



Obama, FDR: Who Is the Bigger Spender?

As reported by Tom Eddlem in *The New American*, President Obama on February 12 signed legislation to increase the federal government's borrowing authority by nearly \$2 trillion, on behalf of all of us who will be stuck with the astronomical promissory note. Perhaps to distract from the jaw-dropping bottom line of that stroke of the pen, President Obama followed up the following day with an address filled with language that sounds nearly like a parody of the discourses he so often delivers.



"After a decade of profligacy," the President proclaims, "the American people are tired of politicians who talk the talk but don't walk the walk when it comes to fiscal responsibility." This bit of same-old, same-old cliché'-laden populism, while eliciting groans, would at least be forgivable if not for the shameful hypocrisy it evinces. In what can only be described as a "hide in plain sight" Purloined Letter-style gambit, the veracity of the President's claims are betrayed by a brief perusal of the data provided by the administration's very own number crunchers at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

The "Historical Tables" posted on the [OMB's website](#), place President Obama's soi-disant thriftiness in a conflicting context. If adjusted according to the average annual percentage of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that will be spent by President Obama and his congressional co-signers, then by 2012, President Obama will sit alone atop the leader board when it comes to doling out the people's money. This distinction doesn't square with the President's self-congratulating declarations of painful, though necessary, austerity.

As a matter of fact, as reported at [townhall.com](#), President Obama's spendthrift ways will outdo even the unstoppable check writer of the New Deal himself, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. FDR is not only President Obama's sensei in matters of [social engineering](#), but his fiscal habits serve as our current president's model, as well.

According to the OMB figures, federal spending under President Obama will be about 24.13 percent of GDP, while FDR-era spending never topped 24.3 percent, even during the expansionist era of big government following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and the resulting prosecution of World War II. In further evidence of the student becoming the master, the federal government under President



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Obama will achieve an annual deficit of 10.6 percent of GDP, a first since the time of FDR. As explained by Terry Jeffrey, “The last time the deficit hit double digits as a percentage of GDP was 1945 — when Germany and Japan surrendered.” To put that sort of prodigality in perspective, deficits during the Reagan Administration’s unmatched expansion of the American Cold War arsenal, deficit spending as a percentage of GDP never reached double digits.

Finally, in his address promoting his own fantastical frugality, President Obama derided the Bush Administration’s “decade of profligacy.” As a matter of fact, every time President Obama sits down to write a check, he throws up the “George W. Bush spent way more than me” smokescreen. No one, with a straight face, the increases in the size and power of the federal government that took place during the George W. Bush a. President Bush’s accelerated augmentation of government paired with his sponsorship of the simultaneous eradication of constitutional rights is indefensible. That said, for the sake of accuracy and fairness, it must be reported that the average annual federal spending during the George W. Bush administration averaged about 20.43 percent of GDP, while the rate under Barack Obama’s watch is estimated to reach 24.13 percent. Furthermore, a side-by-side comparison of the two executive’s penchant for spending money they don’t have reveals a similar disparity between the deficits incurred during both administrations.

The sad moral to this story is that regardless of the party of the man holding the pen, for more than 70 years president after president has demonstrated a deplorable lack of parsimony when it comes to the assumption of incalculable debts that are run up on the credit of the American people and each of them has done so in willful defiance of Constitutional strictures meant to check and restrain the exercise of power.

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