

that statement from our Secretary of State.

The implications of the dynamic changing Arctic for U.S. security, economic, environmental, and political interests depend on greater attention, greater energy, and greater focus on the Arctic itself. But it will take robust diplomacy and very likely recognition, as Secretary Clinton has reminded us, that the interest in the Arctic is not just limited to the five Arctic coastal States or even the eight countries that make up the permanent members of the Arctic Council. It will take a level of cooperation, a level of collaboration to include the non-Arctic states as well. But I am pleased that ever so slowly the United States seems to be waking up to the fact that we are an Arctic nation and willing to take up the responsibilities as such.

I am confident with the leadership of the Members of Congress, the administration, and from the Arctic community at large, we can continue to highlight the strategic importance of the Arctic for the United States. I believe the Arctic Council meeting may be just the turning point for American leadership in the Arctic.

With that, Mr. President, I thank you for your attention, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I ask to speak in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### SENATE BUDGET

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, I am deeply concerned by our growing financial crisis and really deeply angered by the failure of this Senate to take any meaningful steps to address it. I am going to announce steps I will take to try to force this Senate to do its job since our Democratic leaders seem determined to prevent the people's work from being done.

As ranking member of the Budget Committee, I see quite plainly that the process the statutory act requires is not being followed at a time in which we have never faced a greater systemic long-term debt crisis as we face today. The act calls for a budget to be produced by April 15, the Budget Committee to have meetings by April 1, and here we are toward the end of May, about to recess, and we have not even had a hearing in the Budget Committee on the markup of a budget.

Budgets, of course, are able to be passed by a simple majority in the Senate, and they have given the majority

party in the Senate the opportunity—really the responsibility—to set forth their vision about the financial future of America, to set forth their priorities, how they would conduct the people's business.

We know the House of Representatives met that deadline. They passed a historic budget. But the Senate has not done so. All we have seen from Majority Leader REID are political games, cynical games, distractions and gimmicks to avoid confronting the fiscal nightmare we are now facing. How else can you explain why, in the middle of the crisis, Democratic leaders have not even produced a budget, have not even allowed the committee to meet to work on one? We have not even met to mark up one. We are required by law to produce a budget in committee and pass that budget on to the Senate floor, but this process has been shut down. We have not produced a budget in 754 days. Let me repeat. This great Senate, in a time of financial stress and danger, has not passed a budget in 754 days and has, it appears, no intention of doing one this year.

Today I join with the newest member of our Budget Committee, Senator KELLY AYOTTE of New Hampshire, to send a letter to Senator REID, signed by every Republican Senator in the Senate, pressing him to finally allow the Senate to begin work on a budget. But we are told in the media that the Democrats' refusal to put forth a budget is just good strategy, that it is best that they avoid putting a plan on paper.

Here is an excerpt from a recent article in the Wall Street Journal. Fittingly, the article is entitled "Democrats Unhurried in Work on Budget." I would say that is true. This is what the article said:

As a political matter, the Democratic strategists say there may be little benefit in producing a budget that would inevitably include unpopular items. Many Democrats believe a recent House GOP proposal to overhaul Medicare is proving to be unpopular and has given Democrats a political advantage. They loath to give up that advantage by proposing higher taxes. Senate Democrats plan to hold a vote on the Ryan plan hoping to force GOP Senators to cast a vote on the Medicare overhaul that could prove politically difficult.

This is astonishing. It is the position of the great Democratic Party that their vision for deficit reduction is so unpopular or unfeasible that they won't even articulate it in public, let alone offer it up as a budget?

The heads of President Obama's fiscal commission warn that an economic crisis may be just 1 year or 2 years away.

That was the testimony they gave us in committee. It could be a year, a little sooner or a little later, said Erskine Bowles, Chairman of the commission, along with Alan Simpson, who said it could be 1 year, in his opinion, that we could have a debt crisis—not a little warning from people who spent months hearing witnesses and studying the

debt situation facing our country. But it appears the leaders of the Senate would prefer to hide in the hills and take shots at Republicans from a distance. Is that what they prefer?

Chairman PAUL RYAN and the House GOP had put forward a plan to get this country out of a looming, Greek-like debt crisis, make our economy more competitive, and save Medicare for future generations. It is an honest, courageous plan that will improve the quality of life for millions of Americans and do the job short term and long term. It may not be perfect. I am not saying it is perfect. I am saying it is a serious plan, seriously considered, that confronts both long-term and short-term problems and reforms Medicare and puts it on a path to salvation. But all we hear are attacks.

By contrast, the budget the President sent forward doubles our national debt and puts our entire country at risk, even though the President promised it would "not add more to the debt" and have us "live within our means." Those were the President's words. In the 10 years of his budget, analyzed by the objective Congressional Budget Office, they tell us the lowest single annual deficit out of those 10 would be \$740 billion—a stunning amount. They would average almost \$1 trillion. The last years—8, 9, and 10—of his 10-year budget do not show the debt going down but going back up to \$1 trillion. It was the most irresponsible budget that has ever been presented to this Nation. It is a stunning failure to lead at a time of financial crisis. It doubled the debt. It increased the debt over the projections of our baseline as it is. Instead of helping, it made it worse because it raised taxes and raised spending, and it raised spending more than it raised taxes.

So where do our colleagues in the Senate stand? They refuse to put forward their own plan. Last week, Senate Majority Leader REID said the Democrats don't need a budget. "There is no need to have a Democratic budget, in my opinion." He said it would be "foolish" to present one. The only thing that is foolish is violating the Congressional Budget Act in such a cynical attempt for political gain. The decision not to produce a budget is not a decision based on what is best for our country but based, as you can see from the quotes of the staffers and actually Senator REID's own quote—it was designed for political advantage.

The Ryan budget is honest. If anybody confronts the budget situation in an honest way, they know the budget is going to have to have some bad news. It is going to have to tell people things cannot continue as they are today but we are going to have to do better. We are going to have to reduce spending. So maybe for some people that is not popular. Isn't that what we are paid to do here, serve the national interest, tell the truth about what is happening in our country?

We find ourselves in the remarkable position this week of having Senate

Democratic leaders bring forward not a Senate budget but bring forward the House Republican budget, only to vote it down while offering no alternative of their own. What a cynical ploy. Think about it.

Senator REID said we are going to bring up the House budget, we are going to vote on it, and every member of his caucus—I am sure he has already counted the heads—will vote no. It has no chance of passage. What good is that? The Senate has a statutory duty under the Budget Act to produce a budget. We have not even attempted to produce a budget. They will attempt to bring forward a budget they have no intention of working on, no intention of taking seriously, no intention of opening for amendment or discussion, with only one goal: to use their majority to vote it down.

I look forward to the chance to support the House budget. I look forward to casting a vote which says we will be getting our spending under control, we will deal honestly with our budget challenges short term and long term. I look forward to voting for a budget that creates jobs, makes us more competitive, and deals honestly with the debt threats we have. But let's look at the bigger picture.

This week, the planned series of votes are designed by the majority leader to fail, of course. They are designed as a gimmick to distract attention from the Senate's failure to produce an honest plan. They are designed to keep this Senate from doing its job and defending this Republic from grave financial danger.

I, therefore, will not provide unanimous consent for any prearranged package of votes doomed to fail, intended to fail. Anyone can call up these budget votes, consistent with the rules, anytime they wish. But a package deal that wastes the Senate's time I cannot and will not support. The majority leader is wasting the American people's time. I am here to speak honestly and just tell the truth about that. That is the plain fact. It is a political gimmick that is going on.

Further, I will not agree to unanimous consent on any motion to adjourn for the Memorial Day recess. If we are going to close down this Chamber for another week without having produced a budget, without having even scheduled a committee hearing, then I am going to require we have a vote on it. Let's vote to go home, not having done the people's business.

PAUL RYAN is leading. Speaker BOEHNER is leading. The House Republicans are leading. They produced a document that can be defended, that has integrity, that deals with our short-term spending problem and our long-term spending problem. It is not perfect, of course. We have the opportunity to amend it. We have an opportunity to pass a budget of our own that might be different, but it will get us off the unsustainable path we are on. But our Democratic leader and the Demo-

crats who control the Chamber are refusing to allow a budget to go forward. They are refusing to share with the American people the contents of the plan they say they have behind closed doors. They say they have one. We read in the paper they have one. Why don't we see it?

So on Memorial Day—a week from today—we honor those who have fallen serving their country. We honor the brave men and women who have risked and given everything for our freedom and our future. We truly do. We honor those who gave their last breath to preserve our way of life. But now that way of life is threatened by a tidal wave of debt that we refuse to confront. It is a debt we have created, that we are growing, and that is up to us to stop, to defeat. That the Senate would go into recess this week refusing to work on a budget or even hold a public meeting on it, a further hearing on it, is unthinkable. Our soldiers serving overseas will not get the next week off. Why should the Senate get a week off after failing miserably to do its job?

My message to the majority leader is simple. If you object to the House GOP plan or to other Republican plans, then you must come forward with your own honest plan to prevent financial catastrophe and create a more prosperous future. Indeed, I close with this quote from the preamble to the fiscal commission report. This is what the Commission said because they anticipated just this kind of political difficulty. They anticipated that politicians in our country would do exactly what they are doing in the Senate—not what they did in the House where they faced up to their responsibility, but in the Senate.

This is the quote:

In the weeks and months to come, countless advocacy groups and special interests will try mightily through expensive, dramatic, and heart-wrenching media assaults to exempt themselves from shared sacrifice and common purpose. The national interest, not special interests, must prevail. We urge leaders and citizens with principled concerns about any of our recommendations to follow what we call the Becerra rule: Don't shoot down an idea without offering a better idea in its place.

That is exactly what the majority leader plans to do. He said: We don't need a Democratic budget. It would be foolish for us to produce one. We will just call up this House budget, and we will attack it, and with our Senate majority we will vote it down. But we won't produce our own. We won't produce any other alternative. We won't tell the American people our vision, our prospects and plans for getting this country off the unsustainable debt path we are on, and on to the path of prosperity and job creation and a sound financial future.

Why don't we hear it? Because, as one of their staff members said in that comment to the press, it might cause somebody to object. We might have, as the debt commission warned, advocacy groups and special interests that are

going to rise up and complain about anything that reduces a dime they receive.

I don't deny in an honest budget, at this point in history where 40 cents of every dollar we spend is borrowed, we are going to have to reduce some spending. Some good people are going to feel it. It is not going to be easy, just as the debt commission told us. Don't we know that? I thought that was what the past election was about last fall, when the big spenders and the high tax guys got shellacked. I thought Congress would get the message. Apparently, we haven't.

The debt situation we are in is not a little biddy thing. Under the Congressional Budget Office analysis of President Obama's 10-year budget, last year we had interest on the debt that we now owe of a little over \$200 billion. According to the analysis of the President's budget, in the tenth year, under his plan, the Congressional Budget Office estimates we will pay, in interest in 1 year, \$940 billion.

I know that is so much money it is difficult for people to comprehend it. Alabama is a State of just about average size. We are about one-fiftieth of the United States. We have a lean government that is making some serious reductions in spending because our money hasn't come in, and we have a constitutional amendment that requires the budget to be balanced. But the amount of money that Alabama spends on its general fund obligations is \$1.8 billion.

The President's proposed budget would cause the interest on our debt in 1 year to reach \$940 billion. That is way above what we spend on defense. It is way above what we spend on Medicare. It is the fastest growing item in the entire spending plan of America—interest on the debt—and that is why Mr. Bernanke, Chairman of the Federal Reserve; Mr. Alan Greenspan, our former Chairman; the International Monetary Fund; Moody's; the debt commission have all told us this is unsustainable. We can't continue. We won't go 10 years without a debt crisis. When asked, Mr. Bowles said we could have one in 2 years, maybe a little sooner, maybe a little later. I am not predicting that, but if we don't change that could happen, as expert after expert has said.

I hope in the days to come we will see the regular order be reestablished. Our colleagues say they have a budget. Let's bring it forward. Let's see it. They certainly have talked to the Democratic Members on more than one occasion about it. Maybe it has some good things on which we can agree. It will probably have some things that I wouldn't agree on, but it can be passed. We can't filibuster a budget. Under the Budget Act, it can be passed by a simple majority. A budget can clear the Senate, but you know what. If we produce a budget, we have to tell the American people what we really believe about America, where we really want this country to go.

Do we want a limited government, or do we want to continue to expand a larger and larger government? Do we want to raise taxes more and more to sustain spending levels higher than we have ever had them before? Is that what we want? Or are we prepared to make reductions in spending? One or the other has to occur. We cannot continue to borrow at the rate we are borrowing, which every expert has told us.

I am challenging the leaders of this Senate who asked for the job, who asked to be leaders of the Senate, asked to be given the responsibility of helping guide our Nation, to step forward and provide leadership.

In the joint statement issued by Mr. Bowles and Alan Simpson that they submitted to the Budget Committee, they said our Nation has never faced a more predictable financial crisis. In other words, to the experts they heard from and who testified to them, and then based on their own study, they believe we are heading to a financial crisis. Alan Greenspan recently said: I think the Congress will, at some point, pass reform in spending and budget matters. The only question is, Will they pass it before or after the debt crisis hits.

So we have that challenge. We have no higher duty than to protect our people from a foreseeable danger.

That danger is out there. We are heading right toward it. It is time for us to stand up and be honest and face that challenge. I do not believe business as usual should continue, and I will object to it so far as I am able.

I thank the Acting President pro tempore and yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

#### PATRIOT SUNSETS EXTENSION ACT OF 2011—Motion to Proceed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 1038, which the clerk will report by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to the bill (S. 1038) to extend expiring provisions of the USA PATRIOT Improvement and Reauthorization Act of 2005 and the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 until June 1, 2015, and for other purposes.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, as Chairman of the Senate Intelligence

Committee, I wish to point out that as of Friday, there are three provisions of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act which are going to expire. Those three provisions are something called roving wiretaps, the "lone wolf" provision, and the business records authority.

Because of prior discussions, let me point out up-front that this does not include national security letters, just these three provisions: "roving wiretaps," the "lone wolf," and the "business records" authorities.

I very much appreciate that the majority leader and the Republican leader have come together in agreement to bring this legislation to the Senate floor. Because of its importance, particularly at this point in time, I hope we will be able to conclude this business and see that those provisions are extended for 4 years before Friday.

Many of us strongly believe when it comes to national security there should be no partisan divide, only strong bipartisan support. So this measure should receive a substantial vote this afternoon, and the Senate will pass it quickly this week before these key authorities expire.

But before talking about the substance of the legislation, let me describe the context in which this debate occurs.

Three weeks ago, on May 1, the United States carried out a risky, complicated but ultimately successful strike against Osama bin Laden, in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The strike was the culmination of nearly a decade-long intelligence operation to locate bin Laden.

Similar to most complex intelligence challenges, finding bin Laden was the product of multiple intelligence sources and collection methods. It was a seamless effort led by the CIA, with important contributions from the National Security Agency—known as the NSA—and the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency as well.

The intelligence mechanisms that are employed in counterterrorism operations are carefully and regularly reviewed by the Senate's Intelligence Committee, which I have the honor to chair. Some are also overseen by the Judiciary Committee, on which I also have the pleasure to serve.

These intelligence tools include the provisions of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, or FISA, and in particular the three provisions that will, if not reauthorized, expire on May 27. Again, they are the "roving wiretap," the "lone wolf," and the "business records" authorities.

The point is, we as a nation rely on certain secret sources and methods to protect our national security. Most other nations do as well.

It is also important to note that the strike against bin Laden, while a critical strategic blow to al-Qaida, is also very likely to lead to reprisal attempts.

There have been calls for attacks against the United States after the bin

Laden strike from al-Qaida in Pakistan, from al-Qaida affiliates in Yemen and North Africa. There is a very real concern that radicalized Americans here at home may contemplate violence in response to extremists' calls for retribution.

So this is a time of heightened threat—maybe no specific threat, but certainly heightened threats. We are seeing attacks in Pakistan carried but by the Taliban in reprisals for this attack as well. Therefore, this is a time when our vigilance must also be heightened.

Key officials from the National Counterterrorism Center, the FBI, and the Department of Homeland Security recently described to the Intelligence Committee in closed session how their respective agencies have heightened their defensive posture over these very concerns.

Clearly, this is a time where every legal counterterrorism and intelligence-gathering mechanism should be made available.

It is also a time to seize the opportunity to further disrupt al-Qaida. The assault on the bin Laden compound netted a cache of valuable information: papers, videos, computer drives, and other materials about al Qaeda's vision and al-Qaida's plans.

The intelligence community established an interagency task force to go through that material as quickly as possible. I am hopeful that previously unknown terror plots will be identified and information leading to the location of terrorists will be found.

Authorities such as the three provisions set to expire this Friday may well prove critical to thwarting new plots and finding terrorists. They must be renewed.

Let me describe the three provisions in more detail.

First, the roving wiretap provision. Roving wiretap authority was first authorized for intelligence purposes in the PATRIOT Act in 2001. But, as you know, it has been used for years in the criminal context. This provision, codified in the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, provides the government with the flexibility necessary to conduct electronic surveillance against elusive targets.

Let me explain.

In most cases under FISA, the government can go to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act Court—which I will describe in detail later—and present an application to tap the telephone of a suspected terrorist or spy. The FISA Court reviews the application and can issue an order—basically a warrant—to allow the government to tap a phone belonging to that target.

We all know in this day and age there are disposable or "throw away" cell phones that allow foreign intelligence agents and terrorists not only to switch numbers but also to throw away their cell phone and replace it with another.

This roving wiretap authority allows the government to make a specific