

Federal fisc not a bottomless pit

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Despite the Republican victory this month, which was a loud and clear message from Americans that they want fiscal responsibility, we are getting nothing but political theater from Washington.

The release Wednesday of the report from President Barack Obama's bipartisan deficit commission might be a starting point, but it is wholly inadequate in addressing Washington's profligate spending.

The most obvious proof Washington is not going to cure its spending habits is that outgoing Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, a staunch Obama ally, discounted the report as "simply unacceptable."

The report calls for too little in the way of cutting spending and it takes too long to implement. For example, the commission has suggested increasing the

retirement age for Social Security by one month every two years, reaching 69 by 2075. That's right, 2075. That is laughable.

The commission also calls for cuts in Department of Defense spending and massive tax increases.

The report is mostly being criticized by Democrats. Liberals have no desire to cut spending because they live in a fantasyland where the federal fisc is a bottomless chest.

Meanwhile, the Republicans who take power in January also are calling for too little. They have promised to return federal spending to 2008 levels. While that might facially sound good, the devil, as they say, is in the details.

They are only talking about nonsecurity discretionary spending, which is actually a small percentage of the federal budget and, according to Ted DeHaven of the Cato Institute, would only shave about \$100 billion off Obama's budget. Under Obama, defense spending alone has increased \$126 billion.

If the GOP really wants to reduce spending, then everything has to be included. The president has proposed spending \$853 billion more in fiscal 2011 than was spent in fiscal 2008. That is almost \$1 trillion that can be cut.

Unfortunately, liberals don't understand. Despite Obama spending nearly \$1.3 trillion a year more than the government brings in, they still want to spend hundreds of billions of dollars on wasteful programs such as high-speed passenger rail and universal health care.

Please stop!

It is criminal that government continues to spend as it does. To put it on a smaller scale, how long would the average family survive if it continually spent more than it brought in year after year? It would not take long before the cars were repossessed and the house foreclosed.

We have reached that proverbial fork in the road. What we do today will determine the future fate of our nation for generations to come. This is not rocket science but it does require serious people willing to make hard decisions.

That means an across-the-board reduction in spending. That means an end to unneeded programs such as high-speed passenger rail. That means bringing our troops home.

Nor can there be any sacred cows. We must end the unconstitutional Ponzi scheme known as Social Security (please show me where the Constitution gives the federal government the power to force Americans to participate in a federal

retirement program). That does not mean breaking our promise to those in the program, it simply means stop adding people and give those in it the option to opt out.

Medicare must also go. Obama Care must be repealed. Defense spending must face serious cuts.

The smaller items also need eliminated, as they add up. End all subsidies for art, farming, Amtrak, etc. Put an end to government broadcasting companies such as public radio. Eliminate departments such as Education and Energy and downsize the rest.

Take tax increases off the table. If anything, cut taxes in order to stimulate the economy. The more money people have in their pockets, the more they spend, the more jobs that are created, the more they pay in taxes.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there needs to be a constitutional amendment requiring the Congress to balance the budget every year. There is no excuse for not balancing the budget, except, perhaps, during times of war — legal, just and moral wars only, please.

Members of the deficit commission said they want an “adult conversation” on deficit reduction. With the children in the Congress and the White House, that is not going to happen.