

State seem to spend more time with their diplomats and their Foreign Minister than almost any other country in the world—China and the South China Sea.

In the face of these challenges, we are also starting to see something that is truly alarming. The postwar structure, the national security structure of the world that the United States was instrumental in building, is beginning to crumble in different parts of the world.

So what should we do? What can we do? I think there is a lot we can do. We can certainly bolster the American-led order that was established after World War II. It certainly does not have to crumble. This is what our colleague Senator MCCAIN laid out in his outstanding speech in Munich. He talked about how this is one of our most important inheritances, this world order, this American-led order, and how we need to focus on it—not with speeches but with action.

What else can we do? We can look at the changing landscape of the world and see if we need to devise new political structures that address new challenges in places such as the Middle East, where borders seem to be being erased on a daily basis by terrorist groups like ISIS. This is something General Abizaid has written about recently.

Both of these alternatives require American leadership. They are not going to happen without the United States in the lead. If you went to Munich, you realize their allies want us to lead.

What can we do in the Senate? Well, we can certainly press for a more assertive and leading role for the United States of America from this body. The Constitution gives the U.S. Senate significant power in national security matters and foreign affairs, and we should be using that. We are using that.

Under the new leadership of the Senate, we have been moving forward in many areas of foreign policy and national security. There are the North Korea sanctions that were passed by this body 2 weeks ago, and now the world is following our lead on that. Senators GARDNER and CORKER did an outstanding job in that regard. There is the bipartisan approach to Ukraine that we see on the Armed Services

Committee. Every Member of that body, Democratic and Republican, thinks we should be doing more to help the Ukrainians defend themselves against Russian aggression. Afghanistan, the same thing—bolstering the need for troops there to guard America's security. The President has seemingly wanted to take all our troops out of there, as he wanted to do in Iraq, but again a bipartisan group of Senators have been questioning that strategy on a daily basis. In the South China Sea, we have been encouraging the administration to do what we have been doing for 70 years—conducting freedom of navigation operations to keep the seelanes of the world open. These are all things the Senate has been doing—in essence, trying to give this administration backbone, to assert the leadership we know is so important to our security and the security of the world.

But there is another thing, another option that might be out there. We can ignore the problem of what is happening in the world.

I hate to say this, but if you saw Secretary of State Kerry's speech in Munich, certainly compared to Senator MCCAIN's keynote address, what the Secretary of State seemed to be doing was that fourth option. He seemed to be saying: Hey, things aren't going that badly. Things in Syria aren't that bad.

He cautioned against pessimism and said that we have good reasons to be optimistic about what is happening. He talked about how fewer people are dying in conflict today than ever before. You literally heard a gasp in the audience in Munich when that was stated. That is not true.

What this does when you have the Secretary of State making these kinds of statements at important security conferences with all our allies, it further undermines the credibility of the United States in terms of foreign policy and national security.

We need to lead again. Our allies want us to. Most importantly, I believe the American people want us to.

Why? Why shouldn't we just withdraw from the world and let everything catch on fire? Bring the troops home and have the two oceans protect us—the Atlantic and Pacific.

We need to lead, and I believe the American people want the United States to lead because they know that

when the United States leads in the world, it is a safer place abroad and it is a safer place at home. They know what Senator Lieberman said recently in his op-ed after Munich: "The absence of American leadership has certainly not caused all the instability, but it has encouraged and exacerbated it." The American people also know that when there is a lack of U.S. leadership in the world, it not only turns to undermining our national security interests, but it turns to humiliation for our own citizens. Just think of the photos that we saw recently of U.S. sailors on their knees at Iranian gunpoint with their hands raised in surrender and what that does in terms of how Americans are thinking about our role in the world, the security of the world, and what is happening with regard to U.S. leadership. We have to change these policies of leading from behind.

I will conclude by mentioning in terms of this lack of U.S. leadership what I fear the most. I started by saying that we were at a conference where our allies directly, indirectly were asking for American leadership once again. But what I fear the most is the day that a group of bipartisan Senators goes to another conference like Munich or the Shangri-la Dialogue and we don't hear from our allies, we don't hear them asking for us to lead once again, because such silence will truly be dangerous indeed because that is when we will know that our traditional allies have given up on the United States; that is when we will know that our traditional allies have lost faith in America and have begun the process of making accommodations with our adversaries. We in the Senate must do all in our power to make sure that situation where we lose our allies, where they don't ask for our leadership, does not happen.

I yield the floor.

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ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.  
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:40 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, March 10, 2016, at 9:30 a.m.