

# The Political War In Washington Threatens A Government Shut Down

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“Political Language is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable”... George Orwell

Forget Libya; the real bombing is not underway there. Pay less attention to Pakistan; the drone attacks there pale in comparison.

The real US war is about to erupt in Washington pitting those who believe government has a necessary role to play and those determined to weaken it.

The former understand that, without regulations, without rules, without programs for those in need, we could have a system collapse maybe even an uprising that will make Wisconsin look like a real tea party.

But America's would be political suicide bombers could care less. They are on a holy our way or the highway mission

What would a shutdown mean? The Boston Globe calls it a “downshift,”

“A federal ‘shutdown’ is more like a massive downshift — the federal government reaches too deeply into the crevices of daily American life to close. Social Security payments would still be made. Air traffic controllers would scan the skies. The mail should arrive at the doorstep.”

There are problems; apparently no one realized in the last shut down when the National Institute of Health was closed, no one was left to feed the lab animals. Ah, but who cares about them?

You can be sure the Republicans won't defund the military in part because their operation is run like a military campaign complete with deceptive propaganda and iron discipline.

Already conservatives are blaming Democrats for the problem, and, naturally praising themselves.

Here's House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, “House Republicans continue to offer serious solutions to get our fiscal House in order, but we cannot keep doing it alone. If Senators Reid and Schumer insist on shutting down the government because they want to protect every last dollar and cent of federal spending then that will be on their hands.”

Democrats like New York's Schumer are firing back by calling them “extreme,” “instead of

lashing out at Democrats in a knee-jerk way, we hope House Republicans will finally stand up to the Tea Party and resume the negotiations that had seemed so full of promise.”

Each party is blaming the other. Each deploys message points. Each acts sanctimoniously.

And, as the Zogby Poll illustrates, the public is, predictably confused.

“Voters are split on whether they are concerned about a possible government shutdown, and if they agree that a temporary shutdown would be a good thing because it will force spending cuts. Democrats, however, are much more likely than Republicans to be concerned and much less likely to think it would be a good thing.”

It’s an institutional failure, not just a political one. In the end, if negotiations fail, America’s least approved institution, the Congress itself, will find itself rejected and disrespected by more Americans!

Make no mistake: behind the rhetoric, the hard-line ideological right is on a war footing. They don’t care who they will hurt, and are hell bent in shutting down the government, in defunding any programs Democrats like or people need. They are not into compromise, conciliation or even dialogue.

In response, the center operates more like the flabby do gooders of the Salvation Army, trying to save what it can, trying to keep their unraveling coalition together, compromising and colluding with whomever it can.

In contrast, the right is more like a more muscular Marine Corps, determined to seize that hill, in this case, Capitol Hill. They are, in one sense, true Jihadists in suits, on a mission from God, and in this case, the great deity’s chosen representatives on earth like the Billionaires, Koch Brothers and Rupert Murdoch.

This is not about Money; it is about power. And it is coming to a head soon. Each party is scurrying to get the best deal but a large number of diehards have wrapped themselves in “live free or die” banners and are willing to take the government down with them.

It is a calculated tactic, akin to holding the country hostage, by creating a crisis that only they can solve, when their opponents cave into their demands, that is.

In essence it says to pols in Washington; do what we demand or we take your government away!

Writes David Johnson of the GOP, “Their election strategy for 2010 was to obstruct everything and keep the economy from creating jobs, and then blame Democrats. It worked. So now they’re doing it even more. But is that the whole plan? In every instance Republicans are obstructing the very things that can help the economy recover and provide the jobs people need. Everything they do is aimed at making things worse. It is hard to understand their actions except as a systematic attempt to blow up the economy.”

Tom Franck called Republicans the “Wrecking Crew” in a book of the same name well before they were able to beat up on a flabby, dispirited and poorly organized Democratic Party led by a President who wants to be everyone’s friend. Time Magazine said of his book,

“Frank offers one damning anecdote after another. The Wrecking Crew explains how cynical conservatives have wrested control of the government by railing against its very existence, all while using federal perches to funnel billions into the pockets of lobbyists and the corporations they represent.”

A Steve Koss explains, “According to Frank, the conservative worldview is totally committed to “the ideal of laissez faire, meaning minimal government interference in the marketplace, along with hostility to taxation, regulation, organized labor, state ownership, and all the business community’s other enemies.

“The conservative movement promotes the interests of business exclusively over all else in accordance with the motto, ‘More business in government, less government in business.’ So-called ‘big government,’ also tagged as the liberal state, is the enemy; in fact, virtually all government is the enemy, other than the national defense. “

That said, where are we now?

The Daily Beast reports, “Senate Democrats are preparing to offer \$20 billion in new spending cuts in order to avoid a government shutdown- but will it be enough for the Tea Party? (DS: They are now up to \$30 B) The offer, which is Democrats’ highest yet, comes on top of \$10 billion in cuts that have already been enacted. The House GOP, however, has so far stood by its demand for \$61 billion in cuts as it faces pressure from the Tea Party activists. Congress returns from recess Monday and has until April 8 before funding runs dry.”

On the sidelines is an emboldened Wall Street, “resurrected” in the words of the National Journal, into “a global financial elite even less under U.S. control than before the crash.” Its many lobbyists are hard at work toning down the rules that will govern the financial reform bill.

They are shifting their political money to Republicans, some even recognizing that the Tea Party is their best friend all in the name of the “free: (sic) market.”

Welcome to the age of stalemate and paralysis with the tone still set by an ever so cautious President who still hopes to make a deal rather than fight for his program. He is watching the polls— not listening to the cries of his supporters.

Contrast Obama’s failure to explain the real challenge with the stand taken by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1936. (He was re-elected three more times), condemning “business and financial monopoly, speculation, reckless banking, class antagonism, sectionalism, (and) war profiteering.”

FDR said then, “We know now that Government by organized money is just as dangerous as Government by organized mob.”

The times have changed, although the conflicts that surfaced in the 1930’s are surfacing again as economic inequality grows and cutbacks intensify. A half a million people took to the streets in London last week. Don’t think the same or more can’t happen in the USA.

A last minute deal is likely to get done with more compromise on the left and more gloating

on the right.

Who will get hurt? Not the wealthy, that's for sure. But these issues, and this conflict are here to stay <strong>with or without </strong>a last minute compromise or sell-out by Democrats.

*News Dissector **Danny Schechter** directed the DVD, Plunder the Crime of our Time and wrote the companion book. (Plunderthecrimeofourtime.com.)*

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