

where Jewish people have been able to flourish alongside so many other immigrant groups. We must never lose sight of just how special that is, nor must we ever stop fighting for it.

All Americans share a responsibility and an obligation to fight back whenever we see the rise of prejudice of any type in our midst, to preserve this Nation as a promised land of refuge, as a land that honors the dignity of every individual, as a land of opportunity for all.

So my plea—my plea, my fervent plea—to the American people of all creeds and backgrounds is this: First, learn the history of the Jewish people who have been abandoned repeatedly by their fellow countrymen. I say this particularly to younger people who didn't live with any of this history. Learn the history of the Jewish people who have been left isolated and alone to combat anti-Semitism through the centuries.

Second, reject the illogical and anti-Semitic double standard that is once again being applied to the plight of Jewish victims and hostages, to some of the actions of the Israeli Government, and even to the very existence of a Jewish state. That is a double standard. There is no ducking from it.

Third, understand why Jewish people defend Israel—not because we wish harm on Palestinians but because we fear a world where Israel is forced to tolerate the existence of groups like Hamas that want to wipe out all Jewish people from the planet.

Some of us watched this film, which the public can't see, which showed the brutality and viciousness that every Israeli citizen and every Jew feels.

We fear a world where Israel, a place of refuge for Jewish people, will no longer exist. If there is no Israel, there will be no place—no place—for Jewish people to go when they are persecuted in other countries.

As an adult, I remember watching my grandfather, one of the few in his family to survive the Holocaust, being overwhelmed by emotion and breaking down in tears when he saw Israel for the first time. This had nothing to do with politics or with money or with racism or oppression. It was deeply human—the emotional catharsis of a man whose family was uprooted and exterminated finally stepping foot in the place of refuge for his people, the place that the Jewish people have yearned for not just for decades, for centuries, but for millennia.

So many of my aunts and uncles and cousins and nieces and nephews would be alive today had Israel existed before World War II, as I said before.

Many Jewish Americans fear what the future may bring based on the repeated lessons of history. Many Jewish Americans see clear anti-Semitism in the double standard that is being wielded by too many opponents of Israel, and we see it in attacks on Jewish people for simply being Jewish, apart from having anything to do with

Israel. And maybe worst of all, many Jewish Americans feel alone to face all of this, abandoned by too many of our friends and allies in our greatest time of need, as anti-Semitic hate crimes skyrocket across the country.

I implore every person, every community, every institution to stand with Jewish Americans—not to ignore it, not to shrug your shoulders—to denounce anti-Semitism in all its forms, especially the double standard that has been wielded against the Jewish people for generations to isolate us.

The time for solidarity must be now. Nothing less than the future of the American experiment hangs in the balance. Building a more perfect Union, one that fulfills our founding ideals, is our longest and most solemn struggle as a country. And as Americans, we are called on to do all we can to achieve that higher standard.

We are stewards of the flames of liberty, tolerance, and equality that warm our American melting pot and make it possible for Jewish Americans to prosper alongside Palestinian Americans and every other immigrant group from all over the world.

Are we a nation that can defy the regular course of human history where the Jewish people have been ostracized, expelled, and massacred over and over again? I believe—truly believe in my heart—that the answer can and must be a resounding yes, and I will do everything in my power as Senate majority leader, as a Jewish American, as a citizen of a free society, as a human being, to make it happen.

Ken y'hi ratzon. May it be God's will. I yield the floor.

Mr. SCHATZ. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I had an opportunity to watch the majority leader's speech this morning. It was extraordinary. I want to compliment him for providing a history lesson for Americans about the history of the Jewish people and putting it in context with the conflict that is underway.

So I want to thank him and associate myself with his remarks. I share his disgust at the alarming rise of anti-Semitism in America—and around the world—in the wake of the October 7 attacks.

So, again, I stand with him in condemning this hatred. And I stand with our ally, Israel, as it defends, literally, its right to exist.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. President, on another subject, Border security is actually national se-

curity. This is not just a statement of legislative priorities or partisan politics; it is a fact of human history.

The Senate has little more than 2 weeks to deliver supplemental legislation on the four urgent national security priorities. And each one of them deals directly with the questions of border and sovereignty.

For over a decade, Putin has been trying to redraw the borders of Europe. He has invaded and occupied Georgia and Ukraine. He has attempted assassinations and influenced operations on foreign soil. And he has exploited humanitarian crises to weaponize migrant flows to Europe, including, most recently, at the border of Finland.

Meanwhile, the Hamas terrorists who rule Gaza violated sovereign borders on their way to slaughtering 1,200 Israelis and taking hundreds more hostage. These savages' stated objective is to erase the borders of the state of Israel "from the river to the sea."

China, for its part, is also keenly focused on challenging borders. The PRC has used force in an attempt to gain the upper hand along its border with India. It has expanded its military footprint in the South China Sea and threatened to resolve longstanding territorial disputes with multiple neighbors by force. And China's historic investments in military modernization are aimed at threatening Taiwan's sovereignty and bringing the island to heel.

Borders matter. Sovereignty matters. The United States is a global superpower with global interests. And we have an interest in preventing autocrats and terrorists from trampling the borders of Europe, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pacific. Because if we leave them unchecked, these aggressors will keep challenging borders and keep starting wars.

Borders are intrinsically and universally about a nation's security. Controlling and defending them is the essential predicate of sovereignty. So it is not by accident that, in addressing urgent national security priorities, Senate Republicans are working so hard on policy changes to restore security to Americans on borders.

Trying to clean up the Biden administration's border crisis isn't some arbitrary interest; that is, unless you ask the Democratic leader. According to the senior Senator from New York, the national security crisis his party has abetted at the southern border is "extraneous" to the national security supplemental before the Senate. The way our colleague sees it, securing our own borders as we help our allies and partners defend their sovereignty would be dangerous.

Dangerous? Here in the real world, what is dangerous is denying the humanitarian and national security crisis festering at America's southern border on President Biden's watch. What is dangerous is accepting the record numbers of illegal aliens surging across our borders as the new normal. What is

dangerous is defending open borders and a broken asylum and parole system, even at the risk of urgent assistance to our partners in Ukraine, Israel, and Asia.

The Biden administration's open borders will rank among its biggest national security failures, plain and simple. But if Senate Democrats refuse to take border security policy changes seriously, they will also be wrapping American weakness up as a Christmas gift to Russia, China, and Iran.

Borders are an essential element of national security. They are not extraneous. We must secure and defend sovereign borders beginning right here at home. If we fail to uphold this basic, fundamental responsibility, America and our friends around the world will pay dearly.

#### BIDENOMICS

Mr. President, now on another matter, President Biden is on the road today, and he is facing an uphill battle to convince the American people that Bidenomics is somehow working. For months, the President has been touring the country with a rosy assessment of the economy on his watch. He has been telling working Americans what the administration's obsession with radical climate policy is doing for them. But by overwhelming margins, the American people haven't been buying what the President is selling. The polls continue to show that for millions of families, Bidenomics is just a code for higher prices, shrinking paychecks, and lower quality of life.

The entire Nation watched in realtime as the Biden administration's war on domestic energy drove the price of gas and home heating through the roof. Taxpayers watched Washington Democrats turn their hard-earned dollars into subsidies for blue-State liberals' favorite electric cars and home appliances.

Here is how one analysis put it:

The typical American household must spend an additional \$11,434 annually just to maintain the same standard of living they enjoyed in January of 2021.

An extra \$11,000 a year just to stay afloat. But the Biden administration's latest tactic appears to be publicly congratulating itself that prices on some everyday staples were actually rising slower than the record paces that were set during their time in office.

The President himself has even wagged his finger at American growers, manufacturers, and retailers to "stop the price gouging" now that "inflation has come down."

Well, the Bidenomics strategy apparently depends on working Americans ignoring the reality they live in every day. The White House seems to be counting on middle-class families to forget about the 40-year-high inflation they spending binge helped create. They want the country to set aside the average food prices that have risen 20 percent since President Biden took office.

Well, it doesn't look like the American people have any intention of suspending their disbelief about Bidenomics. And who on Earth would blame them?

The PRESIDENT pro tempore (Ms. DUCKWORTH). The Senator from New York.

#### ISRAEL

Mrs. GILLIBRAND. Madam President, I am here once again to highlight the stories of the people who have been and continue to be held hostage by Hamas. I am so happy to hear that several of our hostages, whose families I have worked with, have been finally returned. They include: 4-year-old Abigail Mor Edan, whose parents were both murdered in front of her eyes and who now faces the horrible process of healing from the many traumas she underwent; Danielle Aloni and her 5-year-old daughter Emilia. They had been visiting Danielle's sister Sharon, her brother-in-law David, and their 3-year-old twins Emma and Julie on the day of the attack, when all of them were taken captive. Sharon, Emma, and Julie have also just been released, but David still remains in captivity.

I am so grateful that members of another family I have worked with have also been released. They include 67-year-old mother Shoshan, sister Adi, Adi's two young children Naveh and Yahel, Aunt Sharon, and Sharon's 12-year-old daughter Noam.

It has been heartening to see these families reunited with their loved ones, to see the joy and the indescribable relief, and I am grateful to the Biden administration for making these reunions possible. But, of course, many, many more people still remain in captivity, including Emma and Julie's father, David, and Naveh and Yahel's father, Tal.

These families have already endured the worst traumas imaginable, and yet now they have still been ripped apart, with no idea when they will see their fathers and brothers and sons again. Tal is a 38-year-old who reads a lot and loves to explore new topics as well as exercise and play sports. He and his family like to travel in the desert areas in southern Israel and spend time near the Sea of Galilee.

David is a talented 33-year-old actor who lived with his family in Nir Oz. He and his family woke up on the morning of October 7 to the sound of bombs and sought refuge in their home's bomb shelter. But when Hamas set fire to their house, the shelter filled with smoke and forced them out to meet the terrorists.

His American family last saw him in a video shared by Hamas where he can be seen in the back of a truck with Sharon and one of the twins. A survivor who was able to escape says she spoke briefly with him and that he said to her:

I know that I left the safe room with two babies, and now I have only one.

I can only imagine what it must be like for him now to have both of his babies ripped away.

These two families, these fathers, don't deserve to be separated from their families. They don't deserve to be kept in horrific conditions, potentially with little food.

As joyful as it has been to see some of the hostages reunited with their families, we must not stop pushing for the release of all the remaining hostages. I will continue to work with their families and with the Biden administration to advocate for these individuals, and I will not rest until we get every hostage, including the nine Americans, home.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

#### BORDER SECURITY

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, today I want to speak to the issue of our southern border because I think it is a really important and relevant issue with respect to the national security package that we are considering or that we will be, I think, at some point, considering here in the Senate that deals with many of the national security crises we face around the world.

And as I think about this issue, I am always reminded that as a one-generation-removed-from-immigrant individual in this country—my grandfather came here back in 1906—I am reminded that we are a nation of immigrants.

We have had, throughout our history, a welcoming culture in this country. We are a country that is made up of people from all over the world, and I am representative of that, as I said, one generation removed.

It is also important to remember that we are a nation of laws, first and foremost. Ronald Reagan once said:

A nation without borders is not a nation.

I have heard it paraphrased that a nation that can't control its borders can't control its destiny. And I believe that to be true.

I think what we have right now at our southern border is a situation that has just run amok. It really has. You cannot defend what is happening at our southern border if you believe we are a nation of laws or, for that matter, if you believe we are a nation of immigrants because you have to have a legal way to get into this country. All countries do that, and the United States, as I said, is a very welcoming nation. If you look at the number of people who come here every year as refugees, the number of people coming to this country, you add up all the other countries around the world and the number of people they allow into their countries, the United States exceeds that, and that, to me, is a remarkable testament to the welcoming nature of this country.

But it is welcoming in the sense that it is done within the context of the rule of law, and that, first and foremost, has to be front and center as we think about this issue.

What we have right now at our southern border is essentially a huge welcome sign, a huge green light to come