imply a divided allegiance. While a State commands allegiance of its citizens the paramount allegiance is to the Union.

Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable. — Webster.

2.1.5 Right of suffrage.

Under the Constitution, the National Government confers American citizenship, but it is left to the States to determine who may vote at both its own and national elections. — Constitution, Article I, section 8, paragraph 4; fourteenth and fifteenth amendments.

In America public opinion is the ultimate force of Government. It is the expression of the mind and conscience of the whole Nation, without respect to sectional or partisan alliances.

Under the Constitution, voting is the only means provided for the expression of public opinion — it is the exercise of the will of the citizen in the protection of his rights.

2.1.6 Guaranties as to person and property.

The United States is composed of 50 sovereign States, each State having its individual constitution and laws. Yet no State may discriminate against the rights and privileges of the citizen of any other State as to person or property. Among these guaranties are:

- Opportunity for education and individual improvement.
- Unrestricted possession of property.
- Joint rights to interstate commerce, communication, and transportation. Public utilities.
- Freedom of residence and choice of occupation.
- Care or protection on the high seas or abroad through passport privileges and international law.

2.1.7 Obligations of citizenship

Active citizenship is gained only by becoming an enfranchised citizen of a State. This carries with it the obligation of a clear understanding of the principles of government and the courage to demand that these principles be not abridged.

Andrew Jackson said that every good citizen makes his country's honor his own, and not only cherishes it as precious, but sacred.

Lincoln declared: *"I must stand by anybody that stands right; stand with him while he is right; and part with him when he is wrong."*

- It is essential that the individual citizen exercise his right of franchise — vote — as his paramount duty at all elections.
- Uphold the Constitution as the one assurance of the security and perpetuation of the free institutions of America.
- Practice self-government to assure good government for all.
- Respect the rights of others, to assure the enjoyment of his own.
- Contribute to the maintenance of his Government by the payment of taxes.
- Obey the law as the first essential to law enforcement. Place service to country above service to self. Conform his conduct to the best interests of society. The opportunities and privileges of the American citizen are limited only by his

individual ability, his personal habits, and conformity to necessary legal regulations. It is your obligation to exercise —

- Care in your choice of occupation. Diligence in preparation for your task. Thrift to insure advancement and prosperity. Judgment in selection of companions. Integrity, honor, initiative, self-reliance, self-control.

2.1.8 I am an American.

"I am an American" is a challenge to the highest ideals and aspirations of mankind; to self-sacrifice and devotion: to loyalty and patriotism; to joyful work and courageous achievement; to magnanimity and charity to all and malice to none; as we seek to uphold and perpetuate the principles of our great Republic.

I live an American; I shall die an American; and I intend to perform the duties incumbent upon me in that character to the end of my career. I mean to do this with absolute disregard of personal consequences. What are the personal consequences? What is the individual man, with all the good or evil which may betide him, in comparison with the good or evil which may befall a great country, and in the midst of great transactions which concern that country's fate? Let the consequences be what they will. I am careless No man can suffer too much, no man fall too soon, if he suffer, or if he fall ill the defense of the liberties and Constitution of his country — Daniel Webster.

In the days of the Caesars "I am a Roman citizen" was a proud exultant declaration. It was protection. It was more — it was honor and glory. Twenty centuries of advancing civilization have given to the declaration "I am an American" a higher and nobler place. It stands today in the forefront of earthly titles. It proclaims a sharing in the greatest opportunities. It is a trumpet call to the highest fidelity. It is the diploma of the world; the highest which humanity has to bestow" — Judge Brewer of the Supreme Court.