

reaffirmed its commitment to Ukraine to respect the independence and sovereignty and existing borders of that nation, to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, to refrain from economic coercion to subordinate Ukraine to Russia's interests, and to consult in the event a situation arises that raises a question concerning these commitments.

Remember why the Budapest Memorandum was entered into by Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom as well as Ukraine. It was entered into because the Ukrainians were surrendering their nuclear weapons. They had decided to give up their nuclear arsenal as long as they had an assurance they would be protected and their sovereignty would be respected. Russia signed on and then summarily ignored it by basically an act of aggression in Crimea in this last week.

In 1997, the Russian Federation and Ukraine signed a friendship treaty. It was during that time that Russian President Boris Yeltsin said in Kiev, "We respect and honor the territorial integrity of Ukraine." As a participating state in the Final Act of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 1975, Russia committed to respect the sovereign equality and individuality of other participating States.

It is clear that in many respects Russia has violated the very agreements it signed. It has shown an act of aggression in the sovereign nation of Ukraine.

I will concede the situation is complicated because of the basic agreement between Russia and Ukraine when it comes to that critical piece of real estate in the Black Sea, but it still does not warrant the efforts that have been made by Putin to destabilize an effort for a peaceful government.

Mr. Putin has argued that the change in government in Ukraine was just the mob in the street. Nothing could be further from the truth. The change in government in Ukraine occurred through its Parliament, through its Constitution, and with the promise of an open and free election on May 25. It is up to us in the West and all countries that believe Ukraine deserves our assistance and support to make sure that election is carefully monitored, is totally legal and free, and the people of Ukraine have the last word about their future and their leadership.

Mr. Putin ought to be part of the observation team—at least his representatives—so that there is no argument about a free and fair election in Ukraine.

We also need to help this country that is going through some extremely difficult economic times. A recent article I read suggested Ukraine needs our assistance—way beyond the \$1 billion Secretary Kerry has talked about in his visit. But in order to achieve that, they are going to have to make some

significant and maybe unpopular reforms in their economy, in their gas program, and the like. It is tricky. To do that runs the risk of an unpopular backlash against these reformers. But without the reforms there can be no meaningful aid package. We need to stand with Ukraine, and Ukraine needs to stand for the reforms necessary to strengthen their economy.

This week I am working with Senators BROWN, SHAHEEN, WICKER, MURPHY, Kaine, COLLINS, and WARNER to construct a resolution condemning the Russian action in Crimea. There is more to be done. Senator MENENDEZ, at our luncheon, spoke today about the need to discuss aid, as well as sanctions, that may be necessary. I sincerely hope the sanctions will not be necessary. I hope Vladimir Putin and the Russians understand they cannot show this kind of aggression toward Crimea without a cost, but I hope they will do it soon so we can see the return of stability to Ukraine.

Ukraine is a critically important country, the second largest country in Europe today. It was a major part of the Soviet Union, and its independence, I am sure, has rankled Mr. Putin and his dreams of Russian empire. But the people of Ukraine should decide their future, not Vladimir Putin. We need to work with those people in Ukraine to give them that chance of self-governance, to give them a chance to pursue those values which we share here in the United States.

I hope my colleagues on a bipartisan basis will join us in this effort condemning this Russian aggression and standing by the people of Ukraine.

I see another colleague in the Chamber.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

INCREASED EXPORTS

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, a few years ago—actually in 2010—President Obama announced something he called the National Export Initiative. The goal of the initiative was to double American exports in 5 years. That is right, double American exports in 5 years—something certainly I support. It has been more than 4 years now, and it is pretty clear we are going to fall way short of the President's goal.

During his State of the Union Address this January, the President pledged once again to open new markets to American goods. The President specifically requested trade promotion authority. The very next day the Democrats' majority leader rejected the request. I come to the floor today to discuss how President Obama can increase American exports despite the opposition from his own party.

The President should focus on energy, and the President should take the steps needed to increase exports of American natural gas, oil, and coal. Energy exports are going to create

good jobs here in America and reduce our Nation's trade deficit. American natural gas, our oil, and our coal exports will also reap important foreign policy benefits, such as helping nations in Europe such as Ukraine free themselves from Russian manipulation. That is what it is—Russian manipulation.

Last month the magazine *The Economist* published an article with the headline "The petro-state of America: The energy boom is good for America and the world. It would be nice if Barack Obama helped a bit." That is from *The Economist* last month. The article explained that the United States may already have surpassed Russia as the world's largest oil and natural gas producer. The *Economist* went on to discuss the benefits of liquefied natural gas exports from the United States. It said that natural gas exports "could generate tanker loads of cash"—"tanker loads of cash"—for America.

However, *The Economist* also pointed out that the process for obtaining the permits—the permits needed to export that American natural gas—is "insanely slow." This is not an exaggeration. Over the past 3½ years the Department of Energy has used its discretion to approve only six applications to export liquefied natural gas. Meanwhile, the Department of Energy is sitting on 24 other applications. Fourteen of those have been pending for more than 1 year, and two of them have been pending for more than 2 years. To put this in context, the United States has approved only two-thirds of the amount of liquefied natural gas exports that Canada has.

Last year I introduced a piece of legislation, S. 192, the Expedited LNG for American Allies Act. It is a bipartisan bill, with supporters on both sides of the aisle, cosponsors on both sides of the aisle. This would require the Department of Energy to approve applications to export natural gas to members of NATO, to Japan, and to any other country where gas exports would promote U.S. national security interests. Think about the country of Ukraine. As Congress considers this legislation, President Obama should direct his Energy Department to expedite the existing permitting process. He should set firm deadlines for the Department in acting on pending applications.

These exports are going to create jobs all across this country—from natural gas fields in Wyoming, to steel mills in the Midwest, to ports along our coasts.

Liquefied natural gas exports will also help reduce our Nation's trade deficit, which stood at nearly \$39 billion in December.

Finally, natural gas exports will help our allies in Europe. Ukraine imports about 60 percent of its natural gas from Russia. So what is Russia's position on this? Well, we know that Vladimir Putin—Russia had actually cut off natural gas supplies to Ukraine twice before—in 2006 and in 2009. Earlier this

week the Wall Street Journal reported that Russia's state-owned energy giant, Gazprom, is now threatening to raise gas prices in the Ukraine. American natural gas exports could help Ukraine and other European countries reduce their dependence on Russia.

President Obama can also increase American exports by lifting the ban on exporting crude oil. The International Energy Agency estimates that the United States is going to overtake Saudi Arabia as the world's largest producer of crude oil by 2020. This reality is a remarkable development, and it has happened because of hydraulic fracturing and unconventional oil and gas production. It is estimated that unconventional oil and gas production is going to create up to 1.7 million new jobs in this country by 2020. But in January the International Energy Agency warned that the ban on crude oil exports—the ban that exists on those exports—could impede American crude oil production.

If the President does not lift the export ban, he is going to put American oil production and thousands of jobs at risk. He will also pass up on an incredible opportunity—an opportunity to reshape the global oil market. For generations, Americans have been subject to the whims of the global oil market. Americans pay more at the pump when oil production goes offline, wherever it is located. American crude oil exports would boost the world's oil supply and help stabilize prices for American consumers.

American exports would also undermine the influence of oil-rich countries that do not like us very much. For years the United States has asked Japan and India to reduce their imports of Iranian oil. These are two of the world's largest oil importers—Japan and India. In 2012 Japan imported more than 4 percent of its oil from Iran. India imported about 8 percent of its oil from Iran. American crude oil exports could help cut off a vital supply of funding to the Iranian regime. If my colleagues are serious about ensuring that countries abide by U.S. sanctions on Iran, they should support American crude oil exports, not oppose them.

Finally, President Obama needs to promote exports of American coal. Like natural gas and oil, coal exports are going to create good jobs all across the country.

Over the last several years the Environmental Protection Agency has taken steps to block American coal exports. The EPA is asking the Army Corps of Engineers to radically expand the environmental review process for new export terminals. It wants the Corps to consider the carbon emissions that would be produced by exports after they leave the United States. I want to repeat that. The EPA wants to block exports because of the carbon emissions the exports would produce when they are used after they leave the United States.

The National Association of Manufacturers says the EPA's actions would set "a very dangerous precedent that could be used to block exports of all types." That includes exports of American automobiles, exports of civilian aircraft, exports of heavy equipment that we manufacture here in the United States.

To its credit, the Army Corps of Engineers has said it will not expand the environmental review process for new export terminals. President Obama should ensure that the Corps will complete its work in a timely manner and do so without interference from the EPA or any other agency.

President Obama is fond of saying he has a pen and he has a phone. He has boasted about ignoring the will of Congress. He seems to take delight in finding legal authority where he has none. President Obama should stop using his so-called authority that is authority he does not have, and he should start using authority he does have. He needs to use his authority to promote American exports. President Obama needs to lift restrictions on exports of natural gas and on oil and coal so Americans can get back to work and our country can regain its stature in the world.

THE BUDGET

I also want to speak very briefly about another area where I think the President's administration is really not doing enough.

Yesterday the White House finally released the President's budget. This budget included no evidence of leadership and no sign that the President is ready to make a single responsible decision when it comes to Washington's out-of-control debt. The budget increases spending by \$791 billion over the next 10 years. It is a 63-percent increase over where we are today—63 percent. It adds another \$8.3 trillion of debt over the next decade. That is on top of \$6.8 trillion in debt the President has already racked up. The President has never submitted a balanced budget in his life, and this one is no exception.

President Obama is now a lameduck President. That becomes more obvious every time he puts out a partisan political agenda such as this one instead of putting out a serious plan for how government should spend taxpayers' money. The President's budget does nothing to reform Washington's entitlement spending. Is this really the legacy the President wants to leave for America's young people?

The White House has called this plan "Opportunity for All." There is no opportunity in this budget. It is just more debt, more taxes, more accounting gimmicks, budget tricks so the President does not have to make the tough, responsible decisions one would expect of the President of the United States.

On energy exports and on the budget, the President should be taking opportunities to solve some of the real challenges facing our country, not letting them pass him by.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE BUDGET

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to offer some remarks on President Obama's fiscal year 2015 budget proposal, some of which was released yesterday. As we all know, the release of the President's budget is an annual event here in Washington. It sets in motion a chain of processes and events that drive much of what we do right here in Congress.

Unfortunately, with President Obama's budgets in particular, this annual chain of events, for the most part, becomes an empty, almost meaningless exercise. The first problem with this year's budget is that we received it just yesterday, a full month past the statutory deadline.

What budget information we did receive yesterday is certainly incomplete. For example, when you look at the appendix of the budget, there is often reference to a section called "analytical perspectives." But those perspectives are nowhere to be found. I assume the rest of the budget information is forthcoming. Still, we can only wonder why it is being released a few pieces at a time.

Of course, the problems with this budget go well beyond the delays and the sporadic release of information. Put simply, no one in their right mind would say the substance of this budget was worth the wait. Despite the fact that they took an extra month to put this budget together, the most striking thing about it is how little there is in the way of new ideas and proposals.

Indeed, when you look for the substance of the budget, you will see the administration appears to be short on new ideas. President Obama's new budget consists largely of proposals from his past budgets, which is surprising, given that none of them have received a single affirmative vote in Congress. Let me repeat that. None of his past budgets have received a single affirmative vote in Congress.

These proposals center on three familiar themes, all of which we have seen in past budgets, and in virtually every policy proposal from this President. First, we see the administration's continued insistence that we can tax and spend our way into prosperity, and that growing the Federal Government is the same as growing our economy.

Second, there is the effort to further redistribute income and the notion that this will, on its own, somehow lead to economic growth and job creation.