

Why is Trump stoking animosity?

Published: January 12, 2026, 8:53 pm

If politics is always about resolving the conflicts within and between groups in society so that they can co-exist, even if one is favoured over another, why is it that Trump seems intent on stoking animosity and conflict? Is he even doing politics?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYdEZmlP2zs?si=WbDbV_XFAhsplu1c

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=7hc9p-1858d60-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

Why is Donald Trump stoking animosity?

I ask the question because, in my opinion, politics is all about reconciling the conflicting interests between the various groups in society in a way that guarantees that those groups can live alongside each other reasonably peaceably.

Now, I'm not pretending that that doesn't mean there won't be bias in the way in which those conflicts are resolved. We all know, for example, that there have been parties in most democracies which have been biased towards those people who work and other parties that have been biased most towards those who have wealth. And that is part of

the political process. But at the end of the day. Politics has been about working out how those groups can coexist by easing, to sufficient degree, the conflicts that might arise between them so that they can live in some state of harmony.

But that is not what Donald Trump is doing. Donald Trump is clearly going out of his way to stoke animosity.

He's removing people's human rights by now saying that an Act of 1798, which he has already used to deport people to Venezuela, even though it only applies in wartime, might also be used, for example, to allow state officials to walk into anybody's house without a warrant. That is an act of animosity.

He's threatening people's education.

He's threatening many people's healthcare.

He's threatening to withdraw social security from people because the courts are questioning whether Musk is entitled to all the details on every social security claimant in the country.

He is weaponising the people of the USA into a conflict between the various interested parties in the country, of whom we can suggest Elon Musk and his billionaire cohort are one party and pretty much everyone else in the USA as another.

This is not a way to try to find a solution to living in harmony.

This is a way to create strife and disorder and disunity and chaos.

So, is this deliberate on Trump's part? Or is it an accident of what he happens to think he should do because he believes government is too big?

Or is there something else going on here? Is he not even trying to do politics?

I asked that question quite deliberately because it's occurred to me. In a discussion I had recently, we actually talked about the fact that Trump might, in this sense, be a post-politician politician because he isn't trying to do what every other politician who's got the White House has done, which is to some degree hold America together. He's actually trying to blow it apart. And in that sense, he is a fundamentally different character from all who have gone before.

Now, I can't answer the question as yet, because we are watching this play out in real time. Trump has only been in office for a couple of months. There is a long way to go as yet, even before the midterm elections when the first chance to clip his wings does electorally arise. But it is clear that we are on the path to something completely unknown, and that is a country which is being set up by its president to be at war with itself.

I am, frankly, incredibly worried about that, and I don't see why I shouldn't be. I don't see why anybody watching this video shouldn't be. We can't live in such a state for very long.

We are temperamentally not suited to living in conflict.

We are naturally peacemakers. Sure, we can all handle a bit of aggression every now and again, and sure, we will have to resolve our disputes sometimes, very hopefully peacefully. But the point I'm making is we will always try to resolve conflicts, and the vast majority of us will feel very much better when we have. But there is no indication that there is some stable situation to which Trump is headed, where he will say, we've achieved our goals, we have got the outcomes we want.

He appears to simply want to punish the American people for being, and having in the past wanted a government. And in that situation where conflict is at the very core of his governing method in this second term as president that he's now enjoying, I can't see how his government ever reaches a point of stability where it can succeed in delivering anything for the benefit of people instead of delivering destruction for the harm of people.

We are living in dangerous times as a result, and we have to hold our breath and just hope that somehow or other something might change and we might see an end to Trump's animosity and a restoration of some sort of peace.