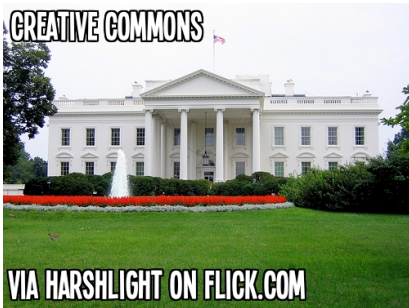


## Republicans and Obama in debt crisis talks

13th October, 2013



After more than ten days of stalemate in the U.S., things have finally begun to start moving. President Barack Obama and the Republican Speaker of the

House of Representatives, John Boehner, sat down for talks on Thursday about the impasse over the partial U.S. government shutdown and the looming debt crisis. Their discussions didn't lead to any certain outcome, but analysts are taking a positive note that talks are happening. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor said the talks were "very useful" and "clarifying". Hopes are that the two sides will agree on a temporary increase to the \$16.7 trillion U.S. debt limit. Failure to do so by October 17 could have dire consequences for the global economy.

A Wall Street Journal / NBC News poll found 53 per cent of those surveyed blamed Republicans for the government shutdown, while 31 per cent blamed President Obama. Observers from other countries are having trouble understanding what is going on in U.S. politics. The Times of India wrote: "What is chilling is that US politicians are willing to engage in a game of brinkmanship that is tantamount to detonating a nuclear device over their economy." A UAE businessman commented that: "There is something fundamentally wrong with a system that leaves a country without direction, in stagnation, without a budget and potentially without the wherewithal to settle its debts."

Sources: VOA News / BBC

### Writing

*The USA has the best system of government in the world. Discuss.*

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*stalemate / talks / government shutdown / analysts / debt limit / global economy / Republicans / U.S. politics / brinkmanship / fundamentally wrong / stagnation*

### True / False

- There has been 10 days of checkmate in U.S. politics. T / F
- President Obama sat down for talks with the House Majority Leader. T / F
- The House Majority Leader said he wanted more clarification. T / F
- The size of the U.S. debt limit is currently \$16.7 trillion. T / F
- More people blame Obama's opponents than Obama. T / F
- An Indian newspaper criticized the U.S. for endangering its economy. T / F
- The newspaper said the U.S. should reduce its nuclear devices. T / F
- A UAE businessman is shocked at the system of US government. T / F

### Synonym Match

- |                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. stalemate / impasse | a. equal to     |
| 2. partial             | b. provisional  |
| 3. clarifying          | c. pay          |
| 4. temporary           | d. deadlock     |
| 5. dire                | e. frightening  |
| 6. blamed              | f. limited      |
| 7. chilling            | g. take part in |
| 8. engage              | h. terrible     |
| 9. tantamount          | i. accused      |
| 10. settle             | j. illuminating |

### Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about the cause of the U.S. government shutdown?
- Could something like this happen in your country?
- Has this crisis damaged America's image around the world?
- Why didn't leaders talk to each other for over 10 days?
- What do you think American people think about their leaders?
- Are analysts right to be positive about the situation?
- What happens if the USA does not raise its debt limit?
- What questions would you like to ask John Boehner?

## Phrase Match

- |                                  |                             |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. After more than ten days      | a. of brinkmanship          |
| 2. the impasse over the partial  | b. increase                 |
| 3. analysts are taking a         | c. U.S. government shutdown |
| 4. agree on a temporary increase | d. of stalemate             |
| 5. have dire consequences        | e. positive note            |
| 6. 53 per cent                   | f. wrong                    |
| 7. having trouble understanding  | g. for the global economy   |
| 8. engage in a game              | h. what is going on         |
| 9. something fundamentally       | i. its debts                |
| 10. settle                       | j. of those surveyed        |

## Discussion – Student B

- Why are people blaming the Republicans?
- Why are people blaming President Obama?
- Has your view of President Obama changed because of this crisis?
- What do you think of the comment from the Times of India?
- Is the UAE man right – that there is something badly wrong with America's system of government?
- What's your advice to the U.S. politicians?
- Who will be hurt most if U.S. politicians cannot find a solution?
- What questions would you like to ask Barack Obama?

## Spelling

- more than ten days of eealttasm
- talks on Thursday about the pisaesm
- the rapltai U.S. government shutdown
- snstayla are taking a positive note
- agree on a rrmyotaep increase
- have dire neuscqeenso
- 53% of those erevdysu blamed Republicans
- eorsrebvs from other countries
- a game of arbninkhsip
- ntgoeaidtn a nuclear device
- something mltalduenyana wrong
- without the tihrweewhal to settle its debts

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. f	3. j	4. b	5. h
6. i	7. e	8. g	9. a	10. c

## Role Play

### Role A – Human rights

You think the U.S. is best for human rights. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which of these America is worst at (and why): world peace, good food or democracy.

### Role B – World peace

You think the U.S. is best for world peace. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which of these America is worst at (and why): human rights, good food or democracy.

### Role C – Good food

You think the U.S. is best for good food. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which of these America is worst at (and why): world peace, human rights or democracy.

### Role D – Democracy

You think the U.S. is best for democracy. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which of these America is worst at (and why): world peace, good food or human rights.

## Speaking - USA

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the things that the USA is great for at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- democracy
- equal rights
- food
- education
- human rights
- world peace
- economic stability
- freedom of speech

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.