

NATIONAL NEWS

Black Cowboys

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Here, at this stop just outside of Oakland, black culture intermingles with conventional country style. Cowboy hats are de rigueur. In the concessions area, vendors hawk catfish, fried alligator, frog legs, and peach cobbler. Next door, Reid’s Records sells coloring books that tell the story of the Buffalo Soldiers, all-black army regiments that fought for the U.S. in the 19th century. Contestants vie for prizes in bulldogging, calf roping, and bareback riding to a soundtrack blending backcountry zydeco and blues with DJ Khaled and Biggie Smalls. During the opening Grand Entry procession, riders of all ages saunter around the arena on brightly braided saddles. Their horses amble and buck to the percussive strains of 2Pac’s “California Love.”



Though heroes of color are virtually absent from the classic Western story, some historians estimate that up to one-third of cowboys during the late 19th and early 20th centuries were black. Their legacy continues in communities bringing attention to cowboys of color across the country today. In Texas, black-cowboy trail rides reportedly attract thousands of attendees; in Queens, New York, riders sometimes compete with traffic. Here in Oakland, black cowboys teaching kids like Brinson to ride say they hope to restore texture and richness to a white-washed past — and pass down values they believe will lead to brighter futures. The Oakland stop of the Bill Pickett rodeo always begins the same way. A rider carrying an American flag races through the gates of the Rowell Ranch rodeo grounds as they fill with the swelling chords of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” The song is followed by “Lift Every Voice and Sing” — also known as the black national anthem. This year, as the final chords die away, the rodeo announcer includes Philando Castile and Alton Sterling, black men shot by police officers just weeks before in Minnesota and Louisiana, among his list of community members lost during the year.

Biden Bans Oil Imports from Russia, Calling It a ‘Blow to Putin’s War Machine’

COMPILED - Officials said President Biden had struggled for days over the move amid deep concerns about accelerating the already rapid rise in the price of gasoline.

On Tuesday, President Joe Biden announced his administration is banning Russian oil, natural gas and coal imports to the US in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, a step he warned could lead to a spike in gas prices at home.

“Today I am announcing the United States is targeting the main artery of Russia’s economy. We’re banning all imports of Russian oil and gas and energy,” Biden said in remarks from the White House. “That means Russian oil will no longer be acceptable at US ports and the American people will deal another powerful blow to Putin’s war machine.”

Sanctions on Russia’s oil and gas industry had once been viewed as mostly off the table as officials in the United States and Europe worried about a global spike in prices. But pressure had been growing on Biden to act, including from Ukraine’s President and American lawmakers from both parties, as Russia’s onslaught in Ukraine increasingly targets civilians.

Biden acknowledged in frank remarks from the White House the step was likely to lead to higher costs for Americans, a potent political issue that is already leading to attacks from Republicans.

Biden pinned blame for the spike on Russian President Vladimir Putin, calling it “Putin’s price hike.”

“A united response to Putin’s aggression has been my overriding focus to keep all of NATO and all of the E.U. and our allies totally united,” Mr. Biden said. “We’re moving forward with this ban understanding that many of our European allies and partners may not be in a position to join us.”

“Defending freedom is going to cost,” Mr. Biden said in televised remarks announcing the ban at the White House.



US President Joe Biden announces a ban on US imports of Russian oil and gas, March 8, 2022, from the Roosevelt Room of the White House in Washington, DC.

The president’s move immediately shut off a relatively small flow of oil into the United States, but it was quickly followed by a British pledge to phase out imports of Russian oil by the end of the year and a declaration from the European Commission — the executive arm of the European Union, which is heavily dependent on Russian oil and gas — to make itself independent of that supply in the coming years.

The impact of the decisions quickly rippled across the global energy market amid fears that the supply of oil would shrink. In the United States, the national average price of a gallon of regular gasoline, which had already surged in recent weeks, reached \$4.173, not adjusted for inflation, a new high and an average increase of about 72 cents from only a month ago, according to the American Automobile Association (AAA).

“If we do not respond to Putin’s assault on global peace and stability today, the cost of freedom and to the

American people will be even greater tomorrow,” Mr. Biden said.

In Summary, Biden’s Executive Order bans:

The importation into the United States of Russian crude oil and certain petroleum products, liquefied natural gas, and coal. Last year, the U.S. imported nearly 700,000 barrels per day of crude oil and refined petroleum products from Russia and this step will deprive Russia of billions of dollars in revenues from U.S. drivers and consumers annually.

New U.S. investment in Russia’s energy sector, which will ensure that American companies and American investors are not underwriting Vladimir Putin’s efforts to expand energy production inside Russia.

Americans will also be prohibited from financing or enabling foreign companies that are making investment to produce energy in Russia.

Biden vowed to “do everything I can to minimize Putin’s price hike here at home.”

McDonald’s To Temporarily Close Restaurants & Pause Operations in Russia

This article was originally sent via email from CEO Chris Kempczinski to McDonald’s employees and franchisees.

March 8, 2022 - The conflict in Ukraine and the humanitarian crisis in Europe has caused unspeakable suffering to innocent people. As a System, we join the world in condemning aggression and violence and praying for peace.

Our number one priority from the start of this crisis has been – and will remain – our people.

As Ian Borden shared last week, the Company has provided immediate financial support to our team in Ukraine. We are continuing to pay full salaries for our Ukrainian employees and have donated \$5 million to our Employee Assistance Fund, and continue to support relief efforts led by the International Red Cross in the region. We have been overwhelmed by the offers of support across the System and thank you for your generous contributions to date.

As many of our colleagues in Ukraine have sought refuge, they have found the familiar support of the McDonald’s System in new and unfamiliar places. In Poland and many other markets across Europe, our System has literally opened their homes, their hearts, and their restaurants. The Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) Poland Care Mobile is at the Polish-Ukrainian border to provide medical care and humanitarian aid for families and children, and another Care Mobile is on the way from RMHC Latvia. Additionally, RMHC Ukraine is deploying medical supplies and providing humanitarian aid throughout the country, and its programs are being repurposed for use by hospital personnel.

This support, enabled by our global System, is happening across Europe, and will continue to grow.

In recent days, I have spoken with and heard from many in our System about our operations in Russia. The situation is extraordinarily challenging for a global brand like ours, and there are many considerations. For 66 years, we have operated with the

belief that communities are made better when there’s a McDonald’s nearby.

In Russia, we employ 62,000 people who have poured their heart and soul into our McDonald’s brand to serve their communities. We work with hundreds of local, Russian suppliers and partners who produce the food for our menu and support our brand. And we serve millions of Russian customers each day who count on McDonald’s. In the thirty-plus years that McDonald’s has operated in Russia, we’ve become an essential part of the 850 communities in which we operate.

At the same time, our values mean we cannot ignore the needless human suffering unfolding in Ukraine. Years ago, when confronted with his own difficult decision, Fred Turner explained his approach quite simply: “Do the right thing.” That philosophy is enshrined as one of our five guiding values, and there are countless examples over the years of McDonald’s Corporation living up to Fred’s simple ideal. Today, is also one of those days.

Working closely in consultation with our Chairman, Rick Hernandez, and the rest of McDonald’s Board of Directors over the last week, McDonald’s has decided to temporarily close all our restaurants in Russia and pause all operations in the market. We understand the impact this will have on our Russian colleagues and partners, which is why we are prepared to support all three legs of the stool in Ukraine and Russia. This includes salary continuation for all McDonald’s employees in Russia.

Importantly, RMHC Russia will continue its full operations, just as RMHC Ukraine is partnering with local hospitals and providing humanitarian aid throughout the country.

Across the rest of Europe, we will stay focused on how McDonald’s can best help those in need, both now



and in the future. We have already seen extraordinary leadership by our Ukrainian and Russian teams, and I know the rest of the McDonald’s System stands ready to support the large number of refugees who have been displaced by this conflict.

As we move forward, McDonald’s will continue to assess the situation and determine if any additional measures are required. At this junct-

ture, it’s impossible to predict when we might be able to reopen our restaurants in Russia. We are experiencing disruptions to our supply chain along with other operational impacts. We will also closely monitor the humanitarian situation.

As always, McDonald’s will be guided by our values and our purpose to feed and foster communities across the globe.

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could send damaging fragments into your lungs.

7. Do 10-20 crunches a day. Your abdominal and chest muscles allow you to suck air in and out. Strengthen them, and if you’re also practicing your deep breathing, you’ll have the breath power of a professional opera singer (or at least close).

8. Take your medicine and listen to your doctor if you have asthma. There’s some pretty good evidence that people with asthma eventually develop chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, a lung disease that strikes people 65 and older. There’s also evidence that keeping your asthma under control with medication and lifestyle changes can prevent the disease from developing.

9. Get at least seven servings of

fruits and vegetables a day. A 1998 study found that high amounts of antioxidants found in such foods, including vitamin C, vitamin E, selenium, and beta-carotene, meant better lung function — even in smokers!

10. Laugh More! Any activity that works the abdominal muscles also works the lungs. Both laughing and singing do just that. Laughing not only increases your lung capacity but also forces stale air out of the lungs so more fresh air can enter. Likewise, singing works the diaphragm muscle, which also helps increase lung capacity.

One Last Tip...

Check household cleansers. Some products, like oven cleaner, can be toxic if inhaled. And if the instructions say to open a window or use in a well-ventilated space, follow them. (BlackDoctor.org-Ellis Moore, Staff Writer)