

《Obama Meeting With Congressional Leaders Fails to Resolve Sh》

WHITE HOUSE — In a meeting at the White House late Wednesday, President Obama and U.S. congressional leaders failed to resolve differences and stop the federal government shutdown.

House and Senate leaders emerged from the White House after meeting with the president for about an hour, and based on their statements, the news was not good.

House Speaker Republican John Boehner was the first to the microphones:

"In times like this, the American people expect their leaders to come together to try to find ways to resolve their differences. The president reiterated one more time tonight that he will not negotiate," said Boehner.

Boehner repeated the offer by House Republicans to go to conference (negotiations) to try to resolve differences.



But he gave no indication of any progress during what he called a "nice and polite" conversation with Obama and Democratic leaders, who he said should "listen to the American people" and have "a serious discussion."

A clearly disappointed and angry Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said Boehner spoke in the meeting only about negotiations for a short-term funding measure to get government operations going.

Reid said President Obama strongly rejected anything that would damage "Obamacare," the health care reform law Congress passed three years ago.

"This has never happened before. They can make all the historical analysis that they want, it just has never happened before where a political party would be willing to take the country to the brink of financial disaster and say we're not going to allow us to pay our bills. The president said he would not stand for that," said Reid.

Reid blamed what he called "Tea Party-driven" members of the House for pushing the country to a government shutdown and in the direction of a potential default. Congress must raise the government's debt ceiling by October 17.

House Democratic Minority leader Nancy Pelosi said Republicans keep "moving the goal posts" on the budget issue, as they try to overturn Obamacare, but she suggested a way forward.

"I am just saying for the good of the order and the confidence of the American people, we should take the debt ceiling debate off the table. The United States of America will always honor the full faith and credit of our country," said Pelosi.

In an interview with CNBC, President Obama acknowledged being "exasperated" by the government shutdown, which he called "entirely unnecessary."

"When you have a situation in which a faction is willing potentially to default on U.S. government obligations, then we are in trouble, and if they are willing to do it now they will be willing to do it later," said President Obama.

Obama said he would be open later to having a "reasonable, civil, negotiation" on broader budget issues.

A White House statement said Obama made clear to congressional leaders that he will not negotiate over the need for Congress to act to reopen the government or to raise the debt limit.

It said Obama was glad the leaders were able to engage in a "useful discussion" and he "remains hopeful that common sense will prevail".

Obama administration pressure on Republicans included a meeting Wednesday in which the president and key business leaders discussed the dangers of default and the ongoing shutdown.

Lloyd Blankfein, chairman and chief executive officer of Goldman Sachs, say Republicans should not use the threat of default as a "cudgel" (club).

"There is a consensus that we shouldn't do anything that hurts this recovery that is a little bit shallow, not very well established and is quite vulnerable, and this shutdown of the government but particularly a failure to raise the debt ceiling would accomplish that," said Blankfein.

The Republican-controlled House has passed spending measures to fund specific parts of the government or programs.

The White House and Democrats reject this, saying House Speaker Boehner should allow a "clean" Senate-passed bill to come to a vote that would fund the entire government.

