

Distinguished pol of the week

By [Jennifer Rubin](#) July 6

Joe Lieberman was one of the most influential senators of his generation. He nearly singlehandedly stopped the public-option version of Obamacare and pushed through the end of don't-ask-don't tell. He championed the surge in Iraq. He liked to say he wanted to bring back the Scoop Jackson wing – socially liberal and strong on defense – of the Democratic Party. In truth, he was the Scoop Jackson wing of the Democratic Party.

Former Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut/ Washington Post

His voice is certainly missed in the Senate and in the country. But he remains one of the few elder statesmen we have. This week the Connecticut independent [showed his sage judgment and essential decency](#) in defying partisanship and speaking in defense of the Constitution and our national security interests.

On the Supreme Court decisions rebuking executive power, he said: "It's not a perfect system but when you've got an ideologically split court and 13 cases saying 9-0 the president or the administration exceeded its constitutional authority, that says something very powerful. It should be reassuring to the American people about protecting their rights."

On Israel, he remains a voice of moral clarity, [debunking the moral equivalence](#) that calls for restraint on both sides. On Iraq, he slammed the decision to pull out all our troops and also chastised the country's prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki. Most important, he reminded the country of the importance of defeating the Islamic State and voiced optimism that, if we act wisely, Iraq is not "irretrievable."

Lieberman remains a national treasure and, if Republicans are able to recapture the White House, he might serve again in government, perhaps as secretary of state. It certainly would be to the benefit of the president he would serve, the country and the West more generally, and to the legacy of Scoop Jackson.

For all this we can say, well done, senator.

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