

society they have built works mainly for themselves. They have effectively run this country for decades, and their legacy is national division and national decline.

It is time to reclaim our revolutionary heritage and reassert the democracy of "We the People." To those who despair at the task ahead, I say the hour is not too late and the crisis is not too deep for the determined effort of a great people, and to those who feel forgotten and unheard, I say this is your time. Now we must stand together to renew the promise of our enduring revolution. We must put aside the tired orthodoxies of years past and forge a new politics of national renewal.

We must begin by acknowledging that GDP growth alone cannot be the measure of this Nation's greatness, and so it cannot be the only aim of this Nation's policy because our purpose is not to make a few people wealthy but to sustain a great democracy. We need not just a bigger economy but a better society. We need a society that offers rewarding work for every worker who wants it, wherever she is from, whatever degree he might have, whether their ambition is to start a business or to start a family. We need a society that will allow towns and neighborhoods to flourish across the great heartland of this country and not just in the megacities of the coasts. We need a society that puts American workers first, that prioritizes them over cheap goods from abroad and offers them the chance to better their station. All this we must fight for and more.

We need to repair the torn fabric of our common life. We need a politics that prioritizes strong marriages and encourages strong families, where children can know their parents and be nurtured by their love. We need strong schools and churches and co-ops because these are the things that make liberty possible, for liberty is more than selling or buying or the right to be left alone. Liberty is the ability to master our own fate and, as a free people, to set our own course. That is the promise of the American Revolution, and we will renew it for our day.

Washington has ignored the need for this renewal for too long. It has rested easy with the priorities of an earlier age. Now it must wake up and face the facts of this day. Now we must ask new questions, force new debates, articulate new priorities, and find new solutions to make the great American middle thrive again.

This is not the work of a day or a season. It is the work of a generation. We will make it the work of this generation and so do our part to see the success of liberty in our time.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

WELCOMING SENATOR HAWLEY OF MISSOURI

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I am glad to be joined by my good colleague Senator HAWLEY. He brings incredible depth to the issues we talked about. He grew up in Lexington, MO, I understand, in smalltown America. He was educated in some of the best schools in our country and had the great good fortune to be assigned as a John Roberts law clerk in the office of another John Roberts law clerk and the good judgment to convince her to marry him. He and Erin are a valuable asset to our State. They have two wonderful little boys. I have enjoyed the time we have had together and look forward to more time with JOSH and his family. He clearly thinks deeply about the issues that affect the country. He is focused on not only the present but the future. Those are all good things.

We have jointly had the opportunity to represent a State that is as diverse as any State in the country. I think a week, a month, a year in Missouri is probably the closest thing to that same period of time if you could somehow condense the entire United States into one place, where sometimes St. Louis is seen as the westernmost eastern city and Kansas City may be more like Denver than St. Louis. Northern Missouri is more like Iowa.

I would state to Senator GRASSLEY that when crossing the border there, you certainly can't tell when you cross from Missouri farmland into Iowa farmland and the small cities and small towns. The Bootheel, Delta South in character where JOSH and I live in Springfield has that northwest Arkansas-Oklahoma vitality that is different from anywhere else in our State. As we travel actively around our State, as we both do, I think we have a great sense of so much of what happens in the country. It is still the population center of America, if not the exact geographic center. Missouri is where the country comes together.

JOSH had an opportunity last year to talk to tens of thousands of Missourians about that and to communicate in other ways with millions of Missourians about that. I am glad he is here and glad to welcome him to the work we will be doing together. We won't agree every single day because if we did, I guess we could have just one Senator and give him two votes. But it gives us a chance to talk about the issues we face and what that means for our State but also what it means to the country.

I am delighted he has committed himself to public service. Missourians have now elected him to two statewide offices in less than 3 years, and they have expressed that confidence in him.

With great frequency, I run into students both JOSH and Erin had when they were both teaching at the Law School at the University of Missouri, and they always tell me Erin was the best teacher they ever had and often

tell me JOSHUA was the best teacher they ever had. They must not have had a class with Erin yet. But I am delighted that they are both part of the discussion that will lead America forward. I look forward to engaging in that discussion with them and partnering in the things we can find to do together and getting a chance to represent our strong, unique State that I think is ready to merge into a greater future, whether that is with all the healthcare and ag research we see happening, the GEOINT focus that is coming into our State because of the new NGA, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency facility being built there.

This is a time of great opportunity. I am glad to have the chance to share part of that opportunity and look at that future with my colleague JOSH HAWLEY and certainly want to join others in welcoming him officially to the Senate today as he makes his maiden speech to the Senate.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I want to join with my colleague, the senior Senator from Missouri, and congratulate the junior Senator from Missouri on some wonderful remarks.

I came into the Congress with Senator BLUNT from the House of Representatives over 20 years ago, which I guess makes us the old guys around here, but it warms my heart and gives me great hope for the future to see the caliber and the quality of people who are entering public life in the form of people like Senator HAWLEY.

He is somebody who not only brings great intellect, great passion, and great conviction, but he is a principled leader who is here for the right reasons and profoundly wants to make a difference for the future of this country. In his remarks, he touched upon the genius of our Founders, and that is that average Americans—working men and women in this country—have an opportunity to make a difference with their voices and with their votes by entering the public arena and being a part of our democracy. That is really what this is all about. That is what our work should be about every day, is empowering them to do a better job in raising their families and serving their communities.

I certainly look forward to continuing our work with the new Senator from Missouri and with the rest of our colleagues here as we embark upon that task. I hope we can be successful in restoring that vision our Founders had for what this country should be and in each day waking up and thinking about the fact that it is not about us; it is about what we do to secure a better and brighter future consistent with that brilliant past we have been so blessed by because of those who have come before and have been willing to enter public life and make a difference.

So thank you and congratulations to Senator HAWLEY. It is a great honor to

serve with you, and we look forward to working with you in the days and weeks and months ahead to serve the very people you talked about in your remarks.

NATIONAL MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

Mr. President, May is National Military Appreciation Month, a chance for us to honor the service of those who have kept our Nation free for 243 years.

For me, when I reflect on our military men and women, there are always two things in the forefront of my mind: my dad, Harold Thune, and the men and women of Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota and the South Dakota National Guard.

My father was a fighter pilot who flew Hellcats off the USS *Intrepid* in the Pacific theater during World War II. I came to know the “greatest generation” through my dad—their humility, their quiet service, their patriotism, and their deep dedication to the cause of freedom.

I have come to know the men and women of today’s military through Ellsworth and through South Dakota’s National Guard and the great work, the extraordinary work they do day in and day out, the professionalism, the skill, the talent, and the dedication they bring to the work of defending America and America’s freedoms.

Ellsworth has been on my mind in particular this week because right now the Air Force is conducting a large force exercise involving B-1 bombers, B-2s, B-52s, F-16s, C-17s, KC-135s, JSTARS and AWACS, and, for the first time, F-35s.

My acquaintance with Ellsworth began during my time as a Member of the House of Representatives, but I really got to know the base and what it meant to the Rapid City area shortly after I became a Senator.

Just a few months into my first term in the Senate, Ellsworth found itself targeted for closure by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. That summer of 2005 was a long one as we mobilized to protect the base. I don’t think I missed a BRAC hearing in DC that summer. It didn’t matter whether Ellsworth was on the agenda; I wanted to be there in case the chance to advocate for Ellsworth arose.

Thanks to the efforts of a lot of dedicated people, we were victorious. We demonstrated to the Commission that Ellsworth was a vital national security asset and that moving the B-1 fleet from Ellsworth would actually cost money. We also made the case that the United States shouldn’t put all of its eggs in one basket, that it shouldn’t consolidate all of its assets in one location.

By August, we had succeeded in having Ellsworth removed from the closure list. Since then, the congressional delegation, Ellsworth, and community leaders have worked hard to build up the base so that we never again find ourselves in that same position. In 2007, we saw the Air Force Financial Services Center open at Ellsworth. In

2011, we saw the arrival of the 89th Attack Squadron and its command and control stations for MQ-9 Reapers. In 2015, a decade-long mission paid off with the expansion of the training airspace for the base. The Powder River Training Complex is now the largest training airspace in the continental United States. It is undoubtedly partly thanks to this airspace that Ellsworth was just chosen not only as the home for the B-21 training mission, the first bombers to the fleet, but operational squadrons as well.

Once on the chopping block, Ellsworth is going from strength to strength, and South Dakota is deeply proud to host this crucial base.

Ellsworth’s airmen have played an essential role in the armed conflicts of recent years. Ellsworth’s pilots have engaged targets in the Middle East using Predator and Reaper remotely piloted aircraft for vital reconnaissance, search and rescue, and strike missions.

The Thunderbirds of the 34th Bomb Squadron and the Tigers of the 37th Bomb Squadron have flown countless missions, conducting strikes, providing deterrence, and delivering critical close air support.

During Operation Odyssey Dawn, B-1s from Ellsworth launched from South Dakota, flew halfway around the world to Libya, dropped their bombs, and returned home—all in a single mission. This marked the first time in history that B-1s launched combat missions from the United States to strike targets overseas.

During my time advocating for Ellsworth, I have had the chance to learn a lot about aircraft and the incredible capabilities of the U.S. military, especially the capabilities of the U.S. Air Force. But the greatest part of representing Ellsworth has been the chance to meet with and get to know its airmen, from the wing commanders and other base leaders to the airmen who care for the planes.

Ultimately, no matter what technology we have, the strength of our fighting force comes down to our military men and women. It is because of the men and women we have that the United States has the strongest fighting force in the world.

Members of the military are a special breed. At an age when many are focused on graduation ceremonies or summer vacations, they take a different path—a path that challenges them mentally and physically, that pushes them to their limits and then asks them to go further, that asks them to forget their own needs and to focus only on what they can do for others, and that asks them to forgo comfort for sacrifice, up to and including the sacrifice of their lives. At 18, at 21, these warriors pledge to lay down their lives for the rest of us, and they make that pledge again every day of their service, every morning when they wake up and head to work, whether that is the repair base at Ellsworth or a battlefield half a world away.

I am profoundly grateful for the honor of representing some of the men and women of the U.S. military here in the Senate. We owe our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and Coast Guard a debt we can never repay.

As Military Appreciation Month continues and Armed Forces Day approaches, we can take the time to remember—to remember that we go about our lives in peace and freedom every day because of members of the U.S. military who are standing watch for us. May God bless the members of the U.S. military, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ABORTION

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I want to start today by saying I am really appalled by the extreme, cruel, shameful abortion ban that was passed yesterday in Alabama. That legislation is nothing short of an attack on women, and it is part of a larger effort we are seeing today around the country to take away the constitutional right of women to safe, legal abortion and allowing politicians to make decisions for women about their bodies, their health, and their lives instead of trusting doctors and women.

I want every woman reading the news this morning and wondering what this means for you, your family, and for your granddaughters to know I am with you, and I am going to keep fighting for you every step of the way.

NOMINATION OF WENDY VITTER

Mr. President, I want to turn to speak about my opposition to Wendy Vitter’s nomination, which is yet another step extreme politicians are taking to undermine women’s rights and access to healthcare.

I oppose Wendy Vitter’s nomination to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

President Trump and Vice President PENCE have made it clear that they want to pack the Judiciary with far-right judges who will turn back the clock on reproductive rights, and this nominee is no exception.

Time and again, Mrs. Vitter has advocated against women’s reproductive rights using inflammatory language and falsehoods. She has demonstrated a keen sense of partisanship and a poor sense of judgment, starting with her initial response to the Senate Judiciary Committee’s questionnaire.

Mrs. Vitter left out information about her past statements in her response to the committee—the kinds of serious submissions Republicans have objected to with other nominees. I am