

started on some amendments today instead of waiting around until Monday. Doing so will put us a lot further ahead than we otherwise would be. Our anticipation is to get this thing done by next week, and I think we can do it.

I thank those who had some objection to moving to this bill. I very much appreciate their working with us. I think it will be completed, and I anticipate that the majority leader will have a motion that he will make after the 12:30 p.m. vote today.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

TARIFFS

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I rise to sound the alarm about the President's decision to impose steep tariffs on our trading partners.

Make no mistake, we are not, as some administration officials have suggested, in the leisurely early innings of a baseball game. We are in the nascent stages of a full-scale trade war. Despite the President's statement that this war will be easily won, any student of history knows that unlike a baseball game, in which a winner is guaranteed, a trade war only guarantees there will be losers.

Free trade allows the most efficient allocation of labor and capital. Protectionism, on the other hand, stifles innovation and reduces productivity. Recognition of this philosophy has been as close to a consensus as this body has achieved in more than 70 years, and the application of these principles has provided the foundation for growth and prosperity that was unimagined by previous generations.

If tariffs aimed at our adversaries produce disastrous results, what will happen when we target our allies?

Imagine claiming that imports from Canada represent a national security threat. Well, that is exactly what we are doing. Canada is our largest trading partner—a trading partner, coincidentally, with whom we enjoy a trade surplus. Just yesterday, we learned of a phone call in which Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau challenged the President's use of national security as a justification for levying tariffs against a steadfast ally. These new tariffs imposed on our allies will not and are not going unanswered. A number of them have already introduced retaliatory measures.

In March, when the tariffs on steel and aluminum were first announced, I proposed legislation to block their implementation. Yesterday, I joined with a bipartisan group of Senators, led by Senator CORKER, in introducing legislation to rein in the President's use of section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 to justify protectionist measures. This bipartisan group includes Senators from coast to coast and from across the political spectrum.

The Constitution grants Congress the preeminent role in regulating trade and tariffs. Congress must show leadership on this issue. We are elected to be

leaders, not followers here. It is not our charge to just go along because the President shares our party affiliation, to throw out our long-held beliefs just because they might complicate our political standing.

PROTECTING THE VALUES OF FREEDOM

Now, Mr. President, let me speak for a few minutes on our unique standing in the world and the opportunities and responsibilities that come as a result of that standing.

From its very creation, the United States of America has played a vital role in world leadership. Our Founding Fathers showed how a band of colonies could not only break free from a despotic monarchy but could build a functional democracy on the sturdy scaffold of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They entrenched this hallowed trio of principles within our Declaration of Independence, making America the first country in the world to be born not of accidents of geography or of Tribe but of an idea—a powerful idea—the idea of freedom.

More than 100 years later, at the turn of the 20th century, one that would come to be called the American Century, President Theodore Roosevelt used his inaugural address to highlight America's role: A country that had broken free from tyranny had a moral obligation to help others do likewise.

Roosevelt said:

Much has been given us, and much will rightfully be expected from us. We have duties to others and duties to ourselves; and we can shirk neither. We have become a great nation, forced by the fact of its greatness into relations with other nations of the earth, and we must behave as befits a people with such responsibilities.

This declaration alerted Americans that the Nation had arrived at a new position of global leadership, and it remains as true today as it was then.

The 20th century saw the United States transition from being merely one voice for freedom and liberty to become the preeminent leader of that sacred cause across the world. In the 40 years that followed Roosevelt's speech, American men and women would twice be called on to fight for peace in the face of World War. Hundreds of thousands of Americans would selflessly lay down their lives for the freedom of others.

Indeed, nowhere in our national history has that been more clearly displayed than 74 years ago yesterday, when, on the beaches of Normandy, thousands of Americans paid the ultimate sacrifice to free our European allies from the most unspeakable tyranny the world has ever known.

Yet this Nation's transformation into an indispensable nation, a necessary nation, was not crafted by military might alone. It was our efforts to build up international institutions and norms aimed at fostering democratic ideals and free market principles that truly secured the global leadership some would now squander.

I believe President Reagan best described the importance of this broader

American role when, during an address to the British Parliament, in the depth of the Cold War, he said this:

Our military strength is a prerequisite to peace, but let it be clear we maintain this strength in the hope it will never be used, for the ultimate determinant in the struggle that's now going on in the world will not be bombs and rockets, but a test of wills and ideas, a trial of spiritual resolve, the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish, the ideals to which we are dedicated.

By 1945, the United States had contributed about half of the world's entire economic activity, and, in 1991, we emerged from the Cold War as the world's sole superpower. The Soviet Union was in a glorious free fall, shedding republics by the day. Eastern Europe was squinting out into the light of liberation for the first time in 40 years. Free markets and free minds were sweeping the world.

I vividly recall the fall of the Berlin Wall. At the time, I was in Africa, assisting in the transition to democracy of the newly independent country of Namibia, as it shrugged off the shackles of apartheid.

A continent away, a dissident playwright, Vaclav Havel, emerged from a Communist prison to become the President of a liberated Czechoslovakia. In appearing before a joint session of our Congress, he praised the powerful inspiration of American democracy, and he thanked us for liberating Europe, once again, "from the tyrant's grip."

Both 1945 and 1991 were moments of American global success, when this Nation could have easily chosen to have turned inward and to have left the rest of the community of nations to fend for themselves or we could have simply maintained our dominance through sheer economic supremacy and military strength. We chose neither.

Instead, we chose to build the foundations of a global order based on the values we venerate, the beliefs we cherish, the ideals we aspire to—a world in which leaders must earn the respect of their peers, not through the coercive tactics of bluster and threat but through the virtues of their actions and the wisdom of their policies.

Winston Churchill famously opined, "Democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time." It was a wry acknowledgment that however messy it may sometimes seem in practice, democracy's genius lies in its regular renewal of the people's mandate, what Thomas Jefferson called the "consent of the governed."

It is our responsibility to be the premier example of this democratic order. This is the golden thread that leads all the way back to our Founding Fathers, but today that golden thread of continuity is in danger of being snapped.

Today we appear to be turning our back on this responsibility—a responsibility upheld by previous generations—the same generations that crafted the Marshall Plan to rebuild Europe and Japan after World War II, helping to

shape our two most aggressive enemies into two of our most stalwart allies; the generations who crafted pivotal international organizations such as NATO, the United Nations, and the World Trade Organization, forums for multilateral compromise to take the place of war as the primary arbiter of conflict between nations; the generations who negotiated nuclear disarmament treaties, pulling us back from the brink of atomic Armageddon—but no more.

Instead we find ourselves today led by those who express admiration for authoritarianism in Russia, China, the Philippines, and other places that make common cause with bullies and who flirt with tyrants. We see a world descending into an atavistic tribalism, a political primitivism where dealings between nations are driven by fear and antagonism, bullying and threats, taunts and brinkmanship, rather than mutual benefit and comity.

We find ourselves led by those who would fall for isolationist instincts and antiquated, preindustrial, protectionist economic philosophies—the very same shortsighted nostrums that ushered in the Great Depression. Those who would reject the decades-long consensus on the virtues of free trade, open markets, international interdependence—the policies which have led to the greatest sustained growth our world has ever seen.

What shall our friends make of such erratic behavior? How will they respond to such confusing actions? Most importantly, how long will they remain our friends if this irrational approach continues?

Alliances, institutions, and pacts that took generations to patiently build, generations more to solidify, that were paid for in both blood and treasure, are shattered in an ill-tempered second, an ill-considered tantrum, a childish taunt here, a bellicose insult there, incoherent policy utterances, often as not by tweet, contradicted in the space of a single news cycle. Muddled and mercurial, this is not grownup leadership. Our allies are left baffled, confused, and often appalled.

Make no mistake, our allies and those who look to American leadership will not wait for us to come to our senses. If we abandon our role as a leader in the world today, it may very well not be there tomorrow. We saw this vividly displayed in the decision to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership. After we hastily withdrew from those negotiations, the 11 other countries involved did not go home. They did not give up on trade or come back to us on bended knee, begging us to rejoin the process. They simply shrugged and continued on their own, leaving us behind.

Countries in Southeast Asia that would prefer to be part of the American trade orbit will have no other choice than to be sucked into China's vortex. This is the same China our President

correctly acknowledges as America's primary global competitor. Once again, the absurdity of protectionist policies is laid bare.

The question facing us today is this: Do we really want to be the generation that finally gave in to the backward, regressive tug of American isolationism? Do we want future generations to refer to American leadership in the world only in the past tense, with a rueful nostalgia? Are we truly ready to abandon this “shining city on a hill” described by John Winthrop and echoed so eloquently by Ronald Reagan? Do we believe the United States of America is still “the last best hope on earth,” as Abraham Lincoln once proclaimed?

We are not perfect. We have faltered in our leadership at times; at others we have struggled to determine how best to project our national values, but it is our leadership as the designated driver of the vehicle of world order, the so-called Pax Americana that for more than 70 years has maintained unprecedented peace and prosperity throughout the world. Yes, the world we live in is far from perfect, but I believe it is a far better place as a result of American leadership.

It has been said that the universe abhors a vacuum, and if we do not lead, someone else will. Those who are most likely to do so do not share our democratic values. We should not wish for future generations of Americans to come of age in a world led by someone else.

“Freedom,” as John F. Kennedy once proclaimed, “is not merely a word or an abstract theory, but the most effective instrument for advancing the welfare of man.” We owe it to those generations who have come before us, and those who will come after us, to recognize that our defense of that freedom, in all its forms—from free speech and free thought to free markets and free trade—is not an act of recreation. Let us pointedly declare to those who would suggest otherwise that the crossroads in which we find ourselves is not the early innings of any game but a historic moment in which we will either affirm our commitment to the values that have served so well for so long or engage in a trade war that will only lead to economic disaster. Let us not falter in our mission to promote and protect the values of freedom. Let us not turn away from this most noble of responsibilities. Let us proudly take the torch passed to us from our parents and our parents' parents.

Let us continue to serve as a beacon of hope, a shining light of freedom seen across a volatile world. This light stretches from the lanterns in Boston's Old North Church, lit during the ride of Paul Revere, to the light that shines above our Capitol today. It is the light of freedom, the very spirit of America, and it must never be extinguished.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I thank Senator FLAKE for his comments, his willingness to speak out, and for the courage with which he has spoken. His beliefs, I think, are admirable, and this Senator wants to state that for the record. What he has spoken about does not look down the blind alley of partisanship. He is talking about looking at America, and this Senator appreciates his remarks.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. President, I want to talk today about what is happening to the coastal communities in Florida. The Presiding Officer represents Alaska, the State that has the most coastline. Next to Alaska, my State of Florida has more coastline than any other State, and I would venture to say that since Alaska has very few beaches, it ought to be very clear that the State of Florida has more beaches than any other State. That, of course, is an attraction that becomes an economic engine because people from all over the world want to come to enjoy the sands of Florida's beaches and enjoy the bounty of nature the Lord has provided, but we better watch out because we are starting to mess it up.

Yesterday, NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, released data that the contiguous United States had the warmest May on record. The entire continent of the United States had the warmest May on record. The heat is having real-world impacts.

NOAA also released its “2017 State of High Tide Flooding and 2018 Outlook.” During 2017, the average high-tide flooding in the United States was the highest ever recorded. In 2018, NOAA predicts that high-tide flooding will be 60 percent more frequent across U.S. coastlines than it was 18 years ago in 2000, primarily because of the local sea level rise.

Doesn't this suggest something? In the lower latitudes, our seas are rising. It should not surprise us. It doesn't surprise this Senator. We got a glimpse of this when 4 years ago I took our Commerce Committee to Miami Beach and in fact had a hearing.

One of the witnesses was a NASA scientist, Dr. Piers Sellers, a prestigious scientist and former astronaut who, unfortunately, we lost to cancer just recently. At the hearing he said, “By the end of the century, the intensity of hurricanes . . . will increase . . . but even if hurricane frequency and intensity do not change, rising sea levels and coastal development will likely increase the impact of hurricanes and other coastal storms on those coastal communities and infrastructure.”

I would like to show a picture. A picture tells the real story. This shows a sunny day in Miami Beach—a sunny day when the king tide is flooding Miami Beach. OK. That is obvious, looking at it. This happens frequently at high tide.

What has the city of Miami Beach had to do? Spend tens of millions of