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House of Representatives

MAKING IN ORDER FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1, FULL-YEAR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2011—Continuing

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I guess I am a dissenter in this orgy of self-congratulation, and I want to explain why. And I may not object if I have a chance to explain why, but if I can't explain, I have to object. So that is the choice. I either explain or object.

I object not to the UC at this point, but to the self-congratulation that the majority is engaging in because they said they had such an "open process." In fact, the refutation of that was best stated by the gentleman from Kentucky. He just said we have debated the whole government. Yes, we have—and very inappropriately.

To debate the whole government and to debate fundamental policy issues under the guise of a budget, under the constraints of a budget debate and not three, not a whole week, 2½ days so far. Maybe we will get a third day. We have dealt with the most fundamental questions. In the jurisdiction of the committee on which I serve, issues came up under great constraint. The reform bill of last year has been damaged by what was done here. Fortunately, it will never become law. And we were constrained because we had to choose between the SEC and the IRS. That is not the way to legislate.

This was not an open process. Yes, you could offer amendments. You could offer amendments in a very narrow compass. You could offer amendments according to the jurisdiction of subcommittees. The jurisdiction of subcommittees is somewhat accidental. It doesn't determine public policy.

And, yes, we are talking about it now. We are boasting about debating the whole government. Did my colleagues listen to the UC? You will get to debate whole aspects of the government tomorrow for 10 minutes. We are

the model of democracy. The next thing you know, they will be rioting in parts of the world so they can have 10 minutes per issue to debate fundamental issues.

This is a travesty. I very much objected to this procedure. My leadership, for which I have great respect, had asked me if they could go forward. I am prepared to allow that because of some conditions. One is that I am confident that this awful, distorted, ill-thought-out process has produced a bill that will never see the light of day. And by the way, no one should be surprised. We are now going to recess after we finish with all of these other parts of the government in 10 minutes per issue, or up to an hour for a couple of important ones, 20 minutes for some only moderately important ones.

The Senate will then get this with 4 days left before it expires. No one realistically thinks this is going to happen. So perhaps some of the constituencies were mollified by this show; but I want to stress again, this has been awful procedure.

The gentleman from Kentucky is right: we have debated the whole government, fundamental issues that go far beyond budgetary issues in 3½ days. We will have debated fundamental issues in 10 minutes. This is openness? This is a travesty of the democratic process.

So, Mr. Speaker, because I have been given a chance to explain why I think this is a terrible process, why I am going to say now I don't expect the Senate to accept this. We will have to come back and do it again. There will have to be, I assume, a short-term extension.

I want to give notice now to all parties, I will object strenuously at every procedural opportunity to any effort to repeat this travesty.

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So with respect to the ranking member and to the minority whip and the

minority leader and to others and to people who have worked so hard and to the poor long-suffering staff, yes, I will remove my reservation, and I will not object. Having made it clear, once the Senate gives this awful product an appropriate burial, I will not be a party to its resuscitation.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the right to object because just to sit here and listen, after having spent the last 4 years dealing with the most closed Congress—the last Congress, in fact, had more closed rules than any Congress in American history—and then to be lectured about what is a travesty is itself a travesty. That's the real travesty. That many closed rules, and you come down here and want to tell us what is awful? Try standing here for the last 4 years and dealing with closed rule, closed rule, closed rule, no amendments. We're not going to let you represent your people because we're going to cram everything down. That's a travesty.

Let's get on with the democratic process because that's what it is when you get to hear from both sides. We heard from one side. We heard "travesty" several times, and now we'll get back to the democratic process.

And with that, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Now that we do have the UC in place, we intend

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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