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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. CARL).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 13, 2023.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JERRY L. CARL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

MIKE JOHNSON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 9, 2023, 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 time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

FREE SPEECH IS ANTI-SEMITISM CURE, NOT CAUSE

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, when the presidents of MIT, Harvard, and the University of Pennsylvania were invited to denounce open race hatred on their campuses, they wrapped themselves in the mantle of free speech.

People have a right to say what they think as long as it doesn't become

threatening conduct, they said. On this narrow point, they are right, but that does not explain why anti-Semitism is rampant on their campuses.

It is not a tolerance for outrageous speech that is the problem. It is a complete intolerance of patriotic speech.

According to the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, the two most intolerant and oppressive universities in the country are Harvard and UPenn. MIT ranks 136 out of the 254 universities surveyed.

How is it possible that such depraved and discredited philosophies as Marxism, totalitarianism, racism, Islamic fascism, and anti-Semitism now flourish on these college campuses? It is because, for years, the antidote to these social pathologies—the American founding principles of freedom, democracy, tolerance, and justice that have always kept them in check—have been systematically suppressed and removed from campus discussions.

A generation ago, only the lunatic fringe of our society would deny or minimize the Holocaust, cheer the slaughter of innocents in their cribs, or praise the fascist governments that produce such horrors. The spectacle of university presidents maintaining that genocide was a contextual matter would have been absurd. Why? Because people of good will had the freedom to present the other side, and the other side was always compelling.

The only way to separate truth from lies or wisdom from folly or good from evil is to place the two side by side and then trust the common sense and good judgment of the American people to know the difference.

This free exchange of ideas is the beating heart of democracy. It is the sole purpose for which this Capitol Building was constructed.

We have based our entire form of government on the assumption that more than half of the people are right more than half of the time, but it assumes

that people have the full and unfettered freedom to express themselves and to challenge the claims and opinions of each other. In such an exchange, the good, the moral, the wise, and the right will ultimately rise to the top.

There are only two ways to resolve disputes among human beings: reason and force. The American Founders built an empire of reason enshrined in the First Amendment. Freedom of speech, of the press, of religion, and of peaceful assembly are the very tools that Americans have used for two and a half centuries to resolve our differences civilly and chart a path to a better future.

In this brave new Orwellian woke world that we have entered, speech in opposition to leftist views is violence; violence in support of leftist views is speech; racial discrimination is social justice; and force rather than reason is the legitimate way to resolve our differences.

They tell us that shouting down opponents, disrupting civil discussions, rioting in the streets, and threatening or even practicing violence against opponents is freedom of expression. The ultimate expression of this rot is the moral confusion that sees the killing of babies as a legitimate way to resolve grievances.

Polls on campuses tell us that the vast majority of college students fear even expressing views that conflict with leftist orthodoxy.

We are now learning that the Federal Government itself colluded with tech companies to deny the American people crucial facts and analysis over everything from COVID to the Russian collusion hoax to Biden family influence peddling.

Major newspapers that once thrived on vigorous debate have said they won't even print opinions contrary to leftist orthodoxy on climate change.

Free societies do not fear words and thoughts, even those that are hateful,

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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ugly, evil, or obscene, because the same freedom that protects these darkest impulses of our nature also protects the right of men and women of good will to confront them, expose them, and reject them.

This is what these university presidents and their many confederates have taken from our campuses, and this is what the left is taking from our society. This is what we must restore if we are to resume the upward path toward peace, prosperity, happiness, and justice that our freedom ensures and that our First Amendment protects.

WE NEED TO END THREAT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak about the growing threat of the use of a nuclear weapon in armed conflict and the threat of a new nuclear arms race. Such threats should scare every single Member of this House. I know it worries my constituents.

The world has not been in such an unstable nuclear situation since the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Since that time, the risk of nuclear war has not been high, but it has never been zero.

A web of nuclear arms control agreements was created over decades that reduced the number of nuclear warheads and set limits on nuclear testing. Over 50 years of such agreements, the number of nuclear warheads was reduced by 86 percent.

However, Mr. Speaker, after decades of progress in nuclear arms control and disarmament, in a very short period, we have seen much of the architecture of these agreements undermined. While not quite dismantled, they are significantly weakened as both the Russian Federation and the United States have withdrawn from some, and Russia has unilaterally withdrawn from others.

We have seen the nuclear weapons agreement with Iran, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, erode following the U.S. withdrawal by President Donald Trump in 2018. As a result, every day, the Iranian Government increases its capacity to build a nuclear weapon.

Throughout Russia's unprovoked and unlawful invasion of Ukraine, we have frequently heard Russia threaten to use nuclear weapons against Ukraine. In late November, President Putin's mouthpiece, Vladimir Solovyov, who hosts a show on Russian state TV, warned that nuclear war is "unavoidable."

Each of these actions—let alone taken together—exposes the unbearable truth about nuclear weapons: Nuclear weapons do not prevent wars. To the contrary, they are used to threaten, coerce, and facilitate war.

Mr. Speaker, we need an urgent call to action. There is leadership in this

House seeking to renew and reinvigorate the urgent need for nuclear arms control.

Congressmen DON BEYER and JOHN GARAMENDI lead a working group on nuclear weapons and arms control.

Congressman TED LIEU has introduced H.R. 669 to restrict the first use of nuclear weapons and H.R. 2894 that would block a nuclear launch by artificial intelligence.

Along with Congressman BLUMENAUER, I introduced H. Res. 77 that calls on the United States Government to work toward the goals and aspirations of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the TPNW.

Along with Senator MARKEY, I have also introduced H.R. 3154, the HALT Act, to freeze nuclear weapons production and urgently return to negotiations.

Congresswoman ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON has introduced H.R. 2775 to direct the U.S. to sign the TPNW and convert the funds that maintain and sustain our nuclear arsenal to address urgent domestic needs.

At the end of November, I was privileged to attend a meeting of parliamentarians at the United Nations to discuss these urgent questions. The meeting was coordinated by a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. Each of us was from a nation that has not yet joined the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We discussed what needs to happen in our countries and our parliaments to accelerate the debate on ending the threat of nuclear weapons.

We were at the U.N. because the 93 nations that have joined the TPNW were meeting to discuss concrete steps to implement the treaty's provision. Such leadership should be recognized and supported, Mr. Speaker, but it is not enough. It is simply not enough.

I wish the United States would be bold. I wish the United States would join the TPNW and abolish nuclear weapons once and for all. At a minimum, we need a path back to dialogue in arms control negotiations.

If we are going to move the major nuclear powers to action, including the United States, we need a massive outpouring of grassroots action in support of ending the threat of nuclear weapons. Without large-scale citizen movements, I fear that the nuclear powers will continue to move in the wrong direction, and we will see the unraveling of all nuclear agreements, a renewed nuclear arms race, and even the actual use of nuclear weapons in current and future conflicts.

We cannot wait to change direction, Mr. Speaker. We live at a time when the world as we know it can be destroyed in one terrible nuclear flash. The time to act is now.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the record the "Parliamentarian Statement to the 2MSP."

PARLIAMENTARIAN STATEMENT TO THE 2MSP
(Delivered by Guillaume Defossé,
Parliamentarians for the TPNW)

As a delegation of 23 parliamentarians from 14 countries, we are honoured to address this second Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW. This meeting represents a pivotal moment in our collective journey toward a world free of these devastating weapons. We extend our appreciation to the governments, organisations, and civil society representatives who have tirelessly championed this cause. The TPNW remains a bright and powerful reason for hope when many other international developments point in the wrong direction.

We congratulate the state parties and signatories of the TPNW for their unwavering leadership on the global abolition of nuclear weapons since the last meeting of states parties. Your dedication showcases the immeasurable value of the TPNW within the international legal regime that prohibits weapons of mass destruction, offering a clear pathway to their global eradication.

We applaud our colleagues who have worked tirelessly to convey the significance of this Treaty to their respective governments and advance the process of ratification. Our commitment remains resolute, grounded in the belief that the citizens we represent, along with all citizens, should never have to bear the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use or testing. We pledge to redouble our efforts in expanding the membership of this Treaty and supporting its effective implementation. We will tirelessly strive to garner support among parliamentarians for this Treaty and call on all governments to sign and ratify it as a matter of international urgency.

We stand united in denouncing any and all nuclear threats, regardless of their form and irrespective of the circumstances. As recalled by TPNW, and in accordance with the UN Charter, all States must refrain from the threat or use of force. Leaders around the world must confront the reality that nuclear threats now being voiced by certain policymakers reveal the folly of continued legitimization of nuclear weapons including through promoting so-called nuclear deterrence. It is encouraging to see that many leaders, even from nations not yet party to this Treaty, have adopted a similar stance, firmly rejecting the unacceptable rhetoric surrounding so-called tactical nuclear weapons and loose discussions of their use.

However, despite repeated assurances and commitments to disarm, nuclear-armed states collectively maintain over 12,000 nuclear weapons and continue to allocate vast resources for the modernization and expansion of their arsenals. In 2022, \$82.9 billion were spent on nuclear weapons. Money that would be better invested in a sustainable, just, and peaceful future. We deplore the reliance on the perilous doctrine of nuclear deterrence and the renewed emphasis on the nuclear dimension of military alliances, which obstructs progress toward nuclear disarmament, elevates nuclear risks, and undermines non-proliferation efforts. We also vehemently object to the deployment of nuclear weapons on the territory of other states, a direct contradiction to the objectives of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and a violation of Article 1 of the TPNW.

In striking contrast to the reckless rhetoric of certain nuclear-armed states and their allies, we commend the state parties to this Treaty for their unwavering dedication to implementing the TPNW. We, too, are committed to taking every conceivable action to advance the prohibitions of the Treaty. The regrettable decision of Russia to denigrate the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty