

What happens when US democracy finally fails?

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Once upon a time, the question with which I title this post would have seemed academic. Of course, there has always been a risk that US democracy might fail, but the idea that it might actually do so (even within its own self-defined limits) seemed faintly absurd.

Until now, that is.

Last night, Steve Scalise, the Republican House majority leader, withdrew his nomination to be Speaker of the US Congress because although he had majority support from his party, it had become very clear that he had far too little support from it to win a vote to be Speaker without Democrat support, which was very unlikely to be forthcoming.

As a result, the Republicans, having sacked one of their own as Speaker cannot now find a replacement that they can agree upon and as such US democracy is at an impasse, because without a Speaker Congress cannot sit and so the entire US legislative system grinds to a halt.

Of course, this problem might be solved. US democracy might have a little life put back into it again, in the short term. But the emphasis there is on the words 'short term'. The breakdown in relations between those in the Republican Party is now so severe that a repetition of this fiasco, or the occurrence of another with similar significance, is likely soon.

What is apparent is that the Trump supporters in the party want to bring democracy down and are intent on achieving that goal. As we watch fascists are trying to end democracy in the country that prided itself above all else on being a democracy above all else.

The risk of democratic failure in the US is now very real.

And where the US goes others follow.

The demise of choice - the ultimate goal of the neoliberal philosophy - is happening.