

*Excerpt of Remarks delivered by*

**Congressman Norman D. Dicks**

. . . . One of my fondest memories of Brigitte happened in 2003. She had mentioned to me during one of our meetings that she was determined to attain United States citizenship, and how much it meant to her. As a native of the Netherlands, she had lived in Japan and traveled throughout Asia, but it was her dream to become an American citizen. So when the time came, we had a little celebration to commemorate her citizenship oath in one of the more historic rooms of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington. It was a wonderful event, attended by several family members and many of the NBR Board members who were in Washington for meetings. After the oath, I recall the words Brigitte used as she spoke of how important it was to her and to her family that she adopted this country as her own, and how meaningful the words in the citizenship oath were to her. And following her remarks I will never forget the spontaneous comments that General Shalikashvili made, reflecting on how his family in Poland fled the Red Army and were able, eventually, to come to the United States. He nearly brought the room to tears when he told us how the words of that oath—pledging allegiance and committing to defend his newly-adopted nation—inspired him to join the Army and probably made him a better soldier. It was an emotional day, and I was very proud to have played a role in celebrating the decision that was so important to Brigitte.