Mr. President, today

my colleague, Senator LIEBERMAN, and

I are preparing to submit a resolution

on the situation in Libya.

Mr. President, is it allowed to send to

the desk a resolution even though we

are in morning business and its consideration

be delayed until the appropriate

time?

Mr. President, the

wording of the resolution is a sense of

the Senate. It is pretty simple and

straightforward. It calls for a recognition

of the provisional revolutionary

government in Libya, and it calls for

placing as rapidly as possible a no-fly

zone over Libya. It has some other language

associated with it, which I would

go into later on. But the fact is, what

it does is urge the President of the

United States to take long-overdue action

to prevent the massacres that are

taking place in Libya as we speak. At

this moment, opponents of Colonel Qadhafi

and his supporters are fighting

for their very survival.

The demands of the Libyan people

began much like those of their neighbors

in North Africa and the Middle

East—for the protection of their universal

rights, for greater political freedom

and representative government,

for justice and opportunity. But the response

of Qadhafi and those still loyal

to him stands in stark contrast to the

inspiring events of what some are calling

the Arab spring. Qadhafi has unleashed

a merciless campaign of violence

against the Libyan people, including

civilian noncombatants, using

every tool at his disposal, from artillery

barrages, to airstrikes, to the employment

of foreign mercenaries. As

President Bill Clinton correctly stated

last week, ‘‘It is not a fair fight.’’

It is not a fair fight, and now the

hour is growing dark. Over the past

week, the momentum has increasingly

shifted away from the opposition and

toward Qadhafi—showing once again

what a lot of us understand about warfare:

that a smaller well-trained, wellequipped

force can usually prevail over

a larger less-trained and less-equipped

force.

One by one, towns that had been liberated

by the opposition are now falling

to Qadhafi’s forces. We are only

now beginning to learn the savage cost

of those losses, especially on the civilian

population—the women, children,

and elderly who could neither fight nor

flee Qadhafi’s rampage and, of course,

those brave Libyan rebels, or the many

suspected of aiding their cause, who

face certain death or perhaps a fate

worse than death. We are horrified by

what we have learned already, but

what we have yet to learn and what we

could still witness if Qadhafi’s forces

are allowed to finish this unfair fight

will shock and offend the conscience of

the entire world.

Last week, in a hearing in the Committee

on Armed Services, the Director

of National Intelligence said that absent

outside assistance to the opposition,

‘‘I think over the long term that

the [Qadhafi] regime will prevail.’’ And

yet it is the policy of the United

States, as stated by the President, that

‘‘Qaddafi must step down from power

and leave.’’ That is the right policy,

but it is increasingly at odds now with

the facts on the ground.

So we face a stark choice: either the

President and the United States take

greater action to achieve the objectives

he has laid out or we allow events

to play out as they are, meaning that

Qadhafi reclaims control of their country.

The resolution Senator LIEBERMAN

and I are submitting calls on the President

to take a number of steps immediately

to reverse this impending disaster.

First, the President should recognize

Libya’s Transitional National Council,

which is based in Benghazi but representative

of communities across the

country as the sole legitimate governing

authority of Libya—just as the

government of France has done. President

Sarkozy and the French have recognized

the sole legitimate government

in Libya as the provisional government

which is based in Benghazi.

Some continue to say we do not

know who the opposition is and, thus,

we cannot assist them. That is ridiculous.

They have been organized for

weeks. Their senior leaders consist of

longstanding critics of Qadhafi as well

as officials who recently broke with his

regime. They even have a Web site.

And they are asking—they are pleading;

they are pleading—for international

support.

Qadhafi has forfeited the right to

power through his vicious actions. We

must recognize the opposition government.

Second, the President should take

immediate steps to implement a no-fly

zone in Libya with international support.

Not only has the Libyan opposition

government called for this, the

Gulf Cooperation Council has called for

a no-fly zone. The head of the Organization

of the Islamic Conference has

called for a no-fly zone. On Saturday,

the Arab League called for a no-fly

zone. The French and British Governments

have voiced their support and

have drafted a U.N. Security Council

resolution to implement a no-fly zone.

It is long past time for the President of

the United States to answer these calls

for international leadership. The

United States of America must lead.

A no-fly zone was never going to be

the decisive action that tipped the balance

against Qadhafi, even when Senator

LIEBERMAN and I called for it nearly

3 weeks ago, but it remains the case

that a no-fly zone would take one of

Qadhafi’s most lethal tools off the

table and thereby boost the confidence

of Libya’s opposition. It is Libyans

themselves who want to do the fighting

against Qadhafi, but they want it to be

a fair fight, and so should we.

Finally, the President should develop

and implement a comprehensive strategy

to accomplish the stated U.S. objective

of Qadhafi leaving power. Beyond

a no-fly zone and beyond those

actions such as sanctions and humanitarian

assistance that we are already

taking, there are many actions we

could consider, from sharing intelligence

on Qadhafi’s forces with the opposition,

to providing them with support

for command and control, to technical

assistance, and even forms of security

assistance if they request it—we

could jam Qadhafi’s communications

and his television—and if we can provide

it in a responsible way.

Our window of opportunity to support

the Libyan people is closing

quickly, and this country has a choice

to make. Are we going to take action

to support the people of Libya in their

fight for freedom or are we going to

stand by doing more than nothing but

less than enough to achieve our stated

goal of Qadhafi leaving power?

We all say we support the universal

rights of the Arabs and Muslims in

countries across the Middle East and

North Africa who are inspiring us all in

their quest for greater freedom, opportunity,

and justice. But Libya is the

real test. It is the test of whether we

will provide our support not just when

it is easy but when it is difficult, when

it requires more of us than just speeches

and expressions of solidarity. If Qadhafi

is allowed to prevail in Libya and

crush his opponents, it will send a signal

throughout the region that force is

the way to respond to peaceful demands

for a better life, and it will

cause all of our expressions of support

for the universal rights of all people to

ring far more hollow.

Before I yield to my friend from Connecticut,

I would like to point out that

now we have former President Clinton,

we have the Arab League, we have the

French, the British, other nations

throughout the world, and organizations

in the region and without that

are saying—crying out—that we need

to help these people. And when President

Obama says the noose is tightening

around Colonel Muammar al-Qadhafi,

in fact, it is tightening around

the Libyan rebels. And the way he is

doing it and what he is doing to his

own people are crimes against humanity.

It is time we stood up. It is time we

read from the New York Times this

morning an article by Anne-Marie

Slaughter entitled ‘‘Fiddling While

Libya Burns.’’ It is time we read again,

from Saturday, the Wall Street Journal’s

lead editorial entitled ‘‘The

Obama Doctrine, Libya is what a world

without U.S. leadership looks like.’’

That was by National Security Council

spokesman Ben Rhodes, as quoted

in the Washington Post.

That is from Libyan rebel Mahmoud

Abdel Hamid, on March 10, as quoted in

the Wall Street Journal.

These people are crying out for help.

They are fighting for freedom. They

are fighting an unequal situation on

the battlefield. The least we can do—

the very least we can do—is recognize

them in their struggle for freedom and

give them some assistance; otherwise,

as the President’s National Security

Adviser stated on Friday: Qadhafi will

prevail. That will send a signal

throughout the world that we will have

Tiananmen Squares in this world, not

Tahrir Squares.

I yield to my colleague from Connecticut.

Mr. President, I ask my

friend from Connecticut if we couldn’t

review a few of the facts as they are

now. Despite the fact that the President

made a statement that I am still

bewildered by—I believe it was Saturday

or Friday when the President said

the noose is tightening around Colonel

Muammar Qadhafi.

I think the facts on the ground indicate

that with superior firepower, the

ability to strike from the air, even if

those strikes are not particularly effective—

although, apparently, they are

becoming more effective—and welltrained

and well-equipped small forces,

Colonel Qadhafi has been able to reverse

the tide on the battlefield rather

dramatically. All of the news reports

are that the military situation on the

ground has shifted dramatically in

favor of Qadhafi’s forces.

General Clapper, our Director of National

Intelligence, said on Thursday

that Qadhafi is likely to win in the

long term. Then, on the other side of

the coin, the President of the United

States has said Qadhafi must go.

So I guess my first question to my

colleague is—as the Wall Street Journal

says, if Qadhafi survives, after Mr.

Obama has told him to go, the blow to

U.S. prestige and world order would be

enormous. Dictators will learn that the

way to keep America from acting is to

keep its diplomats and citizens around

while mowing down your opponents as

the world debates contingency. By the

time the babblers make a decision, it

will be too late. This is a dangerous

message to send at any time but especially

with the Middle East in the

throes of revolution.

American prestige is now on the line.

The battlefield situation is that the

tide is obviously against the prodemocracy

forces. Wouldn’t the message be

sent to any dictator in any region of

the world that rather than accept a situation

such as happened in Egypt and

Tunisia, send in the tanks, send in the

military, slaughter people without consequence?

Is that the lesson we would

be sending, I ask my friend from Connecticut?

Mr. President, I say to

my friend that I think that is a strong

and eloquent statement. I admit to the

fact that the terrible tragedy that has

transpired in Japan is one that has riveted

the attention of our Nation and

the world. Our hearts go out to the

Japanese people and their government

in this terrible time of trial. There is

no way we can diminish the tragedy

they are experiencing. But it is a natural

disaster that was the catalyst for

that terrible situation.

Meanwhile, in Libya, we have a

human catalyst named Muammar Qadhafi.

I admit and I will confess to having

such a dull life that I watch a lot of

cable television. I see expert after expert

come before the cameras and give

us reasons the United States should do

nothing.

I commend to my colleagues for reading

an article in today’s New York

Times by Anne-Marie Slaughter, formerly

in policy planning at the State

Department, as I understand it, in this

administration or in another. It does

respond to what we will hear continuously.

The article is entitled ‘‘Fiddling

While Libya Burns.’’

At the beginning, she points out that

the Organization of the Islamic Conference,

the Gulf Cooperation Council,

and now the Arab League have all

called for imposing a no-fly zone. She

runs through the objections raised by

various individuals and ‘‘experts.’’ One

part is entitled ‘‘It’s Not In Our Interest.’’

One is entitled ‘‘It Will Be Counterproductive.’’

Another is ‘‘It Won’t

Work.’’ Another is ‘‘If It Does Work,

We Don’t Know What We Will Get.’’

The last is ‘‘Let’s Arm The Rebels Instead.’’

It addresses most of the main arguments.

The only one I think should be

added to this list is the likelihood that

things are happening in Libya today,

as we speak, that will remind us that

several times in the last century—and

even in this one—we said never again.

We said never again after Srebenica,

after Rwanda, after the Holocaust, and

on several other occasions when nations

stood by while slaughter was taking

place.

Is there anyone who believes that Qadhafi

has not practiced in the past, is

practicing now, and will practice in the

future unspeakable cruelties which will

be inflicted upon his people who dare to

stand up to him? So I say to my friend:

Here we are.

We know what happened in Tripoli

and what happened with air attacks

that are taking place on defenseless individuals.

We watch these brave young

people go out there with the

Kalashnikovs and other things and

fight against the tanks and air power.

As former President Clinton said so

eloquently: It is not a fair fight. It is

not a fair fight.

I guess there will be other consultations

with our allies that we will undertake.

I am glad to see that the Secretary

of State is meeting with the

leadership of the provisional government.

I hope she will, as a result of

that meeting, ask for the U.S. recognition

of that organization as the legitimate

government of the country of

Libya. I hope all these things will happen.

But, meanwhile, events are unfolding

on the ground every second and

minute, and the longer we wait to act,

more Libyans will die. This is a preventable

situation.

The events in Japan, we can argue,

were not preventable. It was an act of

God. What is happening in Libya is an

act of a brutal tyrant and sadist who is

willing to butcher his own people. We

are doing everything we can, and we

will do everything we can to help the

people of Japan. We ought to be doing

what we can to keep the people of

Libya from a fate that, in some cases,

to some individuals, may be worse than

death.

I hope the majority leader will allow

a vote on this sense-of-the-Senate resolution

as soon as possible. I understand

there will be those who may like to see

slightly different language. We would

be glad to change the language somewhat,

but we will not change the message.

The message is that the United

States of America—the Senate of the

United States is standing on the side of

people who are standing up for freedom

and democracy, a universal value that

we treasure. We will not stint in our

obligations. Those who say the most

powerful Nation in the world is incapable

of helping these people by installing

a no-fly zone, I think that is not

substantiated by the facts.

GEN Raymond Odierno said the other

day that we could install a no-fly zone

in just a few days. We could have naval

power offshore that could enforce it in

a variety of ways, from the sea as well

as from the air. Also, it is very clear to

me that if Libyan pilots are told if

they fly they are going to die, a lot of

them would not fly.

I don’t want to focus so much attention

on the no-fly zone as I do on what

is happening to the people of Libya as

we speak and the repercussions that

could take place throughout the globe.

I hope we can vote on this sooner rather

than later. I ask my friend from

Connecticut—I believe we are nearly

out of time.

Mr. President, I ask

unanimous consent that the Wall

Street Journal editorial entitled ‘‘The

Obama Doctrine,’’ the New York Times

article, ‘‘Fiddling While Libya Burns,’’

and, from the Daily Beast, an interview

with the Libyan resistance leader, entitled

‘‘Rebel Leader: Give Us A

Chance,’’ be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material

was ordered to be printed in the

RECORD, as follows: