

Alexander fighting administration's idiocy

U.S. Sen Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., has joined the latest business battle in the Obama administration's incessant war on capital. From the Senate floor to the pages of the Wall Street Journal, Alexander is fighting the outrageous decision by the National Labor Relations Board to register

a complaint against Boeing after the Seattle-based manufacturer spent more than \$1 billion to develop a facility in South Carolina to build more airplanes because business is booming.

The NLRB's move is another example of President Barack Obama's idiocy and duplicity about business.

A year ago, Obama pledged to double exports over the next five years. This year, his appointees at the NLRB throttle America's biggest exporter. What the rhetorician gives, the regulators take away.

The complaint revolves around construction of Boeing's new 787 Dreamliner. Green-lighted by Boeing's board in 2003, and despite several delays in delivery, the Dreamliner is a huge hit. Boeing has orders for 835 planes valued at \$162 billion, with the biggest order from All-Nippon Airways. To meet the demand, Boeing built the South Carolina plant and hired 1,000 workers.

The NLRB alleges Boeing "violated federal labor law by deciding to transfer a second production line to a nonunion facility in South Carolina for discriminatory reasons" because, according to the NLRB, Boeing said at one time it would open a second assembly line at its unionized Seattle plant. The NLRB wants to "remedy the unfair labor practices" by requiring "Boeing to maintain the second production line in Washington state."

Alexander sees the bigger, more sinister agenda. "The National Labor Relations Board has moved to stop Boeing from building airplanes at a nonunion plant in South Carolina," Alexander wrote in the Journal, "suggesting that a unionized American company cannot expand its operations into one of the 22 states with right-to-work laws, which protect a worker's right to join or not join a union."

With heavily unionized blue states in the Northeast and West hemorrhaging jobs as companies make the pragmatic decision to build manufacturing facilities in red states in the South where labor is cheaper and business is not imprisoned by onerous work rules, Obama's biggest backers – labor unions – are apoplectic. Alexander knows firsthand the outcome when union shops compete with nonunion shops.

"In 1985, General Motors located its \$5 billion Saturn plant in Spring Hill, Tenn., 40 miles from Nissan, hoping side-by-side competition would help the Americans beat

the Japanese," Alexander wrote. "After 25 years, nonunion Nissan operated the most efficient auto plant in North America. The Saturn/UAW partnership never made a profit. GM closed Saturn last year."

Alexander joined with U.S. Sens. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Jim DeMint, R-S.C., to introduce the "Job Protection Act" in the Senate. Alexander, Graham, DeMint and South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley have urged Obama to tell the NLRB to stand down. Haley wrote, again in the Wall Street Journal, that Boeing was conducting its business as it saw fit.

"This is not a novel or complicated idea," Haley wrote. "It's called capitalism."

Obviously, the simple concept of a free enterprise in a free nation doing business wherever it chooses is beyond the Obama administration. So, the war goes on. And Alexander et al recognize that in our moribund economy, with 9 percent unemployment, high corporate tax rates, a ferociously competitive global business climate and a still-uncertain economy, the biggest enemies of American business are Obama and his union-tool appointees at the NLRB.

Greg Johnson's columns appear on Wednesdays, Fridays and the second Sunday of each month. Read his blog <http://blogs.knoxnews.com/johnson/>, follow him on Twitter www.twitter.com/jgregjohnson and email him at jgregjohnson@hotmail.com.



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