

It is precisely because the American people focus on the big picture that Republicans are doing everything possible to replace the image the American people see with a test pattern on television.

The President's ratings are below sea level. Republicans are counting the number of seats in the lifeboats. It is simple arithmetic, and the addition has Republicans subtracting.

Mathematics requires proof, and there is plenty. The President bequeaths to the future President any decision about Iraq. His plan takes form: Stay in Iraq until it is somebody else's problem. Invite the embattled President of Italy to address a joint session of the U.S. Congress, speaking in Italian, to use Congress as a political campaign for a backdrop in an Italian election. Charge the Iraq war on credit and mask its real impact on the deficit by leaving it outside the annual budget.

The clearest sign of all is the recent change in the House of Representatives to the 2-minute vote. Call it government by stopwatch. A mere 120 seconds to decide the faith of legislation affecting the lives of every American.

Under Repocracy, legislation comes to the floor of the House only when its passage is guaranteed. That is why we are going home today, because they can't get the budget. It is not guaranteed. The 2-minute drill forces blind allegiance and stiff arms democracy. But that is the intent of Repocracy. Math is math.

Republicans are losing their stranglehold on power. What is a party to do? Well, Republicans have concluded the best offense is a missing offense, so Republicans have substituted the business of the state for the business of reelection.

Suddenly, the House leaders feel an urgent need for recess after recess after recess. We have never had a week off for Saint Patrick's Day. It must be faith-based. The Republican mandated Congressional schedule has nothing to do with the people's business and everything to do with the Republican's reelection business.

The thinking goes like this: If Members are not in Washington, D.C., the national press corps is taken out of the equation. They can't trail 435 House Members, so news coverage goes dark. With Congress out of session, Americans cannot watch C-SPAN to see for themselves what is happening, or not, on the floor of the House. The curtain closes on the big picture. Mission accomplished.

The word "Congress" comes from the Latin "con+gresso," which means come together. The idea was for an orderly and reasoned debate. Take out the stopwatch and clock 2 minutes. Then decide if you think America is governed by a functioning Congress today.

Repocracy is not merely a dereliction of duty, it is an outright threat to democracy. That is the big picture, the

one Republicans don't want the American people to see.

But there is more than one channel, and the American people are watching. They would like to know why this is the do-nothing Congress that will be in session less than the do-nothing Congress of 1948. This will be the Congress that spent the least time discussing our problems on the floor.

We are at war all over the place, we are in debt worse than we have ever been in history. We have no health care for 46 million people. But where is the Congress? They have left. They have gone home. They have got to campaign. If they were here, the people could see they were doing nothing. But Repocracy says we only do it when we rubber stamp it for the President. Otherwise we are getting out of here.

Now it is getting tough because people don't want to rubber stamp for the President anymore. There is an election coming. It is coming soon.

□ 2030

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SODREL). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LIMITING SIZE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER).

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Utah (Mr. BISHOP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

MR. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago, several of us on the floor talked on the value of the Federal Government not trying to be more efficient but simply trying to be less, and returning some misappropriated authority back to the states. To poorly paraphrase, Justice Brandeis, a minority decision he gave in the 1920s: The States are indeed the laboratory of democracy. If you think about it, if a State tries something creative that does not work, we are not all harmed. When we, on the other hand, tries something that does not work, the entire Nation is harmed.

For the Federal Government, the only advantage the Federal Government has is of uniformity. By definition, what we do is one-size-fits-all. States on the other hand have a greater opportunity of being creative, being fair, being just simply because they have a greater opportunity of meeting individual needs. Federal Government does not mean to do harm, we just do.

Let me give you an example: I want to introduce you to a constituent of mine, an elderly gentleman, we will call him Gene. He owned a farm that had been in his family for several generations. Of course, on this farm ran a small creek. This creek went to a larger creek, which went to a river, which went into a bay, which eventually went into the Great Salt Lake. Even though this dead-end lake, all within the state of Utah, has been declared by the Federal Government to be international waterway, because in the 1800s, an entrepreneurial pioneer was paid for ferrying sheep across the lake for summer grazing. Go figure. But back to Gene.

Gene had eight acres of this land that was on the main road, two of it was elevated. Since they were now planting hay on this land, they have to in Utah irrigate. So he built a man-made ditch from the creek to his property to flood up the lower areas so it finally hit the higher areas and water his crop, until the Federal Government declared that the man-made ditch was indeed the creek bed, the man-made standing water was now Federal wetlands; and, if Gene did not like it, it was his responsibility to prove the Federal Government was wrong. Which he actually did. The Soil and Water Conservation District came in and showed the land was different. He dug wells which showed that there was a clay base underneath, so even if the water was there, it would never sink into the aquifer and get to the river. He even put a flexible pipe into the ditch and put the creek water back into the creek, and oddly enough the land went dry, to which the Federal Government then threatened him with fines and imprisonment because he was harming Federal wetland. Then, when confronted with the evidence, they simply said, "Well, we are in a drought cycle. You are going to have to wait at least 5 years until we have a wet cycle to see if the water will naturally appear by itself."

He tried to sell this land at one time. A factory wished to buy it which would make apparel and create 100 jobs in his community, but he could not do it because now this was a Federal wetland. It was not a taking, mind you, because the Federal Government still allowed him to raise hay even though the price he made from the hay barely paid the taxes on this land that was now zoned as commercial property on the main road.

Gene did what most people when they run up against the bureaucracy of the Federal Government did, he surrendered. He eventually sold his property at \$400,000. However, the exact same kind of land next door on the same road was sold for \$750,000 for the same acreage. Which means, \$350,000, which should have been his retirement, it should have been his posterity. The wealth from his own property was denied him simply because we as a government usually do one-size-fits-all.