

Theodore Roosevelt on Immigration and Assimilation

http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/documents/tt_excerpts_citizen.pdf

In the first place, we should insist that if the immigrant who comes here in good faith becomes an American and assimilates himself to us, he shall be treated on an exact equality with everyone else, for it is an outrage to discriminate against any such man because of creed, or birthplace, or origin. But this is predicated upon the person's becoming in every facet an American, and nothing but an American...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... We have room for but one language here, and that is the English language... And we have room for but one sole loyalty and that is a loyalty to the American people.

Assimilation Is American As expressed by President Theodore Roosevelt In the first place, we should insist that if the immigrant who comes here in good faith becomes an American and assimilates himself to us, he shall be treated on an exact equality with everyone else, for it is an outrage to discriminate against any such man because of creed, or birthplace, or origin. But this is predicated upon the person's becoming in every facet an American, and nothing but an American. If he tries to separate from the rest of America, then he isn't doing his part as an American. 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 but one language here, and that is the English language, for we intend to see that the crucible turns out people out as Americans, of American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polygot boarding house; and we have room for but one soul loyalty and that is a loyalty to the American people."

— from a January 3, 1919, letter to the President of the American Defense Society, in Theodore Roosevelt and His Time Shown in His Own Letters, Vol. II (edited by Joseph Bucklin Bishop; published by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920)