

From Latakia, to Aleppo, and from the Kurdish northeast to the villages along the Mediterranean coastline, more and more Syrians from diverse backgrounds are rising up and demanding their freedom.

What exactly are they asking for? It is the same basic demands we hear throughout the region, and they are very familiar—they should be—the American people, because they are the very demands that energized and motivated our rebellion and the American Revolution and the founding documents of our country. The people of Syria want greater political freedom and they want economic opportunity. They want into the modern world. They want to be treated with respect by their government, and they want an end to the culture of corruption and impunity that surrounds the Assad regime.

How has Bashar al Assad reacted to these legitimate grievances? The answer is he has responded not by offering reform but by unleashing what President Obama has rightly characterized as abhorrent violence and repression against the Syrian people. He has responded with thugs and militias who have attacked peaceful protestors. He has responded by spouting conspiracy theories rather than loosening his autocratic grip. And as we know now, he has responded by calling on his allies, his patrons in Teheran, to help him crush the demonstrations by the Syrian people, just as the Iranian regime—the fanatical, extremist, expansionist regime in Teheran, stamped out the protests that took place in Teheran after the June 2009 election.

It is now clear what path Bashar al Assad is on. Rather than pursuing reform, he is taking a page from the Qadhafi model. He is betting that he can beat his people into submission through force and that the world will let him get away with slaughter.

Let's be very clear what it means if Bashar succeeds. It will send a most perverse but unmistakable message that leaders such as Mubarak and Ben Ali in Egypt and Tunisia respectively and who are allied with the United States get overthrown, but leaders such as Assad, who are allied with Iran, survive. Is that a message we want to send?

What about tomorrow? Why do I focus on the next 24 hours? Tomorrow is likely to be a critical day for the future of Syria as protestors come together after Friday's prayers. There is a significant danger that it will also become a very bloody day if Assad continues on the path of violence and brutality against his own people.

This is, therefore, an urgent moment for American leadership, at least for America's voice to be heard. It is important for President Assad in Damascus to know today, before the protests that are likely to take place throughout Syria tomorrow, that his regime will be held accountable for its actions.

I hope we will be prepared to act quickly together with the world com-

munity if Assad fails to heed the will of the Syrian people and tries to hang on to power through repression and murder.

What can we do? Well, to begin with, we can impose tough and targeted sanctions on the Syrian officials responsible for the human rights abuses that are being perpetrated against their own people. We can also work with our allies to summon a special session of the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva, just as we did in the case of Libya, and we can refer Assad's regime to the international criminal court, just as we did with Qadhafi.

We should also embrace the Syrian opposition, the freedom fighters. I hope senior American officials will meet with prominent Syrian dissidents who are here in Washington now. I also urge the administration to speak out clearly in support of the Syrian people who deserve praise for their courage as they risk their lives for freedom and human rights. They must know that the United States, still the beacon of liberty in the world, stands on their side. In the face of attacks by the Syrian regime, Syrian protesters have remained remarkably peaceful, as the protesters in Tunisia and Egypt before them did. In the face of sectarian provocations by Assad, the people of Syria who are protesting have remained together, unified, giving a message of national unity.

I know some have suggested that we should hesitate before throwing our support to the Syrian opposition, to the Syrian people as they rise up, and this argument goes like this: Bashar al Assad is the devil we know. We don't know what might replace him if he fails. But we know enough about Bashar al Assad to know, and we know enough about the opposition to know that it cannot be worse than Assad and will be much better.

The arguments that we should wait and see are, in my opinion, moral and strategic nonsense when we look at the record of Assad. He is Iran's most important Arab ally and, in some senses, Iran's only real ally and the strategic linchpin between Iran and its terrorist proxies, Hamas and Hezbollah, whom he sustains with financial and military support. Assad is responsible for a terrible campaign, long standing, of intimidation and destabilization of Lebanon, and the blood of Lebanese leaders—too many of them—is on his hands, including that of the great Lebanese leader Rafik Hariri.

As Senator CORNYN said, Assad also has the blood of countless American soldiers on his hands, having allowed Syria to be used for years by foreign extremist fighters affiliated with al-Qaida and their ilk to head to Iraq to attack and kill Americans and Iraqis.

Finally, let's not forget Syria's illegal nuclear activities. This is a regime that tried to build a secret nuclear reactor. They did so with help from North Korea. This is a regime that continues to refuse to cooperate with the

International Atomic Energy Agency in its investigation of Syria's illegal nuclear activities.

The plain fact is that Bashar al Assad is not a reformer, he is a dictator. He runs a totalitarian regime that has long been one of the worst in the Middle East.

This is a regime that has repressed, intimidated, and, in fact, tortured and slaughtered Syrian people. It is a regime that is deeply corrupt, and it is a regime that has been a menace to its neighbors and to the cause of peace throughout the region.

We now have an opportunity—and I say a responsibility—to support freedom for the Syrian people as they seek a better future for themselves. It would be a shame if they and we lost this opportunity for the Arab spring to come to Syria. I hope, together with our allies, we will seize this moment and stand in solidarity with the people in Syria who are fighting for the fundamental values on which our own country was built: freedom and opportunity.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant editor of the Daily Digest proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CORRECTING THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 1473

Mrs. MURRAY. I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate H. Con. Res. 35.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 35) directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make a correction in the enrollment of H.R. 1473.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there is 2 minutes of debate, equally divided, prior to the vote.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I yield back all time and ask for the yeas and nays.

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

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the concurrent resolution.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 47, nays 53, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 59 Leg.]

YEAS—47

Alexander	Boozman	Coats
Ayotte	Brown (MA)	Coburn
Barrasso	Burr	Cochran
Blunt	Chambliss	Collins

Corker Isakson Portman
Cornyn Johanns Risch
Crapo Johnson (WI) Roberts
DeMint Kirk Rubio
Ensign Kyl Sessions
Enzi Lee Shelby
Graham Lugar Snowe
Grassley McCain Thune
Hatch McConnell Thune
Hoeven Moran Toomey
Hutchinson Murkowski Vitter
Inhofe Paul Wicker

NAYS—53

Akaka Hagan Nelson (NE)
Baucus Harkin Nelson (FL)
Begich Inouye Pryor
Bennet Johnson (SD) Reed
Bingaman Kerry Reid
Blumenthal Klobuchar Rockefeller
Boxer Kohl Sanders
Brown (OH) Landrieu Schumer
Cantwell Lautenberg Shaheen
Cardin Leahy Stabenow
Carper Levin Tester
Casey Lieberman Udall (CO)
Conrad Manchin Udall (NM)
Coons McCaskill Warner
Durbin Menendez Webb
Feinstein Merkley Mikulski
Franken Mikulski Whitehouse
Gillibrand Murray Wyden

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). On this vote, the yeas are 47, the nays are 53. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of the concurrent resolution, the concurrent resolution is rejected.

The Senator from Washington. Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following votes be 10-minute votes.

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

Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

CORRECTING THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 1473

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report H. Con. Res. 36, which was received from the House.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 36) directing the clerk of the House of Representatives to make a correction in the enrollment of H.R. 1473.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to the vote.

The Senator from Washington. Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I yield back all debate time, and I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on agreeing to the concurrent resolution.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 42, nays 58, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 60 Leg.]

YEAS—42

Alexander Blunt Chambliss
Ayotte Boozman Coats
Barrasso Burr Coburn

Cochran Hutchison Paul
Corker Inhofe Portman
Cornyn Isakson Risch
Crapo Johanns Roberts
DeMint Johnson (WI) Rubio
Ensign Kyl Sessions
Enzi Lee Shelby
Graham Lugar Thune
Grassley McCain Toomey
Hatch McConnell Vitter
Hoeven Moran Wicker

NAYS—58

Akaka Hagan Nelson (NE)
Baucus Harkin Nelson (FL)
Begich Inouye Pryor
Bennet Johnson (SD) Reed
Bingaman Kerry Reid
Blumenthal Kirk Rockefeller
Boxer Klobuchar Sanders
Brown (MA) Kohl Schumer
Brown (OH) Landrieu Shaheen
Cantwell Lautenberg
Cardin Leahy Stabenow
Carper Levin Tester
Casey Lieberman Udall (CO)
Collins Manchin Udall (NM)
Conrad McCaskill Warner
Coons Menendez Webb
Durbin Merkley Whitehouse
Feinstein Mikulski Whitehouse
Franken Murkowski Wyden
Gillibrand Murray

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 42, the nays are 58. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of the concurrent resolution, the concurrent resolution is rejected. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND FULL-YEAR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2011

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the clerk will report H.R. 1473, which was received from the House.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1473) making appropriations for the Department of Defense and the other departments and agencies of the Government for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2011, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate, equally divided prior to a vote.

The Senator from Illinois. Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I yield back all time on both sides and ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second? There appears to be a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on the third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall the bill pass? The yeas and nays have been ordered and the clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 81, nays 19, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 61 Leg.]

YEAS—81

Akaka Durbin Menendez
Alexander Enzi Merkley
Ayotte Feinstein Mikulski
Barrasso Franken Moran
Baucus Gillibrand Murkowski
Begich Grassley Murray
Bennet Hagan Nelson (NE)
Bingaman Harkin Nelson (FL)
Blumenthal Hoeven Portman
Blunt Hutchison Pryor
Boozman Inouye Reed
Boxer Isakson Reid
Brown (MA) Johanns Roberts
Brown (OH) Johnson (SD) Rockefeller
Burr Kerry Schumer
Cantwell Kirk Sessions
Cardin Klobuchar Shaheen
Carper Kohl Snowe
Casey Kyl Stabenow
Chambliss Landrieu Tester
Coats Lautenberg Thune
Cochran Lieberman Udall (CO)
Collins Lugar Udall (NM)
Conrad Manchin Warner
Coons McCain Webb
Corker McCaskill Whitehouse
Cornyn McConnell Wicker

NAYS—19

Coburn Johnson (WI) Sanders
Crapo Leahy Shelby
DeMint Lee Toomey
Ensign Levin Vitter
Graham Paul Wyden
Hatch Risch
Inhofe Rubio

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote the yeas are 81, the nays are 19. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for passage, the bill is passed.

The bill (H.R. 1473) was passed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table.

Under the previous order, the Secretary will immediately notify the House of the Senate's action on the House measures.

The majority leader.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business for debate only until 7 p.m. tonight, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each; further, that the majority leader be recognized at 7 p.m.

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

The Senator from South Carolina.

PORT OF CHARLESTON

Mr. GRAHAM. I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with my good friend, the majority leader.

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

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, a lot of Members now understand the problem we have with the port of Charleston in 2011. There is no money in the President's budget to do a scoping study. Under the new rules concerning earmarking, it has been very difficult to find a way forward. With the help of the majority leader and his staff and the people on Appropriations—the staffs of Senators FEINSTEIN and LAMAR ALEXANDER—we came up with