

right by the radical, unrealistic, unreasonable—I repeat, radical—and unpopular faction, the tea party. I have always said that once the economy gets better, they are going to fade out fairly quickly. It is getting better, and they are fading out. If people want to move the country forward, they cannot let the tea party call the shots.

Our proposal still stands. It is a number the Republicans were for before they were against it. We got that number by relying on reality, not ideology. I repeat, we know the answer lies in the middle. Neither party can pass a budget without the other party. We have already proven that. Neither Chamber can send it to the President without the other Chamber.

I look forward to getting this done so we can avoid the many terrible consequences that come with a shutdown. We do not want that to happen, and if it is up to us on this side of the aisle, it will not happen.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### APPROACH TO ENERGY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, later this morning, the President is expected to outline his vision for improving our Nation's energy security. But, as we frequently have seen with this administration, what it says and what it does are often two very different things. So this morning I would like to discuss some of the things the administration has actually done when it comes to energy, and then I would like to propose some things Republicans would do differently.

It should go without saying that Americans are ready for action on this issue. With average gas prices approaching \$4 a gallon in most parts of the country, growing uncertainty and unrest in the Middle East, and a jobs crisis here at home, Americans want the President to outline a serious plan today which will make us less dependent, not more, on foreign sources of oil and which stimulates job creation here. Unfortunately, what they have gotten instead are more of the same half-hearted proposals Democrats have trotted out every other time Americans get squeezed at the pump. Instead of facing the problem of higher energy prices head-on, Democrats are once again paying lip service to those concerns with fake solutions that only aim to distract people from what they are really up to.

It is my hope that the President changes that tune today, but I am not holding my breath because we have seen how this plays out many times before. Tell a Democrat in Washington that gas prices are too high, and as if on cue they will throw together a speech or a press conference to suggest

that we open an underground oil reserve that was created to deal with calamities, not market pressures; they will take you on a tour of some alternative car plant that promises to have one of its \$100,000 prototypes to market 25 years down the road or they will quietly release some report to the media about how energy companies really are not working hard enough to extract oil, while schizoprenically claiming American reserves are minuscule and that more production is not the solution.

This last item is a perennial favorite of our friends on the other side. The idea here is to somehow blame energy companies for not producing enough energy on their own. What Democrats don't mention, however, is that a drilling lease is nothing more than an agreement with the government that a company has a right to explore for oil and gas in a certain area, not a guarantee that they will find it. They never see fit to mention that most of the area that could be leased is off limits thanks to the redtape factory Democrats operate here in Washington. Honestly, are we supposed to believe that the same administration that declared a blanket moratorium on all offshore drilling off the gulf coast, which chased away rigs and jobs to other countries, and which established new regulations that make getting a new drilling permit virtually impossible, now believes that energy companies aren't drilling enough?

This doesn't even pass the laugh test, but it does suggest that Democrats don't even believe their own arguments about decreased production not affecting price. It is my hope that the President acknowledges as much today—that when you shut down drilling, higher prices and fewer jobs are sure to follow.

The truth is we could use a lot more honesty on this whole issue from Democrats. Despite what some on the other side might say, Republicans are as eager as Democrats to develop alternative sources of energy. But everybody knows it will take years, if not decades, to get to the point where they will be economically viable and widely used. The President's target is decades from now. But Americans should be able to expect action now, and all they get from Democrats is a pretty picture of some far-off future we have been hearing about for decades, and not a word about the things Democrats are doing to make it harder to find and use energy we already have right here.

Initial news reports about the President's speech today mention that the administration is determined to derive 80 percent of U.S. energy from clean energy sources in the year 2035. I am sure we could generate a great deal of bipartisan support for much of what the President will call for, assuming it doesn't involve Federal mandates. But what does any of this have to do with the crisis at hand—the crisis right now? The guy who is trying to make

ends meet wants to know what you are going to do for him today, not 24 years from now. But, of course, the administration doesn't have anything to say to that guy because the administration's energy policy isn't aimed at him. If it were, then the administration would be locking down domestic energy sources. It wouldn't be looking to pass new regulations through the EPA that will impose a national energy tax on every business, large and small. It wouldn't be telling our allies in Brazil that while it is great that they found oil off their coast, those who want to search for oil off our coast and on our mainland can't. In other words, it is great the Brazilians are drilling offshore but not so good that we are. It wouldn't be telling job creators in the energy industry to look elsewhere.

In his remarks today, the President is also expected to call for decreasing imports of foreign oil. Yet last week he told Brazilians that he hopes America becomes a major customer of Brazilian oil. Well, which is it? Which is it, Mr. President? Clearly, on this issue, the President is telling people what he thinks they want to hear.

Over the past 2 years, the administration has undertaken what can only be described as a war on American energy. It has canceled dozens of drilling leases, it has declared a moratorium on drilling off the gulf coast, it has increased permit fees, and it has prolonged public comment periods. In short, it has done about everything it can to keep our energy sector from growing. As a result, thousands of U.S. workers have lost their jobs as companies have been forced to look elsewhere for a better business climate.

Consider this: Three of the areas we could tap in Alaska are thought to hold enough oil to replace our crude imports from the Persian Gulf for nearly 65 years. So the problem isn't that we need to look elsewhere for our energy. The problem is that Democrats don't want us to use the energy we have. It is enough to make you wonder whether anybody in the White House has driven by a gas station lately.

No, the crisis we face is immediate and it requires immediate action, and that is why Republicans have come up with two concrete proposals that will have a positive practical effect—two things we can do to give Americans relief, job creators a reason to hire, and make all of us less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

First, let's increase American energy production by cutting the redtape and opening areas that the administration has either temporarily blocked, stalled, or closed off to production.

Let's block any new regulations that will drive up production costs for energy, including the administration's proposed new EPA regulations on carbon emissions.

The first proposal is guaranteed—guaranteed—to create jobs by unlocking our energy resources. The second has been described as one of the

best proposals for growth and job creation to make it onto the Senate docket in years. Let's be clear: The alternatives being offered by the other side are nothing more than a face-saving exercise aimed at allowing Senators who aren't serious about this issue to mislead their constituents into believing they are.

But the American people have put up with distractions and face-saving exercises long enough. They have put up with near double-digit unemployment long enough. They have heard enough about the costly big government proposals Democrats envision for the future. And frankly, they have had it. It is time to address the problems right in front of us. It is time for the President to put forth a serious plan. When it comes to energy, these problems are obvious. So are the answers. It is time for lawmakers to come together and do what we know is right.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half. The Senator from Alabama.

#### BUDGET ANALYSIS

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, I want to share some thoughts this morning and to report to our colleagues on the analysis done by the Congressional Budget Office of the President's budget he has submitted to us and asked that we adopt.

The budget has been roundly criticized as in no way getting us off this unsustainable path, and allowing the country to continue to head toward a financial abyss. Expert after expert, witness after witness before the Budget Committee—on which I am the ranking Republican Member—has testified to the danger we face and the need for us to take action. The Congressional Budget Office, in sum, concludes that the very insufficient reforms contained in the President's budget are more insufficient than the President has said, when properly analyzed. It is a very firm and severe rebuke to the President and his team of analysts who presented it to us. It is not good.

I believe it is probably the most erroneous budget ever submitted to Congress, in changing the numbers by \$2.3 trillion in debt. In other words, the

Congressional Budget Office says the budget submitted by the President, which was supposed to add to the debt some \$13 trillion or so, is actually going to add \$2 trillion more to the debt over 10 years, more than doubling the national debt. This is a very serious matter.

The budget presentation to the Congress continues a policy by this administration to minimize the danger of the debt crisis we face. It has been a sophisticated, long-term, continuous effort to not only say that cuts are too severe, too extreme—as the talking points go—and that, indeed, this President has things under control; that the debt crisis is not real, and we don't have to take firm action. The President does not look people in the eye and explain the true situation we are facing.

Indeed, this is the rhetoric they have used. The President has used this language; Jack Lew, his Director of the Office of Management and Budget, has used this language. They claim the budget they submitted calls on us to "live within our means." His budget causes us to live within our means. They also have used this phrase, more than once: "It only spends money that we have each year." Also they say that their budget "does not add more to the debt." At a press conference about this, the press secretary to the White House was asked: Do you stand by these statements? What did he say? Absolutely. And when Budget Director Lew came before the Budget Committee, and I asked him about it, he stands by these statements. He didn't acknowledge they are in any way in error.

If we are going to have reform in America, if we are going to do something about the debt crisis this Nation faces, we have to be honest with one another. We have to deal honestly with the grave challenges we face. We can't be in denial. We can't continue to say we are living within our means and that we are not going to add more to our debt.

Why do I say that? Well, the President's own budget said the deficits would surge, would continue to be out there every single year, with the lowest single deficit in 10 years, according to his budget, to be \$600 billion and going up in the outyears to almost \$800 billion.

What does CBO say about all of this? This is what they told us after they analyzed the President's budget. Let me explain what happens. The President submits a budget to the Congress. We have our own Congressional Budget Office, and they analyze what the President proposes. They then give us a report on it and say what it means, if adopted; how it would impact our economy, how it would impact our debt, how it would impact the financing of our government. So what does CBO say? It says the President's debt-doubling budget adds more to the debt than the President claims. The score reveals the President's budget never

once produces a deficit of less than \$748 billion, and climbs to a deficit in the tenth year of \$1.2 trillion—one thousand two hundred billion dollars.

I have been saying the lowest budget was \$600 billion because that is what the President's own numbers said in the document he sent to us, but CBO says no. The CBO Director and his team, for the most part, were in place when the Democrats controlled both Houses of Congress. They are a non-partisan group that tries to give honest numbers and do honest work. They are certainly not a Republican organization. They say the actual number was not going to be a \$600 billion low annual deficit but that the lowest deficit would be \$748 billion, increasing to \$1.2 trillion.

You see, this is why the experts say we are on an unsustainable path. We cannot continue. How much is \$1.2 trillion? Well, the highest deficit President Bush ever had was \$450 billion, I believe, give or take. That was way too high, and he was roundly criticized for that. But this is three times that in the tenth year. This year, we are going to have a \$1.6 trillion, \$1.5 trillion deficit. In this fiscal year we will have, for the third consecutive time, a trillion dollar deficit. These are deficits the likes of which the Nation has never seen before and cannot sustain. It puts us on a path to financial instability and danger. It is a path we must get off. We can do so, but it is going to take some will. We are going to have to do some of the same things our cities and counties are doing.

Also, the CBO said that, using gimmicks, the President's budget concealed a total of \$2.3 trillion in deficit spending and \$1.7 trillion in increases of gross debt for the country. The debt to GDP reaches 116 percent in the 10th year.

Let's talk about that. Why is that important? Professors Rogoff and Reinhart, who testified before our committee, have written a very significant and highly regarded book. Their book, "This Time It's Different," says that from a study of sovereign nations all over the world, when their debt reaches 100 percent of GDP, the economy is pulled down. It has a depressing effect on their economy. The economy will grow on average about 1 percent less than it would have grown otherwise, which is huge.

When you are talking about economic growth of 2, 3, 4 percent, to have a 1-percent reduction is a major drain on our economic growth, and growth is so critical for job creation and actually tax revenue to fund our government and get us out of the debt we are in. You cannot borrow your way out of debt. The deeper you get into debt, the more it pulls down the vitality and growth potential of your economy. We have to get off this path.

CBO says in the 10th year it will be 116. Senator CONRAD, the Democratic chairman of the Budget Committee, is very worried about this number. He