

## Right wing politicians are engaged in economic civil wa...

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The growing political crisis in the USA seems hard to avoid this morning.

For historical reasons the US government is subject to borrowing limits that are set periodically by the House of Representatives and Senate. The current limit is \$31 trillion, and it has been reached. That means it needs to increase if, as is normal in recent times, the US government is to continue its deficit spending.

That deficit spending has been high of late. Covid has boosted it, significantly. Before that \$7.8 trillion was added to the total during Trump's period in office: a record sum, of course. Most of that went to fund tax cuts for the wealthiest people and companies in the USA.

Now the Republican majority in the US lower House of Representatives wants to prevent an increase in the US borrowing limit, which they say is unaffordable without questioning who created it and why.

The result is a standoff. Janet Yellen, as Treasury Secretary, is already planning emergency spending cuts. These include things like cutting funding for pensions for federal employees and the armed forces, for the time being. Without any solution to the standoff within months the US will face a government shutdown and a default on US interest payments.

That, of course, is exactly what those engineering this exercise want. The Republicans hate government. Most of all, they hate government led by a Democrat President. They will do all they can to disable it.

Their price for freeing up spending is already known. It is cuts to Medicare and social security payments for the most vulnerable in the USA. The far-right want to punish those most at risk for the profligacy of their own past-President that always and only had the intention of aiding the best off. They do not care about the resulting suffering.

The sad thing is that the Republicans are bound, to some extent, to eventually get their way. There will have to be a compromise to keep the US government going at some

point in time. The Republicans are bound to get what they want, to some degree at least.

This matters for the USA, of course. The horrible inequality within that society will be exacerbated as a result. Real people will suffer and die as a consequence. The Republicans won't care, or they are just too stupid to do so.

This matters to the UK as well. What the Republicans do one day happens here soon afterwards. The Tories are good mimics.

The Tories cannot, of course, object to artificial debt limits in this country. We do not have such a thing. We have other ways to impose misery.

Austerity is one such way. Hunt is doing that.

Unnecessarily increased interest rates is another way. Andrew Bailey is delivering that.

Both are acting with the indifference of the US Republicans for those will suffer as a result of their policies.

Both are imposing misery with deliberate intent.

I was on Nicky Campbell's programme on BBC Radio 5 yesterday morning, up against a chump for Conservative Home. I suggested that the government is engineering a recession right now. Asked to justify that I said it was because they were stupid.

Henry Hill from Conservative Home exploded and tried to deliver a load of ad hominem attacks on me: to his credit, Nicky Campbell stopped that.

I justified my comment using Bailey as an example. He must know that raising interest rates will cause misery and does nothing whatsoever to stop inflation caused by war in Ukraine, but he is raising rates anyway when inflation will in any event inevitably fall this year.

Either he is stupid, or he thinks the country is stupid enough to believe him. Either way misery and a deliberate shift of reward in society from working people to those with capital takes place - as he and the Republicans both want, because nothing else explains their policies.

This then is deliberately chosen misery. As I keep saying, it is a choice to engage in economic civil war on your own population, and it is one right-wing politicians seem keen on.

Their maliciousness knows no limit. We need politicians and commentators who will argue with them. I proved myself willing to do so. I wish others would.