EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HON. TOM LANTOS
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 3, 1999

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on July 23, His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco passed away and his son, Sidi Mohammad ben Al Hassan assumed the throne of Morocco.

I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to a particularly thoughtful and insightful essay on the passing of the late King Hassan II and his positive impact upon Morocco. The essay—"The Passing of Morocco's King Hassan II"—was written by Dr. John Duke Anthony, the president of the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations, secretary-treasurer of the U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council Corporate Cooperation Committee, and a distinguished American scholar of Middle Eastern affairs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that Dr. Anthony's essay be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to reflect upon his discerning appreciation of the role and significance of the reign of King Hassan II.

THE PASSING OF MOROCCO'S KING HASSAN II

(By Dr. John Duke Anthony)

In the history of America's foreign affairs, a long-running chapter with Morocco, one of our country's oldest and most important allies, closed and a new one opened this past week.

The King of Morocco, the first country to establish diplomatic relations with the United States, died yesterday. The passing of Africa's and one of the Arab world's longest-serving heads of state?

At first glance, the most important certainty is that key Moroccan policies are likely to continue as before. Indeed, a case can be made that, in large measure, because of the timelines of the reign of the late King's reforms, the imminence of the Moroccan monarchy's political demise is even more distant than it was when Hassan II succeeded his father as King of Morocco in 1960. To say this is but to underscore the extent to which the Middle East has become so topsy-turvy within the adult lifetime of a single person: the late King of Morocco.

Had Hassan II lived and chosen to speak his mind on the subject, it's likely that he would have agreed with Diogenes, who is alleged to have requested that he be "buried with my fact to the ground, for in no time at all the wind would like to blow it down."

There are ironies here. For one, search any library on the Middle East from the mid-1980s onward, and the work of one political scientist who has been seen as having predicted with a certainty bordering on arrogance that, in short order, all the Arab world's dynasts would be overthrown, blown away as so many will-o'-the-wisp dolls into the dust. Conventional wisdom of the day postulated that the wave of the future belonged to the Sandinistas and their camp followers from Morocco to Muscat, from Baghdad to Berbera, from Aden to Algiers and Aleppo in between.

Fumitsugu prophesied that the coming generation, nowadays' nineties—yesterday's tomorrow—would be led not by Hassan II and his dynastic counterparts, or anyone else whose lot was hereditary, but, rather, by the proverbial middle-class military officer, the khaki-clad knight on horseback.

But in Morocco, as elsewhere in the Arab world, this was not to be. That it proved not to be the case was in large measure because Hassan II was not bereft of equestrian political skills of his own.

That those who sought to precipitate the late King's political demise failed in the end was not, however, for lack of trying. Twice, in 1988 and again in 1992, major coup attempts were thwarted. Indeed, a case can be made that, in large measure, because of the timelines of the reign of the late King's reforms, the imminence of the Moroccan monarchy's political demise is even more distant than it was when Hassan II succeeded his father as King of Morocco in 1960. To say this is but to underscore the extent to which the Middle East has become so topsy-turvy within the adult lifetime of a single person: the late King of Morocco. That those who sought to precipitate the late King's political demise failed in the end was not, however, for lack of trying. Twice, in 1988 and again in 1992, major coup attempts were thwarted.

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