

The biggest casualty of war in the Gulf will be a loss ...

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The New York Times [asks a totally relevant question](#) this morning, which is when is a ceasefire no longer a ceasefire?

As they noted:

Yesterday, American forces struck Iran for the second time in three days. In response to U.S. strikes on Monday, Iran swiftly threatened counterattacks — and yet, so far, both sides say that negotiations are ongoing and the cease-fire is holding.

Oh, yes, really? That's what a ceasefire looks like, is it?

The obvious question is, if that is the case, what is a war?

Maybe that is when the USA threatens its supposed ally in the Gulf, Oman, with an attack if it too does not comply with the demands of Donald Trump on the Strait of Hormuz, which is what Trump did yesterday.

And maybe it is when Trump says that he will continue with his approach to this conflict whatever the economic consequences, which he did, again yesterday.

Can we know, when so much of what Trump has said over such a long period of time has proved to be unreliable? Should his words count for anything? I suspect that history will say they do not.

Actions, on the other hand, do matter, and the significance of these is clear.

As a matter of fact, there is still a war going on between the USA and Iran, despite the supposed ceasefire, and for all the claims that the ceasefire in Lebanon is holding, it is also very clear that Israel is intensifying its attack on Hezbollah there.

There is, then, an ongoing war in the Gulf. Let's not pretend otherwise. Whatever is said, what is done matters in this context, and the consequence of what is happening in the Gulf is that the looming world economic crisis is still unfolding. Oil, gas and

fertiliser, as well as helium, sulphuric acid and more besides, are not flowing, and, at some point quite soon, the pretence that this is a minor disruption that will just have an impact on the energy price cap in the UK will fall apart.

Until then, our politicians are being as wilfully misleading as Trump is. They are pretending all is well just as much as he is pretending there is peace. Both are seeking to deceive for short-term gain. The long-term consequences are severe.

One of them is that any remaining faith I had in our news media has disappeared. Watch it, or read it, and the collective denial of the reality of the situation we are in appears to be universal. We are being fed total nonsense as the world is falling apart all around us.

It is impossible for there to be disruption of global supply chains on the scale this war is now creating without major economic consequences, but just as the politicians are in denial by offering misleading claims, so too are the media in denial by refusing to discuss what this all means. It is as if there is a collective attempt being undertaken in plain sight to pretend that all will be well when that, glaringly obviously, cannot be the case.

There will be an economic shock as a consequence of this, but do not deny the scale of the social shock that will be faced as well. It may be at least as big.

A population unprepared for the crisis they face as a consequence of the deliberate choices of politicians and the media is likely to react more adversely than necessary. Panic, mistrust, and utter disbelief that a world crisis was allowed to develop without anyone saying anything are going to be widespread, and with them, the sense of alienation among many people in the UK from power and from those who report on it is only going to intensify, and that sense is having horrible consequences already.

This war, and all the thinking and motivation behind it, is a creation of far-right thinking, but right now, in the way that we are seeing supposedly mainstream politicians and the media react, they are doing everything they can to promote that far-right agenda of alienation because, as ever, they are not telling the truth, In that case long after the direct economic consequences of this conflict cease to be apparent, which may be some considerable time in the future, the impact of that loss of trust may still be felt.

It is that which really worries me.