

Trump's mayhem is already imposing a very high price

Published: January 13, 2026, 9:05 am

It takes some effort for a US president to create chaos and destruction on the scale that Donald Trump has.

I have already commented on much of it, but yesterday, [news came through](#) of another impact that he has had, this time on the US economy.

In the first quarter of this year, during which he was President for only a little over two months, the US economy shrank in size by 0.3%, such was the adverse reaction to the economic devastation that he has unleashed.

Since the close of the quarter, things can only have got worse, of course. It would be reasonable to presume that the economic mayhem of April, and its obvious aftermath, is going to have an impact when the tariffs on China really kick in. If so, the chance that the US will move into recession is high, I suspect.

I know that the right-wing ideologues in the White House will claim that this is all part of the plan, and the price they are happy to pay. When, however, the impact of this becomes apparent to people in the USA in terms of job losses, rising prices, falling real income, increasing inflation, reduced public services and an impact on the already limited social safety net available in that country, sentiment is going to change.

So why note this now, in advance of that change of sentiment? Simply because it confirms what commentators like me have already been suggesting, which is that Trump is going to do a staggering amount of economic harm, and that process has already begun, simply because of the change in consumer sentiment he has already created.

This post on this blog is, in that case, for the sake of creating another episode in an ongoing narrative. One of the primary themes of that narrative, at present, is the harm that the far-right is causing. They might have only just begun to wreak havoc, but there is no happy ending to this tale while the far right is in charge.

There is a footnote to add, building on a theme noted yesterday [on the stupidity of markets](#).

You would have expected the S&P 500 index to fall on the news that the USA's GDP had declined. It did not. It rose, quite markedly:



The disconnect between financial markets and the real world becomes more apparent by the day.