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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 29, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRIS COLLINS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

BUILDING A NEW MIDDLE EAST—THE WORK OF A GENERATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, for nearly 3 years, the Arab Middle East, an enormous arc stretching from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, has been in turmoil. Restive millions, frustrated by a lack of economic opportunity, repressive politics, and a social structure often at odds with modernity, have taken to the streets demanding change. Their revolution hangs in the balance with the entrenched interests of the

former regimes on one side and the stultifying religious rule on the other.

Faced with these daunting realities, the Obama administration may be in the midst of a strategic reevaluation of our role in the region—one that is far more modest in ambition, more tempered in expectation, and certainly more reliant on the use of its diplomatic, not military, resources.

This new approach stands in stark contrast to the effort by the George W. Bush administration to deliver a “freedom agenda”—sometimes through the barrel of a gun—that would bring democracy to a region that has known mostly misrule. That doctrine, or its application, proved entirely unworkable, as the societies freed of their authoritarian shackles had nothing upon which to build. This is a lesson we may be bitterly learning in Libya as well.

These setbacks and the realization that democracy building is a generational undertaking must not lead us to disengage from the region. The forces freed by the Arab Spring will not be contained, and I still believe they can lead hundreds of millions of people to more representative forms of government, more economic opportunity, and, we must hope, more tranquility and peace within their borders.

The United States needs to help build institutions capable of supporting a transition in the Arab world in three dimensions: political, economic, and civil society. Unmet economic needs are the most pressing. At its heart, the Arab Spring is the expression of discontent of millions of idle, young Arabs, who have seen the economic opportunities that the outside world offers, but whose own economic realities are plagued by stagnation, mismanagement, and cronyism.

The cure is not outright assistance, which will do little to unleash or occupy long-term energies of Arab youth. It is investment that will allow this generation of Arabs to drag inefficient,

antiquated, and highly statist economies in the 21st century. Since the ouster of Ben Ali and Mubarak, I have pushed for both the creation of enterprise funds and other nimble vehicles that will allow us to direct resources at specific sectors that can help to drive economic growth, as well as improve the quality of life for ordinary people.

In coming years, these economies will need to produce sufficient jobs and wealth to both sustain workers and their families and to provide the economic conditions for sustainable political stability. But that cannot be an excuse to put off political reform now, because capital flows will not resume until investors have some confidence that their money is safe.

The experience of both Egypt and Tunisia serve to reinforce the inchoate nature of their political transitions. Both countries emerged from their respective revolutions with energized Islamist movements that were able to triumph over less well-organized secular parties—in large measure because the old governments had atomized their opposition and left political Islamist governments as the only viable alternative. In both countries, this experiment failed as a result of overreaching and a misreading of the people’s wishes—a development that should ease the fears of those who saw a “green wave” sweeping across the Middle East.

The dysfunction in both Cairo and Tunis, and the Egyptian military deposing of President Mohammed Morsi in a coup, are a reminder that a democratic outcome is never assured or to be assumed. The United States must stand ready to assist Arab nations with the long-term institution-building and political spadework that are necessary preconditions for democracy.

In Tunisia, which is small, relatively prosperous, and not nearly as divided as some of its larger neighbors, prospects for a peaceful transition and

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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