

# Washington Brinkmanship Resolution. The US Senate Approved the “Reopening of the Government”. What Next?

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Beltway theatrics don't surprise.

Late Wednesday, 16 days of government shutdown ended. Denouement came with a whimper, not a bang.

The Senate approved reopening government 81 - 18. The House followed suit 285 - 144. Obama signed the measure shortly after midnight.

HR 2775: Continuing Appropriations Act, 2014 authorizes funding through January 15. It raises the debt ceiling through February 7.

It maintains \$986.3 billion for five appropriation bills. It includes other unreported provisions. It's standard Washington sausage-making. It makes the real thing look good by comparison.

Section 122 “(e)xtends authority for activities to counter Lord’s Resistance Army” activities. It’s a Ugandan guerrilla force. It’s waging low intensity war against repressive governance.

Section 123 “Extends authorization for construction of Olmsted Locks and Dams included within the President’s FY 14 budget request, FY 14 House-passed and Senate-reported Energy and Water Appropriations bills and similar to language included in the Water Resources Development Act.”

Doing so earmarks about \$3 billion for Kentucky. It’s Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell’s home state. Critics call it the “McConnell Kickback.”

They do so for good reason. He and Majority Leader Harry Reid (D. NV) agreed on legislative terms. A few billion for constituents is common Capitol Hill practice. Doing so reflects business as usual.

Section 126 provides \$26 million in judiciary funding. Other sections provide additional funding for Interior Department and Forest Service firefighting.

Section 146 provides Senator Frank Lautenberg’s widow a \$174,000 gratuity. Numerous other sections include other add-ons.

Note: Five versions of HR 2775 were introduced:

“1. To condition the provision of premium and cost-sharing subsidies under the Patient

Protection and Affordable Care Act upon a certification (to) program to verify household income... (Introduced in House).

2. No Subsidies Without Verification Act (Engrossed in House) (Passed House).

3. No Subsidies Without Verification Act (Placed on Calendar Senate - PCS).

4. Continuing Appropriations Act, 2014 (Engrossed Amendment Senate - EAS).

(5) Continuing Appropriations Act, 2014 (Enrolled Bill) (Passed House and Senate)."

In three months, high drama repeats. On Thursday, federal employees went back to work.

Shutdown theatrics left America more than ever discredited. Brinkmanship masked what's going on.

Real crisis conditions persist. They aren't addressed. Venal politicians ignore them. So do media scoundrels.

Poverty, real unemployment, underemployment, hunger, homelessness, and overall deprivation persists at Depression era levels.

America is permanently at war. Imperial direct and proxy ones rage out-of-control. New conflicts are planned.

Police state harshness targets whistleblowers, journalists who report their disclosures, and other right over wrong defenders.

Industrial America is being hollowed out. It's disappearing in plain sight. Offshoring high pay/good benefit jobs lowers household income. It reduces US tax revenue. It erodes economic growth.

It continues America's decline. Out-of-control militarism, police state harshness, and corporate favoritism bear full responsibility for today's deficit.

It approaches \$17 trillion. It's nearly \$54,000 for every US citizen. It's impossible to repay. Fed money printing madness masks a growing debt crisis.

Creating a trillion dollars annually out of thin air debases the currency. It's the basis of dollar hegemony. It's why China urges de-Americanizing.

It wants a new world order. It wants out from under beltway banditry. It's tired of US perniciousness. It wants an entirely new financial architecture. It's not alone.

According to Paul Craig Roberts, America's economy isn't "salvageable in its present form." It's too far gone to be fixed.

Collapse "seems the most likely forecast," he says. Perhaps rebuilding from ruins will change things, he hopes. Not without entirely changing America's political process.

Duopoly power subverts responsible governance. It bears full responsibility for crisis conditions. Rogues, crooks and morons run America.

They're suffocating it. They're hollowing it out. They're destroying it. They're doing it for power, self-enrichment and other benefits they enjoy. They're doing it at the expense of ordinary Americans.

They're ruthlessly exploited. The worst is yet to come. What's emerging is similar to what happened in August 2011 and December 2012.

The debt ceiling was increased in exchange for a \$1 trillion in social spending cuts. Another \$1.2 trillion in sequestered ones became effective January 2013.

Around \$4 trillion of Bush's \$4.6 trillion tax cuts were permanently extended. Bipartisan duplicity agreed on \$6.2 trillion irresponsibly. Rich elites benefitted hugely. They did so at the expense of ordinary Americans.

Bipartisan double-dealing intends more massive social spending cuts on top of earlier ones.

At the same time, expect generous corporate tax cuts. They're agreed on. They're not discussed. Enacting them under the radar is planned. Don't expect major media headlines explaining them.

The difference between now and earlier will be enacting more of what corporate America wants. In exchange, the debt ceiling will be increased.

A political armistice will persist through November 2014 mid-term elections. Business as usual will continue.

Cutting Obamacare was a ruse. It was smoke and mirrors. It was red meat rhetoric for Tea Party conservatives. It was never part of resolving things.

Both parties are in lockstep on massive social spending cuts. Details and timing alone separate them. Social Security and Medicare are prime targets.

They're erroneously called entitlements. They're insurance programs. They're funded by worker/employer payroll tax deductions.

They're contractual federal obligations. They're for eligible recipients who qualify. Targeting them reflects grand theft.

Robbing poor Peter to benefit rich Paul is official bipartisan policy. Obama's as hardline as most Republicans. Public squabbles mask double-dealing complicity.

Social America is being destroyed in plain sight. It's on the chopping block for elimination. Disadvantaged households are out of luck. So are seniors and retirees.

Washington reform is deform. Neoliberal force-fed austerity reflects it. America is the world's richest country. It isn't broke. It misallocates its resources.

Expect much greater misallocation ahead. It'll be phased in incrementally. It'll hammer ordinary Americans hugely. They'll be increasingly on their own.

Millions will be entirely out of luck. A decade from now or earlier, New Deal/Great Society benefits no longer will exist. Dark age harshness will replace them.

Wall Street crooks demand it. Whatever they want they get. Ripping off ordinary Americans benefits them hugely. Market manipulation lets them use added riches to make more of them.

The dirty game continues. Grand theft America is policy. Venal politicians are in league with corporate crooks.

The more they get, the more they want, the more political Washington obliges. Brinkmanship theatrics mask it. Public pain is real.

Media scoundrels don't explain. They support business as usual. They're in lockstep with what demands condemnation.

Union bosses are just as duplicitous. No one represents Main Street. Ordinary Americans are increasingly on their own sink or swim. Harder than ever hard times loom.

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