

ADDINGTON'S USEFUL IDIOTS

KagroX, who just got named one of Politico's top tweeters yesterday, just asked this question:

Has there ever been a populist movement cheering for default & austerity?

We've seen default situations around the world, and austerity programs imposed as a result. But popular political movements in FAVOR of it?

I replied,

Wrong to describe as populist movement calling for austerity. I think it's partially populist partially astroturf calling for chaos.

Take a look, for example, at who Yochi Dreazen claims is riding herd on the TeaParty ideology at the moment.

Addington has taken on a new role as enforcer of tea party dogma during the intensifying partisan bickering over the debt ceiling. From his perch as the Heritage Foundation's vice president for domestic and economic policy, Addington is throwing verbal thunderbolts at House Speaker **John Boehner's** current debt-ceiling proposal, which he argues will pave the way to tax increases.

The merits of Addington's arguments about the need to oppose Boehner's proposals are in some ways less interesting than the simple fact that Addington is the one publicly making them.

And while I'm sympathetic with those who express horror that our torture architect is now

whipping the pro-default vote, I think it worth looking more closely at what Addington said to whip the vote.

This man, after all, championed two unfunded wars. In fact, as he and his boss were putting the final touches on the lies that would justify the second, illegal war, his boss overrode the Treasury Secretary's fiscal concerns about one of several tax cuts, stating, "Reagan proved deficits don't matter." And **that guy**—one of the guys involved in blowing up the deficit with wars and tax cuts—had this to say:

The government has racked up \$14.294 trillion in debt — thought of by no-one as a little credit card debt. The spend-tax-and-borrow crowd, currently headed by President Obama, has been in charge in Washington too long. They have mortgaged the futures of our children and grandchildren. Our government is so deep in debt that the share of debt of a baby born today is \$45,000.

It is time for the spend-tax-and-borrow crowd to stop. As the President indicated, conservatives want deep spending cuts. In contrast, President Obama wants more taxes, a terrible idea. First, the government already takes too much money from the pockets of Americans in taxes. Second, if Americans give the government more money in taxes, the government will just find ways to spend it, rather than using it to pay off the public debt. Third, raising taxes reduces investment, which cuts economic growth and kills jobs.

So the Heritage Foundation, which of course first invented the legislation—health care reform—that ultimately set off the TeaParty, pays the guy who said, "We're one bomb away from getting rid of that obnoxious [FISA] court," the guy who wielded his pocket Constitution like a

sword as he did battle to shred it, to attack those who "spend-tax-and-borrow," ignoring all the time that the folks who have been in Washington too long are those who "spend-cut-and-borrow." Addington's own people.

Meanwhile, the grassroots part of this? They mustered about 50 people for a rally in DC yesterday, one which many of the TeaParty members of Congress attended. And yet as a desperate John Boehner tried to wield what weapons he had to win votes (the TeaPartiers already led him to get rid of the all-important pork he might have used to persuade the TeaPartiers, and Boehner seems to have given up his former ways of distributing checks on the floor of Congress as bribes), one after another TeaPartier refused to budge, even in the absence of any remaining grassroots movement.

In other words, the TeaParty grassroots movement that used to exist is just the excuse, at this point, for those trying to finish the job they started in 2001 redefining our government.

With the chaos that default will cause, think how much easier it will be to convince voters they need a unitary executive?