

# Grasping Reality with Both Hands

The weblog  
of Brad DeLong. Since 1999.  
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## Smith: Coronavirus Relief: Republicans in Disarray—Noted

The House Republicans caucus could not govern when they were in the majority. The House was then run by a caucus composed of non-Tea Party Republicans negotiating with Nancy Pelosi, so that she would give permission for enough Democrats to vote for a bill to make up a majority.

Now it looks like Mitch McConnell has decided that his Senate caucus has the same degree of dysfunction: it looks as though he will sign on to whatever economy-rescue bill Pelosi agrees on with Mnuchin.

Here Karl Smith gives his take on how that happened:

**Karl W. Smith:** *Coronavirus Relief Bill Has Republicans in Disarray*  
<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-07-22/coronavirus-relief-bill-has-republicans-in-disarray>: ‘The pandemic has left GOP lawmakers deeply splintered, not just over tactics or strategy but on basic principles. There are roughly four factions...

...If they don’t find a way to heal their fractures, U.S. workers and the overall economy will suffer even more.... Republicans... have traditionally supported government-led action and unrestrained spending only to battle foreign foes; with some notable exceptions, they have preferred to leave domestic issues to the private sector or the states....

The pandemic has pushed [one] group over the edge. Congress has spent almost half as much fighting Covid-19 over the last four months as it spent in nearly 20 years fighting the war on terror.... They are not prepared to spend another dime....

There is another group... that sees the main issue as the reckless promiscuity of the original Cares Act... that... gave potentially hundreds of billions of dollars to people who didn’t need it and created an unemployment insurance system that paid people not to work....

A third faction continues to believe that Covid-19 should be treated as external threat and that the full force of the U.S. government should be enlisted against it. That means more money for public health, schools and biomedical research, as well as continuing aid for struggling workers and businesses....

Lastly, there are a few senators who are not enthusiastic about more spending, but could tolerate it if it were accompanied by longer-term measures to help the economy....

Bringing them all together will require what the party is most lacking right now: a clear vision of how get out of this crisis with as little death and devastation as possible.... What that vision might consist of is anyone’s guess...

.#coronavirus #moralresponsibility #noted  
#orangehairedbaboons #2020-08-05

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