



## What Training Monkeys Can Teach Us About Congress

When he does, spray cold water on all of the monkeys. The first monkey will scamper into a corner. But after a while, another monkey will start climbing the stairs. When he does, spray all the monkeys with cold water again.

Do this a few more times when a monkey tries to climb the stairs and pretty soon you won't need any water. As soon as a monkey gets on the stairs, the other monkeys will stop him.

At this point, remove one of the monkeys and replace him with a new one. The new monkey will see the banana and start climbing the stairs. To his surprise, the other four monkeys will grab him and start beating him up. After two or three efforts to get the banana with the same thing happening, pretty soon he'll give up, too.



When that happens, replace another of the original five monkeys with a new one. Not knowing any better, he'll try to get the banana. But as soon as he starts climbing the stairs, all of the other monkeys - including the previous newcomer - will start beating him.

When the new monkey has been trained not to try for the banana, replace another of the original monkeys and repeat the process. After three more switches, all of the original monkeys will be gone. None of the ones that remain will have ever been sprayed with cold water.

But here's the amazing thing: None of them will try to get the banana. Each one knows that if he does, the other four will beat the crap out of him. Why? They have no idea. They just know that's the way it has always been.

The reader who sent me the story said the moral is obvious: This is how Congress operates. And it explains why, from time to time, **YOU HAVE TO REPLACE ALL OF THE MONKEYS.**

Right now, the banana is deficit reduction. Everybody wants to reach for it — or at least says he wants to. Heck, even our president recently declared: "We have to live within our means, reduce our deficit, and get back on a path that will allow us to pay down our debt."

Like many of his predecessors in the Oval Office, Barack Obama has mastered the art of saying the right thing - while most of the time doing the exact opposite. There has not been a single second since he took office that he has demonstrated the slightest interest in living within our means, or reducing the deficit, or paying down our national debt. Just the opposite, in fact.

I didn't have the stomach to watch President Obama's speech about the deficit he delivered at George Washington University two weeks ago. It was all I could do to read it the next day. I didn't expect much in the way of honesty, humility, or contrition. But even I was shocked by the partisan bitterness of his



Written by [Wallis W. Wood](#) on April 29, 2011

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remarks.

The president declared that his opponents were heartless monsters who would pit “children with autism or Down’s syndrome” against “every millionaire and billionaire in our society.” As the *Wall Street Journal* noted, “Mr. Obama then packaged his poison in the rhetoric of bipartisanship – which ‘starts,’ he said, ‘by being honest about what’s causing our deficit.’ The speech he delivered was dishonest even by modern political standards.”

The *Journal* is being too kind. Obama’s speech about the deficit just may be the most dishonest assemblage of bluff, bluster and baloney that I have ever read. But we can at least thank our vice president for one of the lighter moments of what was a very dark occasion. In case you missed it, Joe Biden slept through much of his boss’s speech.

I kid you not. You can see it on YouTube by [clicking here](#). And don’t believe anyone who tells you the VP was merely thinking deeply about what his boss was saying. I’ve slept through enough boring lectures myself to know he’s asleep, for crying out loud.

Would that you and I could take this same easy way out to ignore all of our president’s dishonest posturing and phony promises. But we can’t. Unless we force Congress to change, we are going to be willing participants in one of the greatest crimes in U.S. history: saddling our children and our children’s children with a debt they will never be able to pay off.

The promises made by the Federal government to its citizens — the so-called “unfunded liabilities” that are already written into law — now come to more than \$100 trillion. And there is not a single cent set aside to pay them. Not one copper penny.

Even Social Security is bankrupt. You must understand that there is no money in the horribly misnamed Trust Fund. Every dollar a young worker pays in today is sent out immediately to an older retiree. All that the worker will have to show for 40 or 50 years of contributions will be some IOUs.

By the way, the idea that the “rich” in this country aren’t paying their fair share is absolutely preposterous. The top 1 percent of taxpayers in this country earns about 11 percent of the income. So you’d expect them to pay 11 percent of the taxes, right? Not at all: The top 1 percent of taxpayers pays more than twice that amount. They account for 22 percent of all income taxes collected. Meanwhile, the bottom 50 percent of the population pays nothing. In fact, the vast majority of them are net tax recipients.

Wasn’t one of the founding principles in America that we are all supposed to be equal before the law? Please tell me, what is “equal” about a tax rate that is many times higher for a successful person than someone who is not? Has anyone ever heard of the truism that if you want more of something, subsidize it? But if you want less of something, tax it? Apparently, our would-be masters in Washington want more people on the dole. And fewer paying the taxes that make it all possible.

In case you’ve forgotten, our Founding Fathers made a progressive income tax illegal for the first 137 years of this country’s existence. This vital element of Karl Marx’s Communist Manifesto wasn’t inflicted on us until 1913, when a devious conspirator named Edward Mandell House got his puppet Woodrow Wilson to throw his support behind the Sixteenth Amendment.

But here’s the amazing thing: The vast majority of legislators who voted for the darned thing had no idea what they were doing. Sound impossible? Not at all. Let me quote every word in that amendment; then you tell me what you think it says: “The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on



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incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.”

And that’s it. Those 30 words are all it took to unleash the monstrous tyranny of our present tax system on us. Do you see anything there that says, “Hey, Congress, we really think Karl Marx had the right idea. Let’s sock it to the ‘rich’ with a progressive income tax.”

Of course not. The people who would enslave us were not any more honest 100 years ago than Barack Obama and his supporters are today.

Thank goodness, a whole bunch of Americans are catching on. As Howard Beal said, they’re mad as hell. And they’re not going to take anymore.

Neither should you.

Until next time, keep some powder dry.

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