

upon the table and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will resume legislative session.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

SUPPORTING SOVEREIGNTY AND DEMOCRACY IN UKRAINE—MOTION TO PROCEED—Continued

The Senator from Oklahoma.

FLOOD INSURANCE

Mr. COBURN. I will try to make my remarks short. I know several of my colleagues have places they need to be and have a time schedule they are on. I was involved in a committee hearing this afternoon and could not contribute to the debate on the floor on the Flood Insurance Program.

I have about 8 months left in the Senate. I just want to remind us of what we have just done. We have solved a very short-term problem and made a long-term problem significantly worse. We did not really do our work because we were in such a hurry to take the political pressure off of the increases in the flood insurance rate.

Addressing that issue was important, and I agree that we needed to make some adjustments. But what we did is we chose politicians to win and the future to lose when it comes to flood risk mitigation and flood risk cost for the American public. Are there some positive things in the bill? Yes. But what we did once again is we put our political positions ahead of the best interests of this country.

The Biggert-Waters bill was a great reform bill. What happened is when we passed it, we did not recognize the tremendous rate increases many people would have. In the last 5 years in this country, we spent \$1.6 billion at FEMA reevaluating all of the flood plains in this country. The whole purpose behind that was to really put a risk of what is out there based on what we have and slowly get to a point where we are actually measuring the risk.

What have we actually done when we just passed this bill and sent it to the President? What you did is you asked everybody in the future to continue to pay an exorbitant amount of money for their insurance so people who are at risk will not have to pay ultimately what is due them. The only time we are going to see that actually happens now is when a property sells. That is when we are going to see it. Vacation homes are excepted. I understand that. We are not going to give rebates to people. I understand that. But the big problem is we undermined the incentive to mitigate for risk. We undermined it.

So we now have a new flood insurance program. We have \$18 billion worth of problems. We are getting ready to go to \$26, \$28 billion worth of problems, and that is on the heads of our kids. So we once again chose a position that put our kids at risk so we

politically can be better off because we are going to alleviate the parochial scream. Rather than actually fix the scream, we are going to alleviate it, and we have eliminated all of that.

So my disappointment is not that we responded to parochial requests; it is that we did not do the hard work of actually fixing the problem and addressing some of the parochial problems and anecdotal notes of massive increases in flood insurance. We could have done both, but we chose not to.

It is so heartbreaking to me and to this country that we continually choose the politically expedient path that will bury our kids when we do not have to. That is a function of a lack of real leadership, of solving the real problems rather than treating the symptoms of the problems, which is what we did. We have wasted \$1.6 billion now, essentially. We might recover it 30 years from now. But the Flood Insurance Program is now not in any better shape and will not be in any better shape 20 years from now than it is today.

So I hope we are happy that we have solved the parochial problems, but when you go to sleep tonight think about who is going to pay that bill. It is not the people who are getting the benefit from the very large subsidized flood insurance. It is the kids of this country and what is not going to be provided for them. It is those on the really low rung of the ladder economically. We are not going to have the finances to actually care for those who need the care from us the most. Really, it is the well-healed or the more well-healed and the more well-connected. They won again. The builders and the developers won. The real estate firms won. Less than two-tenths of 1 percent of this whole thing, without even modifying Biggert-Waters, applied to people in the lower 40 percent of income in this country. Less than two-tenths of 1 percent. Seventy percent applied to the top 20 percent of the people. So we gave a break to the most well off people. Those are the numbers. You cannot dispute those numbers. So because they screamed and do not want to pay their fair share, we have now damaged the future potential for our children.

I would say congratulations. We continue to do the same thing. No wonder the American people say: What is up with Congress? They do not have the courage to make a difficult, tough decision. What they do is they always make the politically expedient one.

That is exactly what we did today. That is what the House did today. To me, it is sickening.

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, what now is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to S. 2124 is the pending business.

Mr. REID. What is the subject matter of that bill?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Ukraine bill.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by me, after consultation with Senator MCCONNELL, the motion to proceed be agreed to; that there be 1 hour of debate equally divided between the two leaders or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of that time, the bill be read a third time and passed, with all of the above occurring with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Reserving the right to object—I will not object—Madam President, the majority leader has asked that we move and pass this legislation which was considered in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It was open for amendment. Several amendments were adopted. Several were rejected. By a vote of 14 to 3, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported out this bill.

Why should we care about this legislation? I will try to be as brief as possible, but I urge my colleagues' attention to the latest New York Times report today: "Russia Massing Military Forces Near Border With Ukraine." Russian forces are massing near the border with Ukraine. Airborne; ground capabilities; the parachute drop was on a scale not seen since the collapse of the Soviet Union; the units involved artillery batteries, assault helicopters, and at least 10,000 soldiers.

In other words, right now as we speak, Vladimir Putin is either planning on or contemplating an invasion of eastern Ukraine. We have seen the movie before: provocateurs, people having to come and restore order, and there is no order, so then we see military intervention, and then there is going to be another referendum such as is supposed to take place on Sunday in the Crimea, which I predict 80 percent of the vote will do so when that is clearly not what the will of the people of Crimea is.

So, incredibly, incredibly, there will be an objection from this side to this legislation when the people of the Ukraine are crying out for our help and our assistance.

My friend Senator BARRASSO will now be proposing the House bill that has not one single sanction in it—not one sanction. I am surprised that the Senator would want to propose a bill that does not have any punishment for the Russians for what they are doing right now.

Then another one of my colleagues will probably come out and object to us taking up and passing the bill that was put through the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—open to amendments—in a process that could not be criticized by anyone.

So what is the message we are sending to the Ukrainian people? What is the message we are sending them? That we have a problem with a fix for the IMF.

Then also there are some who are demanding changes in the regulation by

the Treasury Department concerning campaign contributions. What has happened? Where are our priorities? Is the IMF—no matter whether it is fixed or not fixed with this legislation—more important than the lives of thousands of people? Is that what we are talking about?

You know, I will say to my friends who are objecting to this—and there are a number of them on my side—you can call yourself Republicans—that is fine—because that is on your voter registration. Do not call yourself Reagan Republicans. Ronald Reagan would never—would never—let this kind of aggression go unresponded to by the American people.

We are not talking about troops on the ground. We are talking about responses that impose sanctions and punishment for Vladimir Putin, who clearly has said that his goal—the greatest disaster of the 20th century was the dissolution, the collapse of the then-Soviet Union. We know what Vladimir Putin is all about. We know what he understands.

So now because of an IMF fix or a campaign finance fix, we are now going to reject a piece of legislation that was done on a bipartisan basis with the leadership of the chairman, whom I see on the floor, of which I am proud, and with the ranking member, Senator CORKER of Tennessee. We are going to say no.

Do you know what the most ridiculous thing about all of this is? That the majority leader has filed cloture. We have well over 60 votes. So we are going to be back in about 11 or 12 days, whatever it is, and cloture will have expired. We have well over 60 votes. We will pass this.

Instead, our signal to the people of Ukraine today, as Russian military forces are massing on their border: Wait a minute. It is more important that we get our campaign finance regulations fixed. It is more important that we have the IMF fix as a higher priority than the lives of the men and women in the Ukraine.

I have been embarrassed before on the floor of the Senate, I will tell the Presiding Officer, but I have not been embarrassed this way about Members of my own party. One of the proudest aspects I have always felt of our Republican Party and the leadership of Ronald Reagan is we stood up for people. We stood up for people when the Iron Curtain was there. We stood up for Natan Sharansky. We said, “Tear down this wall.” Now we have a guy who is trying to reinstate the old Russian Empire, which he has said himself, and what are we saying? No. A shameful day. I will not object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, reserving the right to object—and it is not my ultimate intention to object but hopefully to persuade my colleagues not to object.

I have been watching my colleagues on television, in committee, and on the

Senate floor rail about what is happening in Ukraine and about the lack of action from their perspective. We are at a moment—that after a very considered process in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which I am privileged to chair, working alongside the ranking member Senator CORKER and with Senator McCAIN, another distinguished member of the committee—with a very strong bipartisan vote on a major piece of legislation, that, in fact, when it comes time to act, we have those who say no, even though they go on TV and bemoan the lack of action.

I find it incredibly difficult to suggest that what the House passed can be the only response to what is happening in Ukraine. Yes, it is a loan guarantee which we include in our legislation, but everything we do we pay for. So for those who are fiscally conservative and are concerned about it, we have paid for what we seek to do. That cannot be said about the House.

Secondly, we go beyond a loan guarantee. As important as that loan guarantee is to making an expression to the Ukrainian Government, to the Ukrainian people, to our partners in Europe and in NATO, we say there has to be responsibility taken for those who corrupted the Ukrainian Government, for those who undermined its sovereignty, for those who undermined its security.

We have provisions, both permissive and mandatory, to sanction individuals who have been found to have, in fact, corrupted the circumstances and/or affected the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Ukraine. One of them was sponsored by Senator McCAIN, which was adopted unanimously, a mandatory provision.

If we want to be doing something about Russia, we can't do it with the House bill, we can only do it with the Senate bill. Then, yes, the IMF. I respect people who for some reason have an ideological difference about international monetary institutions, but if we want to talk about security, we will not have security in Ukraine if we cannot stabilize it economically, and a \$1 billion loan guarantee isn't enough to make that happen.

It is the IMF that is going to be the singular force to create the opportunity for economic stability inside of Ukraine, which is fundamental to meeting our security challenge as well.

To hold IMF reform hostage to the question of whether unlimited campaign money can go into our elections without deciding whether that is being done appropriately under the law as it exists is outrageous.

There is a reason we care about Ukraine. It is not simply because we want to do the right thing by a country that has been invaded in the Crimea and for which thousands of Russian troops and equipment are amassing along its border in Eastern Ukraine, it is because this has a global consequence.

If the West doesn't act what will China say when it is looking at its ter-

ritorial desires in the South China Sea? What will Iran say as we are negotiating with them about nuclear weapons?

What will others in the world, in North Korea—whose march to nuclear weapons on a greater scale is in play—all of them will be looking at what we and the West do as it relates to Ukraine and making a decision: How far can I go? What can I get away with?

To be able to stabilize Ukraine, we need to ultimately have the International Monetary Fund. To hold that hostage because of investigations going on—wherever they may lead and however they may lead to the question of campaign finance moneys may be inappropriately, ultimately, being used in violation of law—is outrageous.

What is at play is our national interests, our national security, the sovereignty of the people of the Ukraine, the message that we will send across the world about what we stand ready to do. That should not be hostage to political interests that have nothing to do with those issues.

For all those who have been standing and making speeches, for all those who have been going on TV with plenty of criticism, this is your opportunity to act and act now. There is no reason we cannot do that at this moment.

I withdraw my reservation and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. I will be brief. I wish to say first to the leader, we certainly have had some discussions regarding operations on the Senate floor and the speed with which we deal with things and the amount of debate, but I thank him for trying to bring this issue to a vote today.

I thank him for what he is going to do in a moment; that is, to file cloture on this piece of legislation that passed out of our committee with strong bipartisan support, so that immediately when we get back we will take up the bill.

I wish we could do it tonight. We have a group of seven or eight Senators on their way to Ukraine. Nothing would be better than for them to know we passed this strong piece of legislation this week, while there is going to be a referendum that is going to take place early next week in Crimea, while we have Russian troops on the border, while we have a Prime Minister who was here last night showing extreme courage, as a 39-year-old young man, in dealing with the issues he is facing today.

I lament the fact that we are not going to have the opportunity as a body—the most deliberative body in the world, some say—to take action on this issue.

I do wish to say that whenever we bring up the bill—it appears it will not be tonight; hopefully it will be as soon as we get back—this is a strong piece of legislation. It deals both with giving Ukraine a bridge to the future while

they are dealing with economic issues internally; it deals with sanctions to isolate Russia, which is what we all know needs to happen to keep them from continuing this activity; and it puts in place reforms our country has already agreed to that Congress has not taken action on—and that makes the IMF more fully able to deal with this issue, which is a poster child for why we would want the IMF to operate in a responsible and strong manner.

I strongly support this legislation. I thank the chairman for working with us the way he did. I thank Senator MCCAIN for his leadership on these issues.

Again, I thank the majority leader for placing this in an urgent manner before the Senate today. I lament the fact that we will not vote on it today, but hopefully we will pass it broadly when we return.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Reserving the right to object, I am going to be brief, but I wish to make this point, that it is rare we take an action in the Senate that is watched around the world, and that is happening tonight. That is happening tonight because the crisis in Ukraine and in the Crimea has focused the attention of the world on Russian aggression, aggression by a country which hosted the Sochi Olympics—a charm offensive so we could see the new Russia—and then the final day of the ceremonies they sent their troops into Crimea.

That isn't the new Russia. That is the old Russia. It is a Russia many of us are familiar with, a Russia for those of us who have Lithuanian blood. My mother was born there and remembered full well what the Soviets did in the Baltics and what it meant to those poor people for such a long time.

We remember and we know that the ambitions of Vladimir will only be stopped with the resolve of the West. The resolve of the West starts in this Chamber tonight. It is an opportunity for Members on both sides of the aisle to stand and approve the measure which passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee yesterday 14 to 4, with the great leadership of Senator MENENDEZ of New Jersey and Senator CORKER of Tennessee.

It was a bipartisan effort to say that what the Russians have done is wrong; that if they continue this course we will initiate political and economic sanctions; and that we will join the international community in strengthening the Ukrainian economy so it can prosper, embrace democracy, and the Western values which we treasure. That is what is at stake with this request this evening.

To hear people say let's not do it because we should debate the future of the IMF—for goodness' sake. Can't we save that for another day.

For the people in Ukraine, for those in America of Ukrainian descent who

have family in Ukraine, can't we say we will save the debate on the IMF for another day.

Others have suggested there is another course of action. They say if we want to help Ukraine, we have to say the U.S. Department of Treasury cannot investigate violations of 501(c)(4) organizations.

What does that have to do with Ukraine? Nothing.

This is what it boils down to. Those who are making that demand are saying we cannot protect Ukraine unless we are prepared to protect the Koch brothers from the possibility of investigation and prosecution for wrongdoing. That is what it comes down to. That is an outrage. If we submitted that as a plot line to "House of Cards," they would reject it and say nothing could be so outlandish. We have heard it not once but many times.

Let's stand tonight in the Senate and send a message to Russia and to Ukraine that we stand behind those people whose lives are at stake as they try to move forward toward democracy and as they move forward toward a free election. Let's stand behind them tonight and not hide behind some procedural effort.

I object to this measure and I hope the unanimous consent request is agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, reserving the right to object, today Russia's Defense Ministry announced new military operations in regions along the Ukrainian border, a disturbing development that comes 1 day after Ukraine's interim Prime Minister visited President Obama and met with Members of this body.

We are now faced with the inescapable reality that the Senate is about to enter a recess week, having taken no meaningful action to aid the interim government in Kiev. We are left with one option, taking up and passing the House-passed bill, which authorizes \$1 billion in loan guarantees. We can pass that measure now by unanimous consent and assure our friends in Ukraine that they are not forgotten.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee bill contains provisions related to the International Monetary Fund that are unrelated to the crisis in Ukraine and not needed immediately and must be debated by this body.

The bill also contains sanctions, cuts to the Department of Defense, and other appropriations provisions.

The Foreign Relations Committee bill touches the jurisdiction of several committees and is certain to be met with opposition and perhaps a protracted conference with the House where, were we to take it up today, in the face of Russian armored vehicles, we are offering rhetoric, despite the fact that the committee bill addresses jurisdiction within the Armed Services Committee, the Appropriations Committee, and cuts Defense Department spending.

The chairman of the committee refused yesterday to allow me to offer amendments concerning the export of natural gas to markets in Europe. The Senate should debate whether helping Ukrainians through the export of natural gas is in our interest, as dozens of newspapers around the country talk about Moscow tightening the squeeze on Ukraine over energy.

The Washington Post says: "Europe needs an alternative to Russian natural gas."

The Wall Street Journal: "West Tries to Loosen Russia's Gas Grip."

The New York Times: "U.S. Hopes Boom in Natural Gas Can Curb Putin."

The Senate should debate whether helping the Ukrainians through the export of natural gas is in our interest. It should have that debate and pass sanctions, but none of those matters can be addressed today—none of them.

The only bill that can get to the President quickly is the House-passed bill, and we should pass it now.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—H.R. 4152

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 328, H.R. 4152.

I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

Mr. REID. I was talking to my friend, the senior Senator from Arizona, a little while ago. He and I came to the Senate together many years ago from the House of Representatives.

We came to the Senate together. We were separated because Arizona has more people and Nevada seniority. During those many years that we have been together, we have had some experiences in the Senate that are memorable. I don't know as much—and that is an understatement—about military preparedness and the military as JOHN MCCAIN does. That is a gross understatement. He is somebody we should listen to when it comes to things dealing with aggression and military operations.

Ukraine is kind of personal to me. A baby was born. His parents named him Israel Goldfarb. He, with his parents, came to the United States. His name was changed. That man is my wife's dad, my father-in-law. He was born in Ukraine. My wife Landra and I have been to Ukraine. But this is dealing with more than someone's father-in-law, may he rest in peace; it deals with 45 million freedom-loving people who are being threatened by the big bear wanting to return to the days of the Soviet Union.

So for my friend, the Senator from Wyoming, to come here and say there is nothing we can do about this today, that is absolutely wrong. There is plenty we can do about it today. But we are not going to do that. Why? Well, my friend says there are committees who are concerned about jurisdiction.

How do the people in Ukraine feel about that one? How do they feel about that—that the bipartisan heavy vote we got out of the markup in the Foreign Relations Committee may have stepped on someone's toes dealing with the jurisdiction of a committee? This is much more important than that.

The International Monetary Fund is very much related to Ukraine, and my friend from Wyoming knows that. He is on the committee. He knows about the importance of the IMF.

But 45 million people are desperate for help. They are afraid. They are afraid. Russia has deployed paratroopers to the border with Ukraine. They didn't drive in; they were dropped from the air. These are Russian Cold War tactics.

I want to make a suggestion to President Putin, and that is this. He is going to have this plebiscite on Sunday in Crimea. Why doesn't he have one in Chechnya? What would happen there? Would they support Russia? No. They are an oppressed people because of Vladimir Putin. If he wants to have a vote on what the people of the Russian Federation want to do, let him have a vote in Chechnya and see how that vote would turn out. This is so transparent what he is doing—illegally.

These are Cold War tactics to try to intimidate the 45 million people in Ukraine. That is just what it is—intimidation. The entire world condemns what he has done with rare exception, and they are going to condemn it even more if he goes further because action will have to be taken to isolate Russia and its economy. This robust bill which was passed by the Foreign Relations Committee and sent to the floor is important.

I don't throw around a lot of accolades, especially for my Republican colleagues. I should do more, but I don't, and I have to get better at that. But I have told him personally, and I tell the people of Tennessee and the people of this country and the people around the world that the speech that was given yesterday by the ranking member of that committee, the junior Senator from Tennessee, was historic. It was a wonderful speech that set aside all partisanship and directed its attention to what is going on in a part of the world that must concern us.

This measure that comes from the House of Representatives, I can't do better than what the senior Senator from Arizona said. How could we send eight of our Senators to Ukraine and say: Yes, we decided to do something, but we are not going to do anything to suggest in any way that what Russia has done is wrong. There is not a sanction that would cause anything to hap-

pen with what the House has done. I can't imagine—I can't imagine—how anyone in good conscience, after what has gone on in the last few days—how anyone could agree that our great country should go to Ukraine and tell them that we have passed something that helps you, although we don't condemn Russia in any fashion in the resolution. We are being asked to agree to that? I don't think so.

The role of the IMF in stabilizing Ukraine's economy and keeping Ukraine free is important. But it is important not only for the Ukrainians; it is important for this country. It is a part of our national security interests.

So we know people are upset about committee jurisdiction, and we know because it is out in public. I have kept this to myself for quite some time because it was done when we were doing other things, such as the omnibus. Efforts were made at that time to give up on the investigations of the Koch brothers and all the others. Remember, Treasury is not investigating only Republican super PACs. They are investigating super PACs, as they should—Republican super PACs, tea party super PACs, libertarian super PACs—all of them. If that isn't something that should be investigated, I don't know what is.

I have talked about Senator McCain's efforts in recognizing and identifying for us, and we listen because of his experience in the military. But we should also listen to what he says about campaign spending. I am sorry to take so long. I know people are wanting to leave, but I want to say this. I have been a part of raising money here in Washington for a long time—more than three decades. When I first came here, for the only money you could get you listed where they worked, their address, and everything about them. Then we all will remember both parties found a way to sneak stuff through. We did it through corporations. We funneled the money through State parties, and I remember that. I felt so unclean, for lack of a better description. People would give you these big checks to give to the State party. Then McCain-Feingold passed. For the next election it was as if I had taken a bath—a bath after having run a marathon.

JOHN MCCAIN understands why we need to investigate all this soft money—the super PAC money. When he says it, we should listen. Maybe our colleagues don't want to listen to me, but they should listen to JOHN MCCAIN because he has a record of substantiating his efforts in that regard.

So this thing is being objected to—what we are trying to do here to protect the 45 million in Ukraine—because of this investigation of the Koch brothers and others. I am not going to get into the details about social welfare organizations and all that, but we all know they are political front groups that spend millions of dollars in misleading ads, and it is unfortunate.

So it is too bad we have this. It is hard to believe that some are so wedded to the Koch brothers and others that they would torpedo a bill that is vital to the national security of this country and the freedom of tens of millions of Ukrainians and the birthplace of my wife's dad. This is wrong, and I am very disappointed in my friend from Wyoming that he would come forward and do this. I have to tell you it takes a lot of courage because there isn't a lot of academic integrity in that. Strike the word integrity. There isn't a lot of foundation for what he has done. It is unreasonable. It is unfair and it is without substantiation, and I object.

Mr. MCCAIN. Madam President.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. I know the Senator from Alabama wants to speak, and I assure him I will not remain on the floor to hear it because I know what the Senator from Alabama is going to say that has something to do with paying for it out of defense spending. I will match my record with the Senator from Alabama on defense spending anytime, day or night.

The fact is, this money is taken out of programs that were already canceled and were going to be returned to the Treasury. If they had been used for defense, then it would have busted the budget agreement the Senator from Alabama has so stoutly defended time after time. So in a bit of preemption of the Senator from Alabama, his argument is wrong that this is taking money out of defense. He is dead wrong.

So all I would say to my colleagues is that the Senator from Wyoming came down and wants us to take up and pass a bill passed by the House of Representatives which has not a single binding sanction in it—not one. Not one binding sanction in it. Not one strong message to the people of Ukraine that we are supporting them.

Russia's defense ministry announced: New military operations in several regions near the Ukrainian border on Thursday. Even as Chancellor Angela Merkel warned the operations came as Ukraine's Acting President Oleksandr V. Turchynov—the Acting President of the Ukraine was quoted by Ukrainian news media as saying Russian forces amassed near the border were ready to invade.

So we now have Russian forces ready to invade a sovereign nation, and what are we talking about? An IMF fix. Suppose the Senator from Alabama was right and this sum of money is being taken out of national defense. How much money are we going to have to spend on national defense if Vladimir Putin goes unchecked throughout Europe?

The next target, by the way, will be the Baltic countries because they have Russian speaking populations as well, and we may have to have provocations

there; Moldova, where Russia occupies Transnistria; Georgia, where Russia occupies Abkhazia and South Ossetia. But what are we arguing about? Whether the IMF fix is appropriate or not. What are we arguing about? Whether it is in dispute as to whether this is actually some reduction in defense spending. Where in the world are our priorities? Where in the world is our sympathy and our concern and our need to support the people of Ukraine in this hour of need?

I don't want to go on too long, but the issue of natural gas, we all know that is the way out of it long term. Does anybody think including a provision on natural gas is going to have any effect whatsoever on events that are now happening and will happen in the next few days? Of course not. I am a strong supporter of getting natural gas to these countries, but it is not going to happen in the next days, weeks, months or maybe even years. So to use that is an excuse, of course, again.

I have watched in the last few months two fool's errands. One was when we shut down the government. We were all so proud we shut down the government, turned away 600,000 people from our national parks, took \$27 million out of the economy of my State on a fool's errand that was not going to succeed. Now we see another fool's errand because the majority leader will file cloture and there will be well over 60 votes, and 10 or 11 or however many days from now we will pass it and these sanctions will be enacted.

In the meantime—in the meantime—the first message to the people of Ukraine, who have Russians—in the view of the Ukrainian President—ready to invade, is that we are telling them no, because we don't agree with an IMF fix or we think the money may be or may not be coming out of defense.

Mr. MURPHY. Will the Senator yield for a brief question?

Mr. MCCAIN. I will be glad to.

Mr. MURPHY. I thank the Senator.

Senator MCCAIN and I were in Ukraine at the end of last year. We had the privilege to speak on the Maidan in front of about half a million people, maybe even a million people who were there protesting the current government, the corruption that had reined free, their decision to move away from an orientation towards Europe. After Senator MCCAIN's remarks, the crowd rose up with the chant of "Thank you, USA. Thank you, USA."

Wherever we went during that trip, as we heard also from the new prime minister yesterday, they were desperate for the help of the United States. They are grateful for the fact that both the House and the Senate are moving forward on the issue of providing loan guarantees—loan guarantees that aren't nearly enough. That is why we need to have the IMF reforms, so they can deliver the bulk of the assistance. But they feel as though they are standing virtually alone as Russia

marches across their borders, and desperately want the United States to lead an international consensus to make it clear to the Russians there is a price to be paid.

The Russians marched into Crimea in large part because they didn't believe the United States and Europe would enact the crippling sanctions which would have otherwise caused them to make a different decision. What this moment could be about, right now on the floor of the Senate, as we head back over to Ukraine to again express our support, is there is bipartisan consensus in the Senate and the House that we are not only going to stand with them on the question of economic support, but we are going to enact a set of sanctions which will make Russia consider a different decision.

My question to Senator MCCAIN is: As important as economic support is, that is not what they are asking for here. They are not asking for passage of the House bill. They are asking for the United States, as we have time and time again, to lead an international consensus to send a strong message to Russia. We are going to go over there and I believe have a good series of meetings this weekend, but we could have had a much stronger message brought to them if we had answered their call ultimately to provide them economic support and stand with our partners in Europe, sending a strong message to the Russians.

Mr. MCCAIN. I thank my friend from Connecticut. I say if we take up and pass the House bill, it does one thing: It gives them loan guarantees for \$1 billion. There is not one other single binding provision in the House bill which my colleague from Wyoming wanted to take up and pass, instead of this bill, which went through the committee—with the input, by the way, of the administration. There is bipartisan and administration cooperation on it.

I urge my colleagues to read the provisions of this bill. They are tough. They are tough, enforceable provisions which will make Vladimir Putin and his kleptocratic oligarchy uncomfortable.

And, by the way, one of the reasons why Vladimir Putin is doing what he is doing is he is afraid a free, independent, and noncorrupt Ukraine on his border might send a message to the Russian people who are sick and tired of him anyway.

Sanctions on persons in the Russian Federation, complicit in or responsible for significant corruption, are a major provision of this bill; Sanctions on persons responsible for violence or undermining the peace, security, stability, sovereignty, or territorial integrity of Ukraine. There are many other provisions in this bill which are binding which will make life very uncomfortable.

Instead, my dear friend—and he is my dear friend—from Wyoming wants to take up and pass a bill which has one thing, and one thing only, and that

is a \$1 billion loan guarantee. By the way, the EU has just given them \$15 billion.

So all I can say is we will pass this legislation, and we will go and we will assure our Ukrainian friends that this bill will be passed and we will act.

I hope people at home who know Ukraine and know the people of Ukraine and know the friends and relatives and others will make it known to their elected representatives that for us to sit by and not help these people would be writing a disgraceful chapter in American history.

I thank my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, if I could add to the comments of Senator MCCAIN.

Last night we all met with the Prime Minister. They don't even need this economic aid today. They have to sign an IMF agreement first. It is weeks before they even need what the Senator from Wyoming wished to pass.

On the other hand, what we are trying to do is push Russia back. As the leader mentioned, this bill has tough sanctions. And, by the way, Europe is meeting on Monday to begin looking at the sanctions they want to put in place. So if we were to pass the sanctions which we have in this bill—which are tough sanctions, sanctions which we have never imposed before, sanctions on economic extortion, sanctions on corruption—what that would do is help boost the European community along to do the same thing, and our goal here is to isolate Russia to keep them from continuing to put pressure on Ukraine.

So I couldn't agree more. Why would we pass a bill which does no good as it relates to trying to push Russia back and isolate them, when we have an opportunity right now to pass a bill which shows we are willing to isolate Russia and actually give strength to what the European community is getting ready to do hopefully this next week.

So I agree. I wish we were taking up the bill which we all worked on together and passed by a huge bipartisan majority, and I wish we could send you all with the sanctions in hand, passed out of the Senate, to show the people of Ukraine that while militarily there may not be involvement, we stand together with them to do everything we can to isolate Russia, to isolate Putin, and to make sure economically they pay a huge price if they try to take any other actions in this area. So I agree with the Senator.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. GILLIBRAND). The majority leader.

Mr. REID. Madam President, there has been an objection. I think unfairly, there has been an objection. Everyone should understand, the first legislative matter we will take up when we get back here is going to be this. There is nothing I know of at this time that is more important.

So Senators should be aware, this is nothing we are going to run from. We are going to act on it as soon as we get back. It is really too bad we haven't been able to move forward. We should have. We could have. We are not going to. But we are going to move to it as soon as we get back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, what has happened in Ukraine is a real disaster. It should never have happened. It is so bad, and it reflects a weakness in American foreign policy which goes deep. The American people understand that. I think the whole world is baffled at the lack of clarity in American foreign policy. I would say, if JOHN MCCAIN had been elected President and were President today, we would have never had this invasion by the Soviet Russians into Ukraine and Crimea.

This is a big problem. It is not going away. It is a very deep and serious problem.

The fundamental thing we can do today—and we should do today—is move forward with what the United States can contribute to this situation, which is to pass the \$1 billion loan fund. The European Union is doing their \$15 billion through the IMF. Why don't we do that? Why don't we do that?

The reason is, this leadership is determined to push forward a policy change in the International Monetary Fund which has been up here before the Congress since 2010 and has not been passed and does not have to be passed today. They have insisted on that.

They have placed Ukraine in second place through their reforms which they have been pushing for with the IMF, and there are serious problems with that. It gives Russia more clout, among other things; not a lot, but it gives them more clout in the International Monetary Fund. And it costs money and violates the budget.

I am the ranking member on the Budget Committee. It is subject to a budget point of order. There is no doubt about that. Anybody can suggest otherwise if they want to, but it violates the budget, and we ought not to be doing this in violation of the budget. We don't have to.

But this administration negotiated with Senator MCCAIN and Senator CORKER and the Democratic leadership in the Senate and they agreed this would be the policy. Not what the House passed. But they would add more to it, they would reform the IMF, and then we are all just supposed to accept it.

I told the Senator from Tennessee—a very fine Senator—I am ranking member on the Budget Committee. He knows that. We have worked together to try to adhere to the spending limits Congress has imposed on ourselves. We just voted on this. Ten weeks ago the President signed this reform which raised the spending but limited it, and

they want to spend more in a way which is not legitimate. So I am baffled.

Why in the world would we not take advantage of the—yes, what the House has sent to us, pass this legislation, and allow us to make our individual contribution of \$1 billion? And, by the way, we are scoring it at about \$350 million because it is unlikely we will be fully paid back.

So why don't we do that? Is it pride? Is it pique? Is it politics? I can't imagine. So you don't get everything you want, colleagues. Take what you can get. It is really the only thing which amounts to anything now. The IMF has put up \$15 billion. They don't need this reform to do their loan, their aid to Ukraine. They don't need this legislation for that. Why is it so important?

Senator DURBIN said: Well, why can't we debate this another day. Right. Why can't we debate the IMF another day? But if his bill were to pass, the debate is over; the law the President wants to pass would pass, without congressional involvement in it.

Members of Congress have been dealing with these issues for a long time. It is a serious question. It does not need to be here today on this legislation. It just does not.

I have warned our colleagues that we do not need to be passing legislation which is not paid for in this fashion, and I would object to it. They had time here to fix it, but no attempt was made to fix it.

It is a little disturbing to me to see our colleagues, who have themselves decided what the best solution is, come to the floor and attack those of us who have a good-faith objection to it, when we are perfectly prepared to support the fundamental thing which needs to be done—and that is the \$1 billion loan package the United States has agreed to fund, the House has agreed to support, I support, virtually every Member of Congress supports. But not this big reform package of IMF which is not justified.

I feel deeply this is a big mistake. Why in the world we wouldn't act today and take yes for an answer, I can't imagine. It goes beyond what I think is realistic.

I would conclude by saying again, something is very wrong with the foreign policy of the United States of America. Whether we reform the IMF is not going to send a message to Russia. The idea that somehow we are going to affect them by exactly what has passed here today I believe is incorrect. I believe fundamentally this package is what we can do, what we should do, and we should do it today. Then we should come back and be prepared to impose serious sanctions or whatever the President asks for.

Finally, I am disappointed the President of the United States is not more consultative with Congress in order to determine what legislation we need to pass and would continue to insist on passing reform legislation of the Inter-

national Monetary Fund, which, in all likelihood, will be rejected by the House.

I feel as though we are through the looking glass here. I hate that tensions are so high. But if we would take yes for an answer, pass this House bill, come back and have a full evaluation of reform of IMF, and pass sanctions as we go forward, that would be the right thing for us to do.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Madam President, I commend the Senator from Alabama and the Senator from Wyoming for their leadership on this important issue.

The crisis in Ukraine has riveted our attention for the last 4 months as we have seen brave men and women standing in freezing cold, standing for freedom, standing for their desire to stand with the West, to stand with Europe, to stand with America, and to be free from the domination of Putin's Russia.

We all strongly support the efforts of the Ukrainian people to choose a different path from subjugation to Russia, to choose a path toward economic and political liberty and toward a close friendship with the West.

Madam President, all of us on both sides of the Chamber are united in decrying the military aggression of Russian strongman Vladimir Putin, as he has invaded a sovereign nation with military force, committing an act of war. No one should be confused as to what Mr. Putin is attempting to do. Indeed, acting Ukraine Prime Minister Yatsenyuk said very clearly that Putin is trying to reestablish the borders of the old Soviet Union. He is expanding, sadly, into a vacuum of leadership the United States has not been filling. Russia is filling that vacuum, and the seizure of Crimea is only the beginning of Putin's aggressiveness. He will continue, I would predict, to be aggressive unless and until he meets significant resistance.

We are also united in believing there is an important role for the United States to play in responding to this crisis. I believe we should take concrete actions to respond to Russia's invasion of Crimea.

No. 1, we should press to expel Russia from the G8.

No. 2, the administration should immediately begin enforcing the Magnitsky Act—which he has failed to do up to this point—designed to punish human rights atrocities by Russian Government officials. Indeed, we should expand it to include Ukrainian human rights abusers.

No. 3, we should immediately install the ballistic missile batteries in Eastern Ukraine that were scheduled to go in that President Obama mistakenly canceled in an effort to appease Mr. Putin. That effort did not succeed, and we should go forward with allowing eastern Europe to defend itself.

Additionally, there is a great deal we can do to aid the people of Ukraine.

The President should immediately offer the Government of Ukraine a free-trade agreement indicating that their goods are welcome in the United States and our goods in their country.

We should explore other options to assist them in economic recovery consistent with free market principles, including moving as expeditiously as possible to allow them access to U.S. energy exports and in particular liquidified natural gas. Russia uses natural gas and energy as a tool of economic blackmail. It is critical to the source of Russia's power not just over Ukraine but over much of Europe. The United States is blessed with abundant supplies of natural gas. It is only foolhardy government policy that stands in the way of our exporting that natural gas, meeting the need and helping Ukraine be free of the economic blackmail. We should move immediately in that regard not just because it would help Ukraine, not just because it would represent a serious blow to Russia when Russia relies on the revenue from those energy exports—if the United States steps up and provides it to them instead, that would be a serious economic blow to Russia—not just that but because it makes perfect sense from the perspective of the United States of America, our economic interests at a time when we have the lowest labor rate participation since 1978. When millions of people are out of work and hurting, we should be developing and expanding our resources, and energy provides an opportunity to transform the geopolitical playing field, to use our abundant resources in a free market manner to respond and help liberate the people of Ukraine.

There is also a financial component of the assistance for—Ukraine that it makes a world of sense should come from the International Monetary Fund, to which the United States is a contributor. That is what the IMF was created to do, and the IMF today stands fully capable of meeting that need.

My friend from Arizona has an admirable passion on this issue for the people of Ukraine and for standing up to Mr. Putin, and I commend my friend from Arizona for his passion in this regard. However, the reason this bill has not passed today is because the majority of this Chamber—the majority leader made a decision, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee made a decision to inject into the aid and sanctions plan for Ukraine an extraneous issue, an issue of the IMF that has nothing to do with the underlying issue. That was a mistake. That was a mistake.

I would suggest that the so-called IMF reforms are misguided policy. They don't make sense for four separate reasons.

No. 1, they are unnecessary. There is no need whatsoever for these reforms. Indeed, the IMF is perfectly capable of managing the task on hand, and estimates have shown that Ukraine aid would cost no more than 5 percent of

its current resources. So the IMF portions are unnecessary, extrinsic. I agree with the Speaker of the House, JOHN BOEHNER, who says these so-called IMF reforms are unnecessary and extrinsic to this bill.

No. 2, these IMF provisions, if passed into law, would dramatically expand the financial exposure of the United States of America, effectively doubling our contribution, expanding our exposure. If that is good policy, that should be debated on its merits. We should not be opening the U.S. taxpayers to billions in additional financial liability without a debate on the merits. It shouldn't be just tied to Ukrainian aid and forced through the Senate. That is the wrong approach.

No. 3, most inexplicably, these so-called reforms, if passed, would diminish U.S. influence on the IMF; would reduce our ability to control the decisions of the IMF; indeed, would move the funds from a fund in which we have veto authority into one in which we no longer have veto authority. We would have a smaller portion of influence over the IMF.

Astonishingly, No. 4, this bill would expand Russia's influence and control over the IMF. Let me repeat that. A bill that is being ostensibly introduced to punish Russia for their acts of war and aggression would expand Russia's influence over the IMF and decrease the influence of the United States of America.

I agree with my friend from Alabama who suggested moments ago that this is "Through the Looking Glass." This makes no sense. I would challenge any of my friends here to stand here and explain why a sensible response to what Russia has done is to expand Russia's influence in the IMF and to diminish America's influence. That makes no sense whatsoever.

Madam President, I wish to close with two points. No. 1, we could pass aid for the people of Ukraine right now—today. The Senator from Wyoming rose and asked for unanimous consent to pass the bill that has already passed the House. Had the majority leader not stood up and objected on behalf of Senate Democrats, that bill would have passed into law. It would be already headed to the President's desk for signature. It is only because the majority leader objected that we are not sitting here today having already passed aid for the people of Ukraine.

I would note, by the way, that the majority leader had extended commentary about two businessmen, the Koch brothers, who I am beginning to think are characters almost out of "Dr. Seuss" in the majority leader's mind. They are the grinch who stole Christmas in his telling. I would note that the majority leader focuses on the IRS rules—not focusing on the abuse of power by the IRS, the Treasury inspector general chronicles, but instead on the need for a vote to regulate the IRS's abuse of power.

Let me say very simply that the House bill on Ukraine doesn't mention

the IRS at all, doesn't mention P4s at all. So when the majority leader stood on the floor, this is all because of the nefarious Koch brothers. Set aside the impropriety of the majority leader of the U.S. Senate picking two private citizens—individuals engaged in political speech, standing up for what they believe, and the majority leader using his position of political power to lambaste them, to target them.

Interestingly enough, the majority leader does not seem to have a problem with the California billionaire who has publicly pledged to put \$100 million behind Democrats to press them to pass climate change legislation that would cost millions of jobs across this country from blue-collar workers, from hard-working Americans. That billionaire, in the majority leader's view, is perfectly free to spend \$100 million in the election, but the Koch brothers, because the two of them have stood and expressed their views, are subjected to vilification and personal attack from the majority leader.

The Senate rules allow a Member of this body, if his or her integrity is impugned, to raise an objection. Let me ask you something, Madam President. What Senate rule allows a private citizen to raise an objection when his integrity is impugned by the majority leader?

Those two brothers are not Members of this body, so they can have their reputation dragged through the mud. Yet they are denied a point of personal privilege to come and defend themselves. That is not the job of the U.S. Senate, to vilify private citizens.

I would note that the provision he is talking about is not in the House bill, which means when the Senator from Wyoming stood and asked for consent to pass the House bill, if the majority leader had simply refrained from objecting, we would have passed aid to Ukraine tonight. It has nothing to do with the Koch brothers, nothing to do with the IRS. That is not in the House bill. The reason the majority leader objected is that he wants to hold aid to Ukraine hostage to force through these misguided IMF reforms. That is the wrong decision.

One final point I wish to make. The world should understand, Russia should understand, the people of Ukraine should understand, and Mr. Putin should understand that all of us are united in standing with the people of Ukraine, that the United States will act. I am convinced it will act decisively to impose sanctions and serious consequences on Russia for this unprovoked act of war. We will act decisively to stand with the people of Ukraine. There should be no doubt in any observer's mind that this will unify both parties. We will stand together. We would have done so tonight had the majority leader not made the cynical decision to hold aid for Ukraine hostage to force a partisan bill that does not enjoy sufficient support in this body to pass otherwise. Politics

should end at the water's edge, and I think it is unfortunate to see the majority leader trying to use the crisis in Ukraine for political advantage. That is a mistake.

But there should be no ambiguity. We will impose sanctions. We will stand with Ukraine. And the people of America understand that Mr. Putin's aggression is reliving the days when the Soviet Union was an evil empire. It is reliving those days Mr. Putin called the collapse of the Soviet Union "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of modern times." Well, all of us surely hope he does not succeed in his intentions of restoring the Soviet Union, restoring that evil empire, restoring the cloud of oppression across Europe and across the world, and we stand united with the people of Ukraine and with the people surrounding Russia in support of freedom and against his unconscionable act of war.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the Senator from Texas for his comments and for his eloquence. I believe he has touched on the right issues.

I would just add one thing. I was in Ukraine about 3 years ago; a delegation was there. We met with State Department people. We met with Tymoshenko, the fabulous leader of the Orange Revolution. She had those beautiful braids in her hair like peasants in the Ukraine wear, and she was concerned that she would be put in jail. I just couldn't believe it. The Ambassador told us she hadn't committed any crime, but she was placed in jail and served 2½ years. They have released her now. She was in a wheelchair, and you could tell she suffered from that.

I truly believe the people of Ukraine did a fabulous, wonderful thing when they stood for their country, for democracy. We need to stand with them. I stand with them just as I stood with and defended the people of Georgia when the Russians invaded Abkhazia and Ossetia.

I want to say unequivocally, bipartisanly, that this Congress—House and Senate—stands firmly with the people of the Ukraine. We want to help them. The one thing substantively we can do today that would make a difference for the people of Ukraine is to pass this bill that provides \$1 billion in help to them. I truly believe we should do that. I am deeply disappointed that the majority insists that unless they get their reform of the International Monetary Fund that they want to see happen, which is unrelated directly to the needs of Ukraine, that they won't accept the legislation the House has already passed. I think that would be a mistake.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

UKRAINE

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I return to the floor because I can't let some of what has been said go unchallenged.

First of all, as it relates to the majority leader, the issue of the connection that has been made between IMF reform and the C-4 investigation—the unlimited, undefined, not-known secret money that goes into these entities in elections—was not first raised by the majority leader. It was first raised by Senator CORKER in an article. It was subsequently raised today on the floor by Senator MCCAIN. So casting aspersions upon the majority leader and suggesting he is ultimately impugning the reputation of anyone is pretty outrageous when the Members of his own side of the aisle recognize that it was simply wrong to connect IMF reform and the ability to help Ukraine in the most powerful way now with some C-4 investigation.

Secondly, only in Washington could someone have you believe that IMF reforms we are promoting means more power for Russia. Yes, we are rushing in this Chamber—JOHN MCCAIN and BOB CORKER are rushing into this Chamber to give more power to Russia. Only in Washington could anybody believe that.

Only in Washington could someone have you believe that our other colleagues on the committee who voted for the legislation to have IMF reform were actually voting—our Republican colleagues were voting—to give Russia more power so they could continue to oppress people. It stretches the incredulous nature of that argument.

On the contrary, why are we in the mess we are in? Because when Ukraine was having serious economic challenges, it was Putin and Russia that were coming with their money, not the IMF which—in a way—might have ultimately been important because the IMF needs the resources and the leveraging we create by virtue of this legislation.

You can't divorce it. If you really want to help Ukraine, you need to have the resources of the IMF that ultimately guarantees the full ability to bring Ukraine back into economic order, and from that, build on all the other elements of security as well.

Thirdly, the budget point of order: The ranking member on our committee made it very clear when he said, I want to be supportive, but we have to have this paid for, and we did. People can disagree with the pay-for, but it is paid for, which is something the House of Representatives didn't do. Let me tell you what else the House of Representatives didn't do. They didn't do anything about sanctions—nothing, zero, nada.

The bottom line is, we would send a message that, yes, we want to partially help Ukraine, but not in the most significant way we can, which is with IMF reform and the leveraging of the resources and our voice that we would bring to them in determining their future and the next crisis in the world, which is unfortunately around the corner.

So for those who claim they are all for helping Ukraine and national security, they should have allowed us to have this vote tonight.

Lastly, with reference to my dear friend and colleague, for whom I have a great deal of respect, Senator BARRASSO, who said I didn't permit his amendment on LNG to move forward, his amendment was ruled out of order because it was not within the jurisdiction of the committee. The reality is on the merits of it, it is not about helping Ukraine right now. Ukraine doesn't have the infrastructure for LNG. They obviously don't have the resources to build the infrastructure for LNG.

Turkey, which controls the Bosphorus Strait, has said they are not going to let the LNG go through because of their concerns for security. So the bottom line is that is not about helping Ukraine today. If all of that can be accomplished—infrastructure, the resources to build it, and getting Turkey on board—then maybe in the future that is part of a further, longer term solution, but it is not about right now.

What it is about right now is the loan guarantees. It is about the sanctions to make sure the Russians and those in Ukraine understand they are going to be subject to real consequences by virtue of corrupting Ukraine and undermining its territorial integrity. Lastly, having the long-term ability through the IMF to achieve the goals of stabilizing Ukraine economically and also preparing for the next emergency, that is what was at stake tonight.

We will get there, but when you see movements of Russian troops and the circumstances that are unfolding, and I hear colleagues say, "We are not doing enough," and then just want to do a fraction of what is necessary to help the Ukraine, I begin to seriously wonder.

I hope the majority leader will have this as the first order of business when we return. I think there is bipartisan support for the package the way it is now. It is unfortunate that as our colleagues travel to Ukraine, they can't go with the final message that this was passed today, but it will pass.

As I said to the Prime Minister of Ukraine yesterday—an extraordinary individual who met with members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—in the long history of the world, only a few are called upon to answer the call of freedom in some of its most dangerous moments in history. He has been called upon to do that on behalf of his country at this time. We are called upon to stand against the aggression and to help a country be able to do so.

I hope we will be able to get past this issue of linking IMF reform with the whole question of campaign finance issues so we can achieve that goal.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

DEFENSE BUDGET

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, I very much appreciate the importance of the discussion going on, but I would like to talk about another very important issue that is facing us. One of the

biggest problems our country faces at the current time is one Washington has created—the out-of-control spending and our lack of fiscal discipline to put our country back on a path to fiscal responsibility.

Last week President Obama released his budget proposal for fiscal year 2015. That proposal continues Washington's reckless spending. It offers little in the way of real help to the millions of Americans struggling to get by in this very stagnant economy, which has not been helped by the President's policies.

What is worse is that the President finds a way to support the projects and priorities of his base but can't continue our country's commitment to our men and women who served and are serving our Nation in uniform.

The defense budget proposes to slash even more benefits our military families need. The Military Officers Association of America is rightfully highlighting these proposed cuts to military compensation and health care benefits.

The Washington Times published a story on this topic yesterday, saying retired servicemembers weighed in with frustration and anger, and rightfully so.

The proposal again caps the military pay raise at 1 percent, although the private sector wage growth is 1.8 percent. MOAA, the Military Officers Association, calculated what these cuts would mean to the bottom line of our active-duty military. An Army sergeant stands to lose nearly \$5,000 in benefits annually and an Army captain will lose nearly \$6,000 in benefits annually. This is certainly the wrong message to send to our men and women who put their lives on the line for this country.

When the President was elected, he promised to go through the budget with a scalpel; however, the only thing he seems capable of dissecting is military pay and benefits.

I am here today to say that these cuts on our military families are unacceptable. I will fight to preserve the benefits our military families were promised. Fortunately, as has been the case with the President's budgets from the past few years, this proposal will likely never see the light of day. Even the majority in the Senate doesn't have the desire to bring that proposal up for a vote. But this does not excuse those who continue to propose savings that come at the expense of our men and women in uniform or those who have served us in the past.

Our military members, their families, and our veterans should not have to bear the burden for Washington's irresponsible spending. Taking away benefits from our servicemembers has become a recurring problem. This is very troubling.

I stood here less than 2 months ago talking about our need to restore military retiree cuts that were unjustly taken away to help rein in spending. I opposed the budget agreement that cut

the retirement benefit of our veterans and reducing the cost-of-living adjustment because it unfairly aimed to balance the budget on the backs of our retired military. Now the President seems determined to continue down that path.

We were able to restore most of those misguided military retirement cuts, but these benefits should have never been a target. Now the President wants to target servicemembers again. It is unconscionable considering he is intent on interjecting the Federal Government into private sector labor issues. He wants to force private entities to raise wages and increase benefits in a poor economy that his policies have created. When it comes to our men and women in uniform, he is all for stripping away their hard-earned benefits so he can continue to redistribute wealth, raise taxes, and increase Federal spending another \$1 trillion.

We need to keep the promise we made to our servicemembers and maintain these benefits. Washington needs to find savings somewhere else. It can and must be done.

With that, I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. HAGAN. Madam President, I come to the Senate floor today to discuss an issue of enormous importance to my State, our country, and future generations.

I thank my colleagues for bringing attention to the critical issue of climate change earlier this week. This is a pressing problem that needs to be addressed and too often gets pushed to the back burner.

As a Senator from North Carolina, I represent a State that is home to some of our country's most treasured landmarks and most precious natural resources—from the Great Smoky Mountains in the west to the Uwharrie National Forest in the Piedmont to Cape Hatteras National Seashore in the east.

Like so many North Carolinians, my family and I love spending time together outdoors whether it is hiking, fishing, biking, or just enjoying the views and being outside.

Visitors from across the country travel to North Carolina to experience the Blue Ridge Parkway in the fall or to take a vacation on the Outer Banks in the summer. Tourism is an important part of our State's economy—generating \$25 billion in economic activity and supporting over 390,000 jobs in my State. However, rising temperatures and extreme weather are putting those landmarks and resources at risk.

In 2012, North Carolina experienced a total of 40 broken heat records, 4 broken snow records, 13 broken precipitation records, and 19 large wildfires.

Since 2000, North Carolina has issued 14 disaster declarations from severe storms and flooding. This extreme weather doesn't just jeopardize the beauty of our coastline or put our forest at risk for wildfires, it also affects

our economy and impacts people's everyday daily lives.

In 2011 Hurricane Irene ravaged our coast and affected approximately 1.3 million North Carolinians. Roads and highways were destroyed, homes and businesses were left inaccessible. The damage left some families with no other option but to live in tents.

The storm decimated tourism for the eastern part of our State at the height of the tourist season. The region got back on its feet only to be hit again a year later by Hurricane Sandy, which totally sliced through Highway 12, which is the lifeline of the Outer Banks. It cut it right down the middle.

This changing weather impacts another key part of North Carolina's economy, agriculture, which is our State's biggest industry. Agriculture generates \$77 billion in economic activity and employs nearly one-fifth of our workforce.

Last year record rainfall flooded several counties in North Carolina, and our farmers lost tens of millions of dollars' worth of food crops. Tomatoes were wrought with disease. In some fields half of all of the sweet corn had been destroyed. Experts predicted losses could double for producers, some of whom are thinking twice before they plant a crop next year.

We are seeing the very real impact climate change is having on my State and its economy today. In the absence of action, this extreme weather is here to stay. Recent reports have shown that by 2099 climate change could increase temperatures by as much as 10.5 degrees Fahrenheit and cause over 1,000 more heat-related deaths just in my hometown of Greensboro. By midcentury, Greensboro is expected to increase from a historical average of 8 heat-excessive days in the summer to 59 and to reach a total of 70 days by the end of the century. This current path is unsustainable, and we must take steps now to slow and stop the effects of climate change.

This is a challenge that will need to be addressed from many different directions, but I am proud of the steps we took in North Carolina when I was in the State senate to invest in energy innovation. A bill I worked on in 2007 made North Carolina the only Southeastern State with a mandatory renewable energy standard, requiring electrical utilities to meet up to 12.5 percent of their energy needs through renewable sources by 2021. We also enacted the Clean Smokestacks Act in 2012, which made significant emission reductions from coal-fired powerplants in North Carolina and Tennessee.

I am proud of those accomplishments, but we must do more. I believe North Carolina and the United States are well positioned to lead and to take advantage of opportunities in the 21st-century energy economy.

I look at North Carolina's Research Triangle Park, which has become an international model for bringing together industry, research institutions,

and government to help develop clean energy technologies that reduce carbon emissions and make our country less dependent on fossil fuels. Companies and institutions across North Carolina are developing ways to reduce energy more efficiently, harnessing smart grid technologies and using renewables to provide new, power-intensive data centers in my State.

While addressing carbon emissions presents new economic opportunities, we must also be sure to minimize any economic burdens on the least fortunate and make efforts to ensure that we do not harm our global economic competitiveness.

The challenge before us is great, but if we come together, Democrats and Republicans, we can move forward with commonsense measures that reduce emissions, increase our energy independence, and put the United States back on a sustainable path, all while getting the people of this great country back to work.

Thank you, Madam President. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama.

Mr. SESSIONS. Madam President, as we wrestle with the Ukraine situation, I hope we can—I wish we could have gotten together to be able to pass the core responsibility of this Congress, which would be to allow the loan program to go through—a \$1 billion loan program that I think everybody in the House and the Senate agrees on, Republicans and Democrats. It was, in fact, complicated and made impossible tonight because the majority insisted that IMF reform, which is opposed and is unrelated to the Ukraine, be a part of this legislation. The House has not passed it. I don't think the House will pass it. So why were they insisting on that and refusing to take the money we were able to give tonight? It is just baffling to me.

I appreciate Senator MENENDEZ. He has shown real leadership and insight into international relations. He chairs the Foreign Relations Committee. I don't mean to attack his integrity or anything of that nature, but he is incorrect in saying this bill is paid for or doesn't violate the budget. It absolutely violates the budget. The Congressional Budget Office has analyzed the numbers, and they have concluded just what my Budget Committee staff has concluded, which is that it violates the budget. The numbers are plain.

Look, a lot of things around here are not perfect, but the idea that we would insist on passing International Monetary Fund reform that does not have to be a part of this bill and is not related to this situation, is going to cost \$315 million to fund that program, that reform, which is very controversial, and half of the money explicitly comes from the Defense Department—Air Force missiles and Army procurement and aviation—at a time when the Rus-

sian army is occupying the Crimea in the Ukraine, we want to now cut the Defense Department and the Army of the United States even more.

The Budget Control Act has really tightened the military's defense budget. They are doing all they can do to meet that budget. I have tried to support the budget. I believe all of us need to tighten our belts. But I will just say this: We don't need to take more money out of the Defense Department budget at a time when we are already asking them to take unprecedented reductions. I feel strongly about that. It is disturbing to me that we have not reached that agreement.

In fact, what has happened is the Defense Department was forced to make some tough decisions, so they rescinded some of the money they had, and they intended to use it on other priorities, things they need to spend the money on. They made tough choices. What has Congress come in here now to do? Reach in there and take the money the Defense Department was trying to save so they can move it to something of high priority and spend it on this program. There is \$4 trillion in U.S. Government spending. We can't find some other place to find this money? Aren't there legitimate offsets that don't violate the budget?

For the most part, all of these offsets for both programs are not legitimate. They are basically gimmies. We need to get away from that. We need honesty in budgeting. We really do need it. When we have a priority we want to act on, such as this Ukraine situation, there are plenty of opportunities for us to identify lesser priority spending and take that money and spend it. That is what the Defense Department was doing when they executed rescissions. They were making choices, setting priorities.

We should not do this. It is not a little bitty matter. Frankly, the House needs to be more careful about how they do their business. The bill they sent over here has problems with it. But to take another whack at a controversial program—\$315 million—and take half the money from the military is really unacceptable.

I warned people about this in advance, but they persisted. They thought they could get to the last minute and they would stand here on the floor and emotionally argue that our objection had something to do with not caring about or being supportive of the people of the Ukraine, that we would just fold and give it to them. Well, that day is becoming a day of the past.

Somebody needs to stand here and say we are going to do these things right or we are going to have real problems on the floor of the Senate. If I have to do it, I will do it.

I am proud of the Senator from Wyoming, who sought to pass the House

bill. We just have to accept it. That is something we could do and get it done tonight, and I would be willing to support that. I certainly want to help the Ukraine, and we can do it and do it in the right way.

I thank the Chair for the opportunity to speak tonight. I know we all love the country, and we are going to have to wrestle now with serious questions about Russia—what their agenda is, what kind of actions they may be taking. There needs to be no doubt that this Senator has no intention of standing idly by while Russia attempts to take over independent, sovereign nations on its border. It is absolutely unacceptable. We cannot accept it. It should not have happened. I believe if this President had been more firm and clear in his policies, it likely would not have happened, but it has.

The whole world now has to confront this crisis and deal with it. It is not going to be easy. I think all of us need to work hard to put our politics aside on this question and try to do what is in the national interests.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. REID. Madam President, what is the pending business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed to S. 2124.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk that I would ask the Chair to report.

I have to sign it and send it there first.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 329, S. 2124, a bill to support sovereignty and democracy in Ukraine, and for other purposes.

Harry Reid, Robert Menendez, Debbie Stabenow, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Joe Donnelly, Christopher A. Coons, Jack Reed, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF CHRISTOPHER REID COOPER TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 581.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Christopher Reid Cooper, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Christopher Reid Cooper, of the District of Columbia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Bernard Sanders, Joe Donnelly, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I move to proceed now to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF M. DOUGLAS HARPOOL TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 582.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of M. Douglas Harpool, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk on this nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of M. Douglas Harpool, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Missouri.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Bernard Sanders, Joe Donnelly, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF GERALD AUSTIN MCHUGH, JR. TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. REID. I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 583.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Gerald Austin McHugh, Jr., of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Gerald Austin McHugh, Jr., of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard

Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Bernard Sanders, Joe Donnelly, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NOMINATION OF EDWARD G. SMITH TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 584.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Edward G. Smith, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. REID. I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to report the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of M. Edward G. Smith, of Pennsylvania, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Debbie Stabenow, Robert Menendez, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Richard Blumenthal, Jeff Merkley, Carl Levin, Bernard Sanders, Joe Donnelly, Maria Cantwell, Barbara A. Mikulski, Tom Harkin, Tim Kaine, Jeanne Shaheen, Jon Tester.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum under rule XXII be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion. The motion was agreed to.