

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for having yielded to me.

Mr. DORNAN. Courtesy of half a second then, Mr. Speaker?

I would hope, Mr. Speaker, we could have an hour discussion, every Member of this House, on the O.J. Simpson trial, because most Americans think the justice system broke down, that he was as guilty as sin.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. That would be worthy. I think the American people need to hear both sides of the story.

Mr. DORNAN. I agree.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. To clarify, the gentleman from California [Mr. DORNAN] may not make a unanimous-consent request to extend time under 5-minute special orders.

#### WHY SO LITTLE TIME FOR DEBATE ON THE MOST IMPORTANT VOTE IN OUR CAREERS?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. DEFAZIO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I think many Members feel, as the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. BORSKI] indicated just a few minutes ago, that the vote tomorrow will probably be the most important vote that we have cast in our career; certainly in my 17 years it qualifies.

Mr. Speaker, when we began this session of Congress, there were great protestations about past abuses, closed rules that did not permit open debate, and amendments of all sorts from all across the spectrum here to be offered. We talked a lot about open meetings. To quote Woodrow Wilson, it was all going to be open covenants openly arrived at. This was going to be a new era.

Mr. Speaker, I regret to tell you that what is happening to this most fundamental piece of legislation that all of us feel is so impactful on 40 million Americans in the Committee on Rules at the moment is a travesty. There are people who have yet to commit to vote for this legislation being offered by the Republicans who are angling for a little amendment that hopefully the Speaker will unilaterally without any congressional committee approval insert into an amendment offered by somebody when we get to the floor, probably the manager of the bill. Those people up there who have yet to commit to vote for this on the Republican side are struggling to get some cover so that they can vote for a piece of legislation that will be terribly destructive, not just to senior citizens, not just to rural and urban communities, but to the fabric of American life and the quality of our health care. It is a travesty because most Members who are not about to vote for something like

this are going to be excluded from the process. They are not going to be put in a position to have the opportunity to offer a rule that would, for example, cut this from a \$270 billion hit over the next 7 years, far more than the trustees would indicate is necessary, to something like \$90 billion. We are not going to be able to repair the damage that this bill will do because we are being shut out of the process.

I know people have heard it, they are probably sick of it, but 28 days of hearings on Whitewater, 10 on Waco, 8 on Ruby Ridge. I do not mean to say these are not important issues, but it tells you something. We had 1 day of hearings in the Committee on Ways and Means, none in the Committee on Commerce, and now not a week of debate on this issue, something far less: 3 hours of general debate. Why? Because people do not want to talk about what is about to happen. Republicans offering this legislation do not really want the American people to fully comprehend the impact it is going to have on them. Otherwise we would spend a week and take 8 hours a day extolling the virtues of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I asked today in the Committee on Rules that we have 20 hours. I would be happy with 10. I would now take 5 based on what I expect. It is the antithesis of what we were told this Congress was going to be about when we kicked off in January and took up the vaunted Contract on America.

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It is a great frustration to anyone who appreciates the legislative process, who thinks that, regardless of the outcome of these issues, we ought to have a full debate. We ought to be able to exchange words and language in amendment form, just as we do in committee.

The committees attempted to make some changes. Those changes were unilaterally and uniformly rejected by Republican majorities. But that does not mean that those of us who are not on those committees are shut out of the process. We ought to be able to have some of those key debates right here on the floor, not have just one alternative made in order, not the ability at all to deal with the intricacies of Medicare, a program that probably more than anything but Social Security is the hallmark of what American government is all about, what means the most to the American people.

So I am just here today to kind of let out a protest on process. I will have more to say, as many of my colleagues will, about the inherent weaknesses in this approach, this budget-driven, tax-cut-justified approach. It is not, however, my purpose today.

I am simply here to say that, from my perspective, this treatment of what is the centerpiece of the Republicans' effort to radically change the course of this country is being treated so cavalierly as to require protest by all of us

simply because of the nature of the process in which it is being considered.

I hope the Committee on Rules, before it finishes tonight, will hear our words, will make in order a number of amendments and will allow for the real debate that this radical legislation demands. I doubt if we will be satisfied by their ultimate decision.

#### CLEVELAND TOPS SEATTLE FOR AMERICAN LEAGUE PENNANT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I made a friendly agreement with the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE] of Cleveland, regarding the recent battle between the Seattle Mariners and the tribe from Cleveland. I was really looking forward to using some of that genuine Cleveland slab steel that he promised as part of this to rebuild my 500-foot seawall at our home in Langley. Unfortunately, the Mariners were unable to pull out one more miracle finish in game six last night.

I really have to hand it to the Cleveland Indians. They played a tremendous series. Their pitching was outstanding. I wish them the best in the World Series.

Also, I know that the gentleman from Ohio will enjoy the salmon and the apples from the great State of Washington.

Even in defeat, the Seattle Mariners proved to be a team of character and unmatched resilience. Time after time they came back from what seemed to be a hopeless situation. Whether it was Randy Johnson striking out the side to preserve a win or Edgar Martinez hitting a grand slam to win the game, we are proud of them.

Mr. Speaker, we in Congress can learn a lot from both of those teams. Hard work, perseverance, and teamwork are the key to success. We need all the help possible in the weeks to come in our drive to balance the budget.

Again, congratulations to the Seattle Mariners for an amazing season and good luck to the Cleveland Indians in the World Series.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. METCALF. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to express my gratitude as well as sympathy to the gentleman from Washington. Of course, it is easy to be magnanimous in victory, but I must say you really are a gentleman, and I appreciate the kind words with respect to our prospects in the World Series.

I have to tell the gentleman that this is a particularly special time for anybody from Cleveland. We have been in the wilderness a long, long time, and as you all know, as you well know, the last time we were in the World Series