

Opinion: Despite federal deal, still lots of work to be done on budget

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It would be difficult to find anyone anywhere who's happy about the deal reached by President Barack Obama and Republican leaders to raise the federal debt limit over the weekend.

It also would be difficult to point to anyone in the nation's capital who has performed heroically in recent weeks – not the president, not the leaders of either party in Congress – as the deadline for avoiding an unprecedented default approached.

There were no winners in the long, bitter debate and lots of losers – including a president whose approval rate has hit a new low.

By the time the politicians stepped to the microphones on Sunday to announce that they had an agreement, many Americans had had enough of all of them. And the nasty sniping that continued on Monday only added to the perception that the American government was no longer working to the benefit of the citizens.

But on Saturday it was clear that Congress had reached a stalemate. As in any game of "Chicken," there comes a time when someone must turn away or risk catastrophe. When the Senate rejected the latest House plan to raise the debt limit and the House rejected the latest Senate plan, even before the Senate voted on it, the time had come.

That's when the combatants should – and did – call an end to

the current hostilities and move on to the next battle. And there are lots of battles yet to come.

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