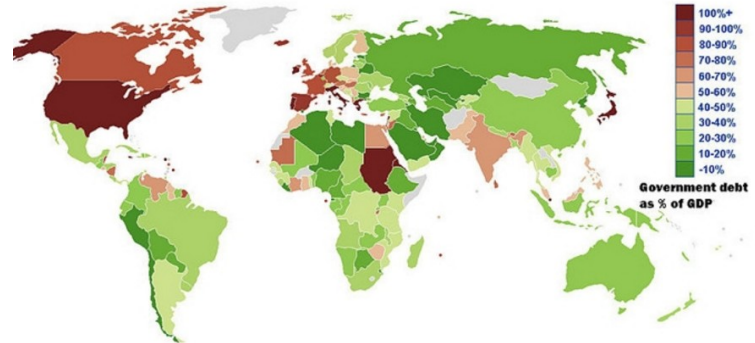




Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 27, 2015

Boehner Cuts Deal With White House; National Debt to Reach \$20 Trillion

After working privately over the past several weeks with members of the White House staff, as well as with Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.), and Harry Reid (D-Nev.), House Speaker John Boehner succeeded late Monday night in cobbling together a [deal](#) that gives everyone in Washington what they want but leaves the bill for the taxpayer. By the time the dust settles, the deal will cause the country's national debt to reach \$20 trillion within the next 18 months, if not sooner.



Doing an end run around usual House procedures, Boehner went over the heads of numerous committee chairmen to deal directly with the White House. In essence, the deal emasculates the “sequester” cuts built into law in 2011, gives President Obama a blank check to fund his government through the end of his second term, expands military spending, and keeps the Social Security disability program solvent for another six years.

The total increased spending is more than \$100 billion, with promises that, as usual, it won't cost the taxpayer anything because the increased spending will be “offset by savings” elsewhere in the government's gargantuan budget, spread out over the next decade. Lip service was given in the deal that the increased government spending will be funded by selling some oil from the government's strategic reserves and holding radio spectrum auctions, along with making some modest changes in the healthcare law. The deal also mentions possible savings through changes in crop insurance benefits and spending money seized from criminals by the Justice Department.

The deal is expected to pass the House on Wednesday, just in time for the House to vote in a new speaker on Thursday, widely expected to be establishment Republican Paul Ryan. This leaves Ryan with a “clean barn,” as Boehner expressed it: “I don't want to leave [Ryan] a dirty barn. I want to clean the barn up a little bit before [he] gets here.”

Voices of dissent were heard across the Potomac. Complaining about Boehner's unilateral dealings without consulting committee chairman per House rules, Budget Committee Chairman Tom Price (R-Ga.) expressed his outrage: “He [Boehner] threw the committee chairmen under the bus.” Representative Lynn Westmoreland (R-Ga.) said, “I can't vote for something where we spend the money today and save it 10 years from now. That, to me, is crazy.” This was echoed by Representative Matt Salmon (R-Ariz.) who said this is “a two-year budget deal that raises the debt ceiling for basically the entire term of this presidency.”

The deal solves a number of pressing issues while ignoring the runaway spending. The debt limit was expected to be reached by November 3, and the government was expected to run out of money no later than December 11. It takes off the table any chance of a government shutdown, and kicks the can past the November 2016 elections for the following Congress to deal with. It removes embarrassing



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questions that Republicans running for office would face next fall from their constituents. It gives the Republican warhawks more Pentagon spending (\$50 billion), and it gives the Democrat liberals more welfare spending (\$50 billion), with another few billion for unspecified military purposes.

Heritage Action and the Club for Growth, in a joint statement of disgust, said the deal “was brokered by a lame-duck Speaker and a lame-duck President [and] represents the very worst of Washington: a last-minute deal that increases spending and debt [while calling it] fiscal responsibility.”

More crudely but perhaps more accurately, Boehner’s efforts to “clean the barn” before leaving office were characterized by Heritage Action’s CEO, Michael Needham:

In Washington, “cleaning the barn” is apparently synonymous with shoveling manure on the American people. John Boehner is clearly a rogue agent, negotiating on behalf of well-connected special interests [but] not the voters who gave him the gavel.

The deal, to be voted on on Wednesday, will require every Democrat in the House and an estimated 90 to 100 Republicans to pass. Then it moves on to the Senate where McConnell is busy lining up support for the bill. From there, it goes to the president’s desk for signing. All just in time for new House Speaker Paul Ryan to inherit a nice clean and tidy barn.

At the start of Bill Clinton’s administration, the country’s national debt stood at just over \$4 trillion, a staggering sum beyond comprehending. Under Clinton it grew to \$5.7 trillion, and then it nearly doubled under “conservative” George W. Bush to \$10.6 trillion. Now, seven years later, the national debt is \$18.7 trillion, soon to reach \$20 trillion. Establishment Republicans get what they want: more military spending. Establishment Democrats get what they want: more welfare spending. What does the taxpayer get? The bill.

That’s how the establishment does business in Washington.

A graduate of an Ivy League school and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at www.LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.



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