LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE OF PENNSYLVANIA—VOTE NO

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

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the Republican plan to cut Medicare by $270 billion while at the same time giving a $245 billion tax break to wealthiest Americans.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to represent the 3rd District in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the 20th oldest district in the United States. Pennsylvania is the 2nd oldest State in the United States of America. One out of every 6 residents in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is a Medicare recipient. One out of every 7 Pennsylvanians is on Medicaid. One out of every 3 Pennsylvanians who enter the hospital use Medicare. Four hundred thousand people in the city of Philadelphia are on Medicaid. The combination of Medicare and Medicaid cuts would be devastating not only to senior citizens but also to the health care providers in the city of Philadelphia.

Let me give you one example. In my district in the city of Philadelphia 88 percent of the people who enter the Episcopal Hospital are on Medicare or Medicaid. Mr. Speaker, I do not know how the Episcopal Hospital can survive. Several other hospitals in my district and in the city are also on the critical list. In the 3rd District, my district, we could lose 6,000 health care workers in the 3rd District alone. The city of Philadelphia may well lose over 25,000 jobs. The impact of the Medicare cuts on seniors is they will pay more, and receive less care, and get less choice. Hospitals and communities everywhere will be devastated.

Mr. Speaker, that is the bad news. Unfortunately there is no good news. But there is worse news. We all know that Medicare is for the elderly, and we all know that Medicaid is for the least fortunate among us. But what people do not know is that Medicaid covers long-term-care costs. Sixty-five percent of the nursing home care in Pennsylvania is paid for by Medicaid. This safety net is gone. Spousal impoverishment protection is gone. What will happen to these seniors who have spent their lifetime savings once they are forced to enter a hospital?

Mr. Speaker, in the last several weeks I have traveled throughout my district talking to as many people as was humanly possible. Thousands of people in my district have sent in questionnaires. Thousands of people have written letters to our office. Our phones are ringing off the hook. People do not want Medicare cuts of $270 billion and tax breaks of $245 billion at the same time.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we will take up one of the most important measures in my tenure in this Congress. I intend to vote no on the $270 billion cuts in Medicare, and I urge my colleagues to also vote no.

THE MILLION MAN MARCH AND THE O.J. SIMPSON TRIAL

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

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I indicated that on Thursday, tomorrow, I would do a special order for 60 minutes on the whole tragedy surrounding the O. J. Simpson double murder, the trial, the verdict. Mr. Speaker, I have not only a very astute and politically active wife, but five grown children, the first who will soon turn 40, and the other four are all in their middle to late thirties. To a daughter and to a son, three daughters, two sons, they said, ''Dad, talk about the march, the gathering of 400,000 people on The Mall. Explain why you went. Talk about race relations in America, and only use the O. J. Simpson tragedy in passing reference.''

So, Mr. Speaker, I think I will do that and take that advice of my grown children tomorrow.

I did want to mention that probably was a short count. I have been to many gatherings on The Mall, 200,000 with Martin Luther King, one of the proudest days of my life to join that true march. I have often seen it when it was 300,000, 400,000. I came to one of the ugliest Vietnam demonstrations of all time with hundreds of arrests and trashing of the city. They claim that was about 600,000.

Mr. Speaker, if that was 600,000, then I think yesterday was a half a million. I mean Monday was half a million or 600,000.

Be that as it may, I started at the Lincoln Memorial, right where I had sat in the third row when Dr. King gave his stirring 19-minute speech. He had only been allocated 7, but it was certainly a stirring 19, and it took me about 3 hours to wend my way in a serpentine pattern all the way up to the grandstand at the west front of our Capitol. It was a beautiful day with more fathers and sons together than I had seen in many years in this city, until I got up near the front. Then you could pick up the feeling of Mussolini, people in fake uniforms, people with glazed looks, security guards, and a man who if he had quit at 19 minutes and taken the part about protecting the innocence of children in all of our communities and the condemnation of young artists shucking corn to sell it to a degenerate society, and to stop throwing their talent back in God's face, Mr. Farrakhan might have ended up a winner. But the other 2 hours was discombobulated garbage, and some of it still hinting at hatred and division in our country.

While all this was going on and while I was speaking yesterday, O. J. Simpson is beginning his rehabilitation, playing golf yesterday at a white country club in Florida, signing autographs for stupid young women who, I guess, missed the signature John Wayne Gacy or the Boston Strangler, and I hope that people will look in their newsmagazines from last week and look at another victim of this double murder, O. J. Simpson's son Jason. This is not a son celebrating a ''not guilty'' verdict, as the mom rightfully would do, and the sisters and the daughters would do. This is a son with a broken heart who knows that his dad committed a double murder and has put a cloud over his whole family, not to mention innocent little Justin and Sydney, and to keep coming in our face the way O. J. is, a Republican millionaire who, I repeat, told the gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] here that he voted for George Bush. That would be a jury of his peers, the 8 millionaires out of the 10 of us. I am not one of them in the Senate. I am in the Presidential conquest.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to a distinguished lawyer, the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE].

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, I welcome the gentleman's expression on the feelings that he has had. That is what this country represents. But I am disturbed at the gentleman from California's attempt to characterize what has captured the hearts and minds of many in the African-American community, the question of equal justice, the question of the ability to be treated with equal justice under the law and to address their grievances, which I think the march Monday reflected; and I am, however, glad the gentleman noted the bonding, of fathers and the sons, black men from all walks of life. That was the real story of last Monday.

I did not have the opportunity to hear your comments yesterday. Actually, I am involved in a fight to save Medicare right now. However, I would hope we applaud those that you see the value in American citizens peacefully protesting and recommitting their lives to a better way of life.

And as to the O.J. trial, which this is not a time to debate, I hope that we can applaud the fact that the judicial system was in place because otherwise we would have anarchy. I am just hoping that we can put the definition of what happened both Monday and at the conclusion of the O.J. Simpson trial, in context, no matter what one's opinions may be about the laws that govern this country—the right to a peaceful protest and the right to a trial by jury worked.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from California [Mr. DORNAN] has expired.

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, could I ask, and if anybody wants to object, I certainly understand, that the gentlewoman from Texas [Ms. JACKSON-LEE] have 5 minutes out of order?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That unanimous-consent request is out of order during the special orders.

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