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**1AC Oil**

**Newest and most conclusive evidence proves Venezuela’s economic model is terminally unsustainable – investment is key**

**Caselli 9/5** (Irene Caselli, BBC reporter on the ground in Venezuela, citing Jose Manuel Puente, professor and advisor to the Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración in macroeconomics, 9-5-13, “Venezuela's economic woes: Sabotage or mismanagement?,” http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-23970027) BI

Theories abound in Venezuela regarding Tuesday's blackout which affected more than two-thirds of the country. While President Nicolas Maduro has accused political opponents of sabotaging the power system, the opposition blames government incompetence for the largest power cut in five years. As parts of the country are still facing problems with the electricity and the political finger-pointing continues, many are asking just how vulnerable Venezuela's infrastructure is. The capital, Caracas, is not used to the power cuts which have become quite common in other regions. On Tuesday, cash machines, traffic lights and the underground stopped working. There was traffic chaos, with some people stuck in train carriages. 'Lack of investment' Thousands of workers poured into the streets, with many finding it hard to make their way down from upper floors when emergency lamps turned out to be faulty. Jose Manuel Puente, an economist at the IESA School of Management, says the power cut is a sign of a wider malaise. "Unfortunately what happened on Tuesday is similar to what's happening to the country's entire infrastructure. Investment in certain areas has been reduced to minimum under [Hugo Chavez's Bolivarian] revolution," he explained. "What we see now is an inexorable consequence of over a decade of unbalanced economic policies." Most supporters of the late president and his successor Nicolas Maduro would not agree with Mr Puente's analysis. But even Finance Minister Nelson Merentes recently acknowledged that the economic policies followed by the government had not been successful. In a television interview broadcast on the weekend, he called for reforms to tackle structural economic problems. "This is a government that has won 18 elections, that has had social achievements," he told TV channel Televen. "But it still has to be successful on the economy." Oil riches Since Mr Chavez came to power in 1998, the government has succeeded in reducing inequality, poverty and malnutrition, according to various United Nations and World Bank indexes. Huge investment in the social sector, government subsidies and price controls on staple foods, fuelled by revenues from Venezuela's oil industry, have been behind its achievements in narrowing the gap between the rich and poor. Venezuela has the world's largest reserves of oil, which make up 95% of the country's total exports. The downside to some of these social-oriented policies has been that they created distortions in the economy, say analysts. One of the most controversial policies was brought in in 2003, when the government set a fixed rate for foreign currency exchange. The move was designed to keep government control over prices and to make certain basic items, such as bread and rice, more affordable to the poor. Black market Under the currency controls, people and businesses can receive US dollars at the official rate only by applying to a government currency agency, and then only for the purpose of importing goods or to pay for foreign travel. The amount of dollars available at the official rate is restricted, causing the black market to flourish. The official exchange rate is 6.30 bolivars to the dollar. On the black market, the exchange rate is six times higher. While changing money on the black market is a crime, finding traders is extremely easy and Venezuelans calculate their cost of living according to the black market exchange rates. "Every aspect of Venezuela's economy depends on the distortion of the market provoked by the fixed exchange rate," says Francisco Ibarra, a director at Econometrica, an economic think-tank close to the opposition. And some analysts on the other side of the political spectrum agree Venezuela's currency controls are problematic. "The fixed exchange rate is what has provoked most damage," acknowledges Victor Alvarez, a former minister of industry under Mr Chavez. "When the price of a currency remains frozen in time, while prices of goods and services go up … it creates a very harmful phenomenon," Mr Alvarez told Venezuelan financial newspaper El Mundo. When using the official market rate, Caracas is among the 10 most expensive cities in the world as measured by the Economist's 2013 Big Mac index. The index uses the price of a hamburger to compare living costs around the world. In Venezuela, a Big Mac will set you back over $10 (£6.40). Shortages Many say the fixed exchange rate is also to blame for other problems the Venezuelan economy is experiencing. Analysts say that imports become difficult because companies cannot access dollars. They say this, combined with an inadequate domestic production of food staples and dependence on imports, is creating shortages. According to the Central Bank, the scarcity index is currently at 18%, meaning that out of 100 goods, 18 are not available. Venezuela also suffers from the highest inflation rates in Latin America. Prices go up regularly for items that are not subsidised and protected by the government. Pineapples used to cost 20 bolivars in March ($3 on the official exchange rate), but now they are double that. Minimum wages have gone up, but not enough to catch up with the inflation. "Venezuela has the worst macroeconomic indicators in the entire region," says Mr Puente. "The lowest growth rates, the highest inflation and the highest shortages index." "Mr Merentes understands this very serious unbalance and the necessity for change. But this is also a political problem." Until his death, Mr Chavez had been hugely popular, winning four consecutive elections as president. Mr Maduro, who won April's election by a razor-thin margin, cannot command the same support his predecessor enjoyed.

**Specifically, oil income will drop nearly 4%**

**Tovar, 7/26** – won the Citi Journalism Award for Excellence 2012, head of the microeconomics desk at El Universal, a major Venezuelan newspaper headquartered in Caracas, translated by Conchita Delgado (Ernesto J., “Plunge of 3.8% expected in Venezuela's oil bill” El Universal, 26 July 2013, http://english.eluniversal.com/economia/130726/plunge-of-38-expected-in-venezuelas-oil-bill)//BI

The performance of Venezuelan oil exports in 2013 is not at all encouraging, as appears from the estimates in the oil and gas market. The US Energy Information Administration (EIA), the statistics arm of the US Department of Energy, estimated Venezuela's oil income at USD 30 billion in January-June 2013. The EIA numbers show a dataset since 2004, both for the face value and the real value, deducting inflation and taking FY2005 as the baseline (when the measurement started). Based on this endpoint, Venezuela seemingly received USD 25 billion in the first half of FY2013 for oil exports. Likewise, this leads to an income forecast of near USD 50 billion for 2013. If such forecast comes true, 2013 will end with a drop of 3.85% in the value of oil exports, compared with USD 52 billion in 2012. Both falling oil prices and the looming reduction of Venezuelan oil exports in the light of growing domestic demand of hydrocarbons play a key role in such decline. Venezuelan oil traded at USD 101.89 per barrel in the first half of 2013, substantially below USD 107.78 in the same period the previous year, or 5.46% less. Thus far this year, the Venezuelan oil basket averages USD 102.07, that is, 1.35% less than USD 103.42 in 2012.

**Negative trends are a result of growing state control of oil resources – that limits investment, restricts democracy and increases risk of oil shocks – U.S. action is key to reverse them**

**Goldwyn, 13** – President, Goldwyn Global Strategies, LLC (4/11/2013, David L., “The Impact of the Tight Oil and Gas Boom on Latin America and the Caribbean: Opportunities for Cooperation,” House Committee on Foreign Affairs; Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere; “Energy Opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean” http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA07/20130411/100622/HHRG-113-FA07-Wstate-GoldwynD-20130411.pdf)

The unconventional revolution will also force the resource-endowed nations of the Western Hemisphere to develop more competitive investment frameworks. North America has become the investment destination of choice, with large markets, attractive fiscal terms, strong rule of law and respect for contract sanctity in the U.S and Canada. As will be discussed in greater depth, many Latin American countries are noted for resource nationalism, volatile investment frameworks, and political extremes rather than stability. In order for Latin America to compete, investment terms will have to improve and regulatory frameworks must be enforced with equity and consistency. In short, the southern half of the Hemisphere must prove that it can adapt to changing markets, resource bases and technologies in order to compete with the opportunities found in North America. The prospects for this adaptation are mixed, providing opportunities for U.S. energy diplomacy. II. Energy Trends in the Western Hemisphere The Western Hemisphere has seen the rise of two trends in energy governance in recent years. One trend is towards rising state control of energy resources – in Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia and Ecuador in particular. The concern here is that this trend will limit the growth of global supplies of oil and gas by undermining the value of existing investments, discouraging future investment and leading to political instability resulting from declining living standards. The economic consequence of this trend is that the hemisphere will contribute less to the diversification of oil supply, thereby engendering a tighter international oil market more vulnerable to the negative effects of supply shocks, increasing the importance of OPEC supply and, over time, undermining economic development in the region. The political consequences of these trends include the decline of U.S. influence in the region relative to competing ideologies and the erosion of democratic structures. A second, much more positive, trend is towards creative fiscal regimes that welcome foreign investment and require state owned companies to compete with international companies, with independent regulators that promote fair and efficient regulation. Countries observing this model are increasing production or stalling the decline of existing reserves. Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Peru are key examples of this creative model. When I last testified on Latin American energy trends before Congress, Mexico was generally considered to be a part of the first group, making the net trend negative. Today, however, Mexico’s government is actively seeking reforms that include, but are certainly not limited to, the energy sector. A new question mark hangs over Brazil, however. While Petrobras had been viewed as an exemplar national oil company in recent years, it has recently seen its production estimates curtailed, and its market value tumble. The company is no longer second in value only to Exxon Mobil. Perhaps as a sign of changing regional dynamics, Petrobras is now reported to be worth less than Colombia’s national oil company, a development that would have been thought to be nearly unthinkable just a few years ago. 14 While natural gas production is rising, oil production is falling, as Petrobras has faced major challenges fulfill both its newfound responsibilities in the deep and ultra-deepwater subsalt resources, companies face challenges meeting aggressive local content requirements and Petrobras struggles to meet the political expectations of the government. Venezuela and Mexico are the most important oil exporters in the hemisphere. While Brazil, Colombia and Argentina are important destinations for foreign investment, and helpfully produce enough oil to meet their own domestic needs and make some contribution to the global export market, they are not strategic suppliers to the global market at this time. Only Mexico, Brazil and Venezuela produce more than a million barrels per day, although Colombian crude oil production rose as high as 944,310 barrels per day in 2012,15 and Federico Renjifo, the Colombian Energy and Mining Minister, has stated that the country expects to produce 1.01 mbd in 2013.16 Bolivia has enormous gas reserves, but exports mostly to Brazil and modestly to Argentina. Only Trinidad and Tobago is a key supplier to the world gas market. A. The Rise in State Control From those countries now committed to increasing state control, the U.S. faces two key challenges: the loss of production growth and diversity of supply from the region if new economic frameworks are unattractive to foreign investors and, most critically, the loss of U.S. influence vis-à-vis competing political visions. The Economic Impact of Rising State Control The recent wave of changes in contractual terms and dramatic changes in tax regimes in Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador and, in recent years, Argentina, threatens to slow new investment and eventually deepen instability and poverty in these nations, as well as destroy shareholder value for the companies invested there. The deterioration in the investment climate for energy in these countries is primarily an economic threat, as it foments an environment where supply is constrained and prices are high. We are seeing the revision of economic terms at a time when producers rather than companies hold more market power. Venezuela In 2007, President Hugo Chavez led the nationalization of oil exploration and production in Venezuela, mandating renegotiation of contracts with a minimum 60 percent PdVSA share. While sixteen companies, including Shell and Chevron, complied with the new agreements, ExxonMobil and ENI refused to cooperate and were forcibly taken over. Both companies have pending complaints before the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) at the World Bank that are expected to be decided in late 2013. As a result of those claims, particularly the ExxonMobil claim, Venezuela withdrew from the ICSID in 2012.17 The impact of the nationalizations, according to expert analysts like Deutsche Bank and Wood Mackenzie, was a massive flight of investment capital from Venezuela’s heavy oil sector to Canada’s oil sands, effectively freezing development of the hemisphere’s largest oil reserves during one of the greatest oil booms in history. The net impact on Venezuela’s credit and credibility are quite negative, again with serious negative long-term consequences for the global oil market and Venezuela’s own economy. In 2008, ENI and Total came reached an agreement with PdVSA regarding a 2005 joint venture requirement that they had not previously signed an MOU for. Terms for involvement in natural gas development in Venezuela are slightly more beneficial, although in 2012, the year before his death, President Chavez expressed some interest in altering those terms. It is generally expected that Venezuela’s oil production will continue to fluctuate or stagnate without considerable outside investment. According to the EIA, some analysts estimate that PdVSA must spend at least $3 billion annually in order to keep production at its current levels.18 Venezuela plays a significant role in the Western Hemisphere, acting as a proxy for Cuba and providing oil at favorable cost and financing terms to Caribbean nations through Petrocaribe and the Southern Cone through Petrosur, ventures which add stress to the country’s fiscal situation. While change is unlikely to happen quickly, pressure stemming from the recent failed currency devaluation, rising inflation, and vast external subsidies will take a toll on the economy and are ultimately unsustainable.

**Growing economic crises and ties with Iran are fueling narco terror networks targeting the U.S.**

**Shinkman, 13** – national security reporter at U.S. News and World Report (4/24/2013, Paul D., “Iranian-Sponsored Narco-Terrorism in Venezuela: How Will Maduro Respond? New Venezuelan president at a crossroads for major threat to U.S.,” http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2013/04/24/iranian-sponsored-narco-terrorism-in-venezuela-how-will-maduro-respond)

At a conference earlier this month, top U.S. military officers identified what they thought would be the top threats to the U.S. as it draws down from protracted wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Gen. James Amos, commandant of the Marine Corps, was unequivocal about a largely unreported danger: "Narco-terrorism just on our south border: [it is] yet to be seen just how that is going to play out in our own nation, but it is an issue and it is something that our nation is going to have to deal with." "Colombia is doing particularly well, but there is an insurgency growing," Amos continued. "They have been fighting it, probably the greatest success story in this part of the world." The commandant's remarks came a week before the April 14 election where Venezuelans chose a successor to the wildly popular and charismatic Hugo Chavez, who died March 5. Amos indicated the outcome of this election would define much of future relations between the U.S. and Venezuela, located on a continent that has rarely appeared on America's foreign policy radar in the last decade. Experts, analysts and pundits could not have predicted the election outcome: The establishment's Nicolas Maduro beat reformer Henrique Capriles by a margin of roughly 1 percent. Chavez's hand-picked successor inherited the presidency, but he would not enjoy a broad public mandate to get a teetering Venezuela back on track. The situation in the South American nation remains dire amid skyrocketing inflation, largely due to Chavez's efforts to nationalize private industry and increase social benefits. Maduro's immediate attention after claiming victory was drawn to remedying widespread blackouts and food shortages. One expert on the region says the new leader may need to tap into a shadow world of transnational crime to maintain the stability his countrymen expect. "Venezuela is a really nice bar, and anybody can go in there and pick up anybody else," says Doug Farah, an expert on narco-terrorism and Latin American crime. He compares the country to the kind of establishment where nefarious actors can find solutions to a problem. Anti-American groups can find freelance cyber terrorists, for example, or potential drug runners can make connections with the FARC, the Colombian guerilla organization, he says. "Sometimes it creates a long-term relationship, and sometimes it creates a one-night stand," says Farah, a former Washington Post investigative reporter who is now a senior fellow at the Virginia-based International Assessment and Strategy Center. Under Chavez, Venezuela also created strong ties with Cuba, which for decades has navigated treacherous financial waters and desperate economic straits, all while dodging U.S. influence. But the help Venezuela receives is not limited to its own hemisphere. Farah produced a research paper for the U.S. Army War College in August 2012 about the "growing alliance" between state-sponsored Iranian agents and other anti-American groups in Latin America, including the governments of Venezuela and Cuba. This alliance with Iran uses established drug trade routes from countries in South and Central America to penetrate North American borders, all under a banner of mutual malevolence toward the U.S. The results of this access are largely secret, though security experts who spoke with U.S. News believe the attempted assassination of the Saudi Arabian ambassador in Washington, D.C.'s Georgetown neighborhood was carried out by Iranian intelligence operatives. "Each of the Bolivarian states has lifted visa requirements for Iranian citizens, thereby erasing any public record of the Iranian citizens that come and go to these countries," wrote Farah of countries such as Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia and Panama. He also cited Venezuelan Foreign Minister David Velasquez who said, while speaking at a press conference in Tehran in 2010, "We are confident that Iran can give a crushing response to the threats and sanctions imposed by the West and imperialism." These relationships are controlled by a group of military elites within Venezuela, Farah tells U.S. News. He wonders whether the 50.8 percent of the vote Maduro won in the April 14 election gives him enough support to keep the country – and its shadow commerce – stable enough to continue its usual business. "[Maduro] has been and will continue to be forced to take all the unpopular macroeconomic steps and corrections that are painful, but Chavez never took," Farah says. "There is going to be, I would guess, a great temptation to turn to [the elites] for money." "Most criminalized elements of the Boliavarian structure will gain more power because he needs them," he says, adding "it won't be as chummy a relationship" as they enjoyed with the ever-charismatic Chavez.

**Results in WMD terrorism on the U.S.**

**Anderson, 8** – AP writer, citing Charles Allen, former chief of intelligence analysis at the Department of Homeland Security (Curt, “US officials fear terrorist links with drug lords,” USA Today, 8 October 2013, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-10-08-805146709\_x.htm)

MIAMI — There is real danger that Islamic extremist groups such as al-Qaida and Hezbollah could form alliances with wealthy and powerful Latin American drug lords to launch new terrorist attacks, U.S. officials said Wednesday. Extremist group operatives have already been identified in several Latin American countries, mostly involved in fundraising and finding logistical support. But Charles Allen, chief of intelligence analysis at the Homeland Security Department, said they could use well-established smuggling routes and drug profits to bring people or even weapons of mass destruction to the U.S. "The presence of these people in the region leaves open the possibility that they will attempt to attack the United States," said Allen, a veteran CIA analyst. "The threats in this hemisphere are real. We cannot ignore them." Added U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration operations chief Michael Braun: "It is not in our interest to let that potpourri of scum to come together."

**Retaliation risks extinction**

**Wright 7** – New America Foundation senior fellow (Robert, 4/28, Planet Of The Apes, http://select.nytimes.com/2007/04/28/opinion/28wright.html)

(3) Terrorism. Alas, the negative-feedback loop -- bad outcomes lead to smart policies -- may not apply here. We reacted to 9/11 by freaking out and invading one too many countries, creating more terrorists. With the ranks of terrorists growing -- amid evolving biotechnology and loose nukes -- we could within a decade see terrorism on a scale that would make us forget any restraint we had learned from the Iraq war's outcome. If 3,000 deaths led to two wars, how many wars would 300,000 deaths yield? And how many new terrorists? Terrorism alone won't wipe out humanity. But with our unwitting help, it could strengthen other lethal forces. It could give weight to the initially fanciful ''clash of civilizations'' thesis. Muslim states could fall under the control of radicals and opt out of what might otherwise have become a global civilization. Armed with nukes (Pakistan already is), they would revive the nuclear Armageddon scenario. A fissure between civilizations would also sabotage the solution of environmental problems, and the ensuing eco-calamity could make people on both sides of the fissure receptive to radical messages. The worse things got, the worse they'd get. So while no one of the Big Three doomsday dynamics is likely to bring the apocalypse, they could well combine to form a positive-feedback loop, a k a the planetary death spiral. And the catalyst would be terrorism, along with our mishandling of it.

**Expanding market based investment is essential to Venezuelan stability and Maduro’s grip on power**

**Campbell, 13** – editor of Alberta Oil (Darren, “A new leader could signal change for Venezuela’s troubled oil and gas sector; If Nicolas Maduro can reverse the industry's decline, it could siphon off investment in Alberta's oil sands,” 16 April 2013, http://www.albertaoilmagazine.com/2013/04/a-new-leader-could-signal-change-for-venenzuelas-oil-and-gas-sector/)

That’s because Venezuelan heavy oil is a competitor to the bitumen and heavy oil Alberta produces, and as long as the Venezuelan oil and gas industry is badly underperforming, some of the investment that could be going to develop its reserves will flow to the oil sands. But now that Maduro is the new boss in Venezuela, is he likely to reverse the decline? Devon Energy Big Box To gain some insight into that question, I contacted Roger Tissot – a native of Colombia who is now a British Columbia-based industry consultant who specializes in South America. Last June, Tissot wrote an essay on Chavez and the future of the Venezuela oil and gas industry that appeared in Alberta Oil. Maduro was Chavez’s hand-picked successor, and knowing that, Tissot says no one should expect a drastic reversal of policies – or a drastic turnaround in the industry’s fortunes. However, the status quo can’t continue, either. Maduro needs oil and gas revenue to fund the country’s social programs and keep the country from falling into chaos. A better run, more free market-leaning oil and gas industry will help Maduro accomplish this and keep him in power longer. Therefore, Tissot thinks Maduro has little choice but to shake things up when it comes to oil and gas matters. “One could expect a government more accessible to foreign investments, and foreign investors concerns (rule of law, security of payments, stability of contracts.) Although it is too early to say, one should expect the Venezuelan oil sectors – after years of stagnation and mismanagement – to perhaps start showing some signs of life again,” he wrote in an email exchange. “How soon and how deep is something that will depend on how Mr. Maduro’s administration performs.

**Instability spills over to rest of the region**

**Shifter, 3** – vice president for policy at the Inter-American Dialogue (Michael, “Why Venezuela Matters,” 16 July 2003, http://nationalinterest.org/article/why-venezuela-matters-2388?page=1)

For the United States, Venezuela is not just another Latin American country in turmoil. It is, after all, the fourth largest oil supplier to the United States, accounting for 15 percent of its oil imports. Senior US officials point to oil as the overriding interest in Venezuela. In the wake of US military action in Iraq, and the tremendous uncertainty in the Middle East, one would think that Venezuela would acquire even greater urgency for the United States. Oil works both ways, however. Shrewdly, the Chavez government allows the oil to flow precisely to avoid antagonizing foreign operations and, especially, the United States. Oil aside, there are other key U.S. interests at play in Venezuela, though these are less widely recognized. Regional stability and security top the list. The five countries that make up the Andean region of South America are particularly convulsed. Continued chaos and escalating violence in Venezuela would not only inflict damage on the country itself, but could well undermine the ability of neighboring countries to achieve and maintain social peace. In this regard, Colombia deserves special mention. The United States has long sought to bolster the Colombian government's efforts to extend state authority and control. Since 1999, Colombia has received some $2.5 billion in security aid from the United States, making it the largest beneficiary outside of the Middle East. Yet, there has been increasing violence on the Colombia/Venezuela border involving Colombian guerrilla and paramilitary forces - and even Venezuela's armed forces. Should the Venezuelan crisis become a military conflagration, the resulting instability would be detrimental to longstanding US policy objectives. The conditions are combustible, and the risks are growing.

**The impact is global hegemonic war**

**Rochlin 94** – Prof. Pol. Sci. @ Okanagan University College (James Francis, “Discovering the Americas: the evolution of Canadian foreign policy towards Latin America”, p. 130-131)

While there were economic motivations for Canadian policy in Central America, security considerations were perhaps more important. Canada possessed an interest in promoting stability in the face of a potential decline of U.S. hegemony in the Americas. Perceptions of declining U.S. influence in the region – which had some credibility in 1979-1984 due to the wildly inequitable divisions of wealth in some U.S. client states in Latin America, in addition to political repression, under-development, mounting external debt, anti-American sentiment produced by decades of subjugation to U.S. strategic and economic interests, and so on – were linked to the prospect of explosive events occurring in the hemisphere. Hence, the Central American imbroglio was viewed as a fuse which could ignite a cataclysmic process throughout the region. Analysts at the time worried that in a worst-case scenario, instability created by a regional war, beginning in Central America and spreading elsewhere in Latin America, might preoccupy Washington to the extent that the United States would be unable to perform adequately its important hegemonic role in the international arena – a concern expressed by the director of research for Canada’s Standing Committee Report on Central America. It was feared that such a predicament could generate increased global instability and perhaps even a hegemonic war. This is one of the motivations which led Canada to become involved in efforts at regional conflict resolution, such as Contadora, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

**Investment in Venezuela trades off with Canadian oil sands**

**Campbell, 13** – editor of Alberta Oil (Darren, “A new leader could signal change for Venezuela’s troubled oil and gas sector; If Nicolas Maduro can reverse the industry's decline, it could siphon off investment in Alberta's oil sands,” Alberta Oil, 16 April 2013, http://www.albertaoilmagazine.com/2013/04/a-new-leader-could-signal-change-for-venenzuelas-oil-and-gas-sector/)

Oil-rich Venezuela has a new president and his name is Nicolas Maduro. On Monday, Maduro was declared the winner of the closest presidential election the country has had in 45 years. He succeeds Hugo Chavez, who died of cancer on March 5. Normally, we wouldn’t write about the results of an election from a far-off outpost like Venezuela here at Energy Ink. But Venezuela isn’t just any outpost. It has some of the largest oil and gas reserves in the world. And under Chavez, the industry and the state-run company, the Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A (PDVSA), have been run badly. That, of course, has been good for Alberta’s own oil and gas industry, particularly the oil sand sector. That’s because Venezuelan heavy oil is a competitor to the bitumen and heavy oil Alberta produces, and as long as the Venezuelan oil and gas industry is badly underperforming, some of the investment that could be going to develop its reserves will flow to the oil sands.

**Impact is extinction from runaway climate change**

**Hansen, 12** – directs the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies (James, “Game Over for the Climate,” New York Times, 9 May 2009, http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/10/opinion/game-over-for-the-climate.html?\_r=0)

GLOBAL warming isn’t a prediction. It is happening. That is why I was so troubled to read a recent interview with President Obama in Rolling Stone in which he said that Canada would exploit the oil in its vast tar sands reserves “regardless of what we do.” If Canada proceeds, and we do nothing, it will be game over for the climate. Canada’s tar sands, deposits of sand saturated with bitumen, contain twice the amount of carbon dioxide emitted by global oil use in our entire history. If we were to fully exploit this new oil source, and continue to burn our conventional oil, gas and coal supplies, concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere eventually would reach levels higher than in the Pliocene era, more than 2.5 million years ago, when sea level was at least 50 feet higher than it is now. That level of heat-trapping gases would assure that the disintegration of the ice sheets would accelerate out of control. Sea levels would rise and destroy coastal cities. Global temperatures would become intolerable. Twenty to 50 percent of the planet’s species would be driven to extinction. Civilization would be at risk.That is the long-term outlook. But near-term, things will be bad enough. Over the next several decades, the Western United States and the semi-arid region from North Dakota to Texas will develop semi-permanent drought, with rain, when it does come, occurring in extreme events with heavy flooding. Economic losses would be incalculable. More and more of the Midwest would be a dust bowl. California’s Central Valley could no longer be irrigated. Food prices would rise to unprecedented levels. If this sounds apocalyptic, it is. This is why we need to reduce emissions dramatically. President Obama has the power not only to deny tar sands oil additional access to Gulf Coast refining, which Canada desires in part for export markets, but also to encourage economic incentives to leave tar sands and other dirty fuels in the ground.

**U.S. energy engagement solves – political and economic changes make Maduro’s acceptance likely**

**Shifter, 13** – Adjunct Professor of Latin American Studies at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service (Michael, “The Empire Makes Nice: Is it time for a Venezuela reset?,” Foreign Policy 11 March 2013, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/03/11/the\_empire\_makes\_nice\_venezuela\_hugo\_chavez)

Four years ago, when the first Obama administration was still hopeful about the prospects of resetting relationships with U.S. adversaries in the world, Venezuela was high on the list. "Eight years of isolation has resulted in the kinds of outreach that, I think, both you and I find troubling," then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told the Senate in 2009. "Our belief is, if it hasn't worked, why keep it going? Let's see what else might be possible." Things haven't turned out quite as planned, but following the death of Hugo Chávez, the United States may get a new opportunity to improve one of its most frustrating relationships, and find out if a new way of operating might indeed be possible. Some progress has been made, of course. The Obama administration learned some important lessons from the George W. Bush years. It wisely avoided becoming embroiled in rhetorical tit-for-tats -- a game Chávez played with relish and of which he was the undisputed master. In 2006, for instance, then-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld likened Chávez to Adolf Hitler. The Venezuelan president responded in kind at a rally in Caracas, "The imperialist, genocidal, fascist attitude of the U.S. president has no limits. I think Hitler would be like a suckling baby next to George W Bush." The Obama White House also seemed to accept the fact that, for all his faults and the problems he posed for the United States, Chávez was Venezuela's legitimately elected president. Had there been another attempt to oust him, Obama officials would, one hopes, not have expressed undisguised glee, as the Bush White House did during the brief putsch of 2002. Seven years after that failed coup attempt, and three months into his presidency, Obama shook hands and bantered a bit with Chávez at a hemispheric summit in Trinidad and Tobago. (Chávez, ever the showman, gave Obama a copy of a book by leftist historian Eduardo Galeano, a gift presumably aimed at enlightening the incoming president about the evils of U.S. imperialism.) True, Obama has eschewed Bush's military adventurism, which touched a deep nerve in Latin America. But a more restrained U.S. foreign policy and a commitment to "engage" with the region as "partners" did little to persuade Chávez that Washington had changed its tutelary ways. "Obama, to me, until now, has been a great disappointment." Chavez told CNN in 2010, comparing the U.S. president to a highly rated baseball pitching prospect who "end up being wild." Today, three months into Obama's second term, Washington will have to deal with a Venezuela -- a country with the world's largest oil reserves that accounts for roughly 10 percent of U.S. imports today -- without Chávez. No one can match the riveting theater Chávez reliably provided -- his trademark, strident rhetoric and audacious, provocative moves on the regional and global stages, so often targeted at Washington. Still, after 14 years of distancing and mutual suspicions, the U.S.-Venezuela relationship is sure to be very difficult. Though uncertainty abounds in the country that Chávez so thoroughly dominated for so long, the most likely scenario is that acting President Nicolás Maduro, Chávez's designated successor, will win the election scheduled for April 14. He will benefit from an emotional boost from Chavez's death and a demoralized opposition that that was thrown off balance by major defeats in presidential and gubernatorial elections in late 2012. Maduro will preside over a government made up of diverse factions that, absent Chávez's charisma and political shrewdness, will have a hard time staying together -- particularly as the country's already serious economic conditions worsen. The Obama administration should take two critical facts about Venezuela's post-Chávez political reality into account. First, since Maduro is not Chávez, he will have little choice but to govern in a different fashion than his predecessor. Lacking comparable magnetism and resources, Maduro will likely be somewhat more accommodating to those Chávez treated with utter intransigence, such as the private sector, foreign investors, and the opposition. Maduro, acting out of self-interest, will need, and look for, political oxygen.The second is simply the risk of turbulence in Venezuela, especially after the upcoming electoral cycle. To be sure, analysts' occasional predictions about political violence during the Chávez years were (happily) not borne out. And given the extent of rancor and polarization in the society, it is striking how little political violence there has been (common crime, on the other hand, has skyrocketed). Still, the security situation is far from settled -- a militia force of 125,000 answered directly to Chávez -- and it would be a mistake to rule out chaotic and perilous scenarios that should be of great concern to the entire hemisphere. What does this mean for Washington? Assuming that Maduro succeeds Chávez, the Obama administration should be amenable to taking steps toward establishing a better relationship with Caracas. Since the relationship today is practically nonexistent, that would not require a big leap.It might simply entail opening up channels of communication and seeking to establish an ambassadorial presence in both capitals which -- absurdly, given the strong commercial relationship between the two countries -- have not existed since 2010. Beyond that, depending on how Venezuela's economic situation unfolds, it might be worth exploring some degree of cooperation and support in energy. Under Chávez, Venezuela's state oil company PDVSA has suffered from declining production and investment and heavy politicization. Maduro may not want to change that right away -- he will need to show that he is a loyal Chávista. But if the country's fiscal pressures prove untenable, he may have few options, and the United States should be open to helping out. Collaboration on counternarcotics and law enforcement would also be desirable but for the time being are probably non-starters politically, given the depth of mutual mistrust (not to mention that seven Venezuelan officials are on a Treasury Department blacklist for their alleged involvement in drugs and arms dealing). To its credit, the State Department reached out to Maduro several months ago, and following Chávez's death the Obama administration has expressed an interest in improving the tense bilateral relationship. Its entreaty was surely not helped by Maduro's broadside against the United States, just hours before he announced that Chávez had died -- a move right out of Hugo's playbook. Maduro not only expelled two military attaches from the U.S. Embassy but also intimated that Washington might have been responsible in some way for Chávez's death. Absent a shred of evidence, Maduro's words were outrageous, but aimed at proving to the base that he was a worthy heir to Chávez before the election. But it's far too early for the United States to give up hope on Maduro. Despite his reckless words in recent days, his ideologically hard-line views, and close relationship with Cuban leaders, Maduro's style contrasts sharply with Chávez's. Chávez was a military man, a former paratrooper who attempted a coup in 1992. Maduro was not only foreign minister and head of the National Assembly, but earlier in his career was a union official who negotiated deals. He will be tough rhetorically, but some give-and-take behind the scenes seems feasible -- a balancing act Washington will have to understand and deal with. Maduro will likely also confront more dire economic circumstances than Chávez ever did. Politically, he will not be able to afford to reject communication and some accommodation with the private sector.In fact, Maduro has been instrumental in the Venezuelan government's constructive role in current peace talks in Havana between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). His support to what is arguably Washington's closest South American ally in an effort to bring to an end the only remaining armed conflict in the hemisphere can be construed as an example of his pragmatism. A peace accord between the Colombian government and the FARC (which uses Venezuelan territory as a sanctuary and was supported by Chávez) would reduce a key source of instability in the wider region. To anticipate potential turmoil in Venezuela in the coming period, Washington should be consulting regularly and at the highest levels with South American allies, especially Colombia and Brazil, who have the most at stake should the security situation deteriorate. Although many commentators have drawn attention to Cuba's role in the Venezuelan transition, and have particularly highlighted Cuba's huge dependence on Venezuelan oil and money, Brazil will probably end up being just as influential as the situation unfolds. South America's undisputed superpower -- whose leverage on Venezuela stems from key exports, especially food, and political backing -- is chiefly interested in maintaining social peace within its own neighborhood In keeping with Brazil's own governance and political evolution in recent years, Brasilia will aim to keep the situation in Venezuela under control and to encourage moderation, gradualism, and communication on both sides. It does not want trouble on its borders. Venezuela's recent entry into the Brazil-led MERCOSUR trade group will makes this issue of even greater concern for President Dilma Rousseff's government. In this respect, there is ample coincidence of interests between Washington and Brasília. Absent Chávez, Venezuela will continue to be tricky in the second Obama administration. The administration will need to arrive at a more accurate on-the-ground reading of what is happening in the country. It will need to engage in quiet, steady, high-level diplomacy with key allies in the region not only to closely monitor the security situation and guard against dire scenarios but to press for free and fair elections and adherence to the rule of law. None of this will be easy, and recent history is not encouraging. But Chávez is gone, and although for now some measure of continuity in Venezuela is most likely, conditions of scarcity -- in charisma, money, and political astuteness -- will soon be acutely felt. It is important not to forget that Chávez was able to do what he did for 14 years for a simple reason -- because he could.

**U.S. resources and expertise are key**

**Farnsworth, 13** – vice president of the Council of the Americas and Americas Society (Eric, “Energy Security Opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean, Hearing Before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, 11 April 2013, http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA07/20130411/100622/HHRG-113-FA07-Wstate-FarnsworthE-20130411.pdf)

More broadly, the United States has a strategic interest in working with willing nations in the hemisphere to develop their own energy resources effectively, while promoting models that reduce the negative if unintended consequences of regional energy development, including a lack of transparency and official corruption, the distorting impact of consumption subsidies, an over-reliance on a single commodity or sector, environmental concerns, and a concentration of wealth and political power around the sector. In order to develop their respective industries, nations need U.S. technology, management expertise, and investment dollars. They need our education system to develop their engineers and seismologists, they need help to understand regulatory, tax, and policy models that work, they need to be exposed to best practices in environmental mitigation, and they need our technical assistance to improve the investment climate and the rule of law.

**1AC Plan**

**Thus, the United States federal government should substantially increase its investment and technical aid for Venezuela’s liberalization of its energy sector.**

**1AC Relations**

**Large-scale rapprochement is possible but not occurring now – oil investment could catalyze stronger relations**

**Metzker, 13** – IPS News writer, citing Shifter and Diana Villiers Negroponte, senior fellow at the Brookings Institute (Jared, “Analysts Say Oil Could Help Mend U.S.-Venezuela Relations,” 17 June 2013, http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/06/analysts-say-oil-could-help-mend-u-s-venezuela-relations/,)

A shift in U.S. foreign policy towards Venezuela may be pending as a bilateral rapprochement suddenly appears more possible than it has in years. On the sidelines of talks held earlier this month in Guatemala by the Organisation of American States (OAS), U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry met with Venezuelan Foreign Minister Elias Jaua, with Kerry’s subsequent statements indicating that relations could be heading in a friendlier direction. “We agreed today – both of us, Venezuela and the United States – that we would like to see our countries find a new way forward, establish a more constructive and positive relationship and find the ways to do that,” Kerry said following the meeting with Jaua, which was reportedly requested by the Venezuelans. The meeting happened on the heels of the release of Timothy Tracy, a U.S. filmmaker whom Venezuela had been holding on accusations of espionage. His release was interpreted by many as an “olive branch” being offered by the new Venezuelan government of Nicholas Maduro, whose presidency Washington still has not formally recognised. Only months ago, before the death of Venezuela’s long-time socialist leader Hugo Chavez, any normalisation of relations between Venezuela and the United States seemed highly unlikely. In 2002, Chavez was briefly removed from power by a military coup d’état that the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had known was imminent. Chavez immediately accused the United States of having played a part in the event. After his suspicions were confirmed partly valid, his rhetoric grew more scathing. In 2006, he famously told the United Nations General Assembly that then-U.S. President George W. Bush was “the devil himself”. Following Chavez’s death from cancer in March, however, his hand-picked successor, Maduro, the former vice-president, has not been as vitriolic in his posturing vis-à-vis the United States. According to Michael Shifter, president of the Inter-American Dialogue, a Washington-based think tank, Maduro has offered “conflicting signals”. “Maduro has so far shifted in his position toward the U.S. between a moderate approach and a more hard-line one,” Shifter told IPS. The new president’s waffling may be a reflection of his tenuous grip on power. By many accounts, Maduro lacks the political prowess and rabble-rousing charm of Chavez, who enjoyed military backing as well as fervent support from the lower classes. In addition to a strong anti-Chavista opposition that openly challenges the legitimacy of his narrowly won election, Maduro has had to deal with a split within Chavez’s own former political base. Shifter pointed out that among the military, which was once a source of significant strength for Chavez, more support is given to Diosdado Cabello, currently head of Venezuela’s parliament and whose supporters believe he was the rightful heir to the presidency. Maduro’s legitimacy stems largely from his perceived ideological fidelity, the reason for his selection by Chavez to lead in the first place. Shifter said this leads him to “emulate” his predecessor and makes rapprochement with the United States less probable. Still, ideological concerns may not ultimately decide the issue. Venezuela has inherited from Chavez an economy in difficult straits, which continues to suffer from notorious shortages and high inflation. Oil economy Over half of Venezuela’s federal budget revenues come from its oil industry, which also accounts for 95 percent of the country’s exports. Estimated at 77 billion barrels, its proven reserves of black gold are the largest of any nation in the world. Despite a troubled political relationship, its principal customer is the United States, which imports nearly a million barrels a day from Venezuela. Venezuela’s oil industry has been officially nationalised since the 1970s, and, as president, Chavez further tightened government control over its production. His government took a greater chunk of revenues and imposed quotas that ensured a certain percentage would always go directly towards aiding Venezuelans via social spending and fuel subsidies. While these measures may be popular with Venezuelans, who pay the lowest price for gasoline in the world, critics argue such policies hampered growth and led to mismanagement of Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A. (PdVSA), the main state-run oil company. The same critics also point to increasing debt levels, slowdowns in productions and accidents stemming from faulty infrastructure. In order to boost production, PdVSA agreed in May to accept a number of major loans. This includes one from Chevron, one of the largest U.S. oil companies, which will work with Venezuelans to develop new extraction sites. “The oil sector is in deep trouble in Venezuela – production is down and the economic situation is deteriorating,” explained Shifter. “They know they need foreign investment to increase production, and this is in part what has motivated Maduro to reach out.” If its economy continues to falter, Venezuela may be further tempted to embrace the United States, which has the largest, most sophisticated fossil fuel industry in the world. Kerry’s recent words suggest that the administration of President Barack Obama would be waiting with open arms. “Venezuela cannot confront its economic crisis and the United States at the same time,” Diana Villiers Negroponte, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institute, a Washington think tank, told IPS, “and we are a pragmatic country which will deal with Maduro if it is in our interests.” Indeed, Negroponte said she was “optimistic” about the possibility of rapprochement between the two countries within the next six months. She notes a “troika” of issues on which the United States is looking for Venezuelan cooperation: counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics and assistance in ridding Colombia of its FARC rebels. Nonetheless, major actions remain to be taken if normalisation is to even begin, such as the exchange of ambassadors and official U.S. recognition of the Maduro government. Shifter (who regards the Kerry-Jaua meeting as “a small step”) was not optimistic that these larger requirements will be completed in the short term.“I don’t think Washington is going to push hard to send an ambassador to Caracas,” he said. “It will probably take more time to observe the new government and see where it is going.”

**Oil nationalization has undermined diplomatic relations**

**Daly, 13** – non-resident Fellow at The Johns Hopkins University Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies’ Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and one of the leading specialists on the post-Soviet space, particularly the Caucasus and Central Asia energy issues, having provided professional audiences with in-depth analysis of energy issues there for more than a decade (John, “Venezuelan President Maduro Offers Olive Branch to Washington,” 28 May 2013, http://www.economonitor.com/blog/2013/05/venezuelan-president-maduro-offers-olive-branch-to-washington)

To say that U.S. relations with Venezuela’s former President Hugo Rafael Chávez grew increasingly strained would be an understatement. But Chávez succumbed to cancer on 5 March, and the winds of change are blowing through Caracas. Why was Chávez in Washington’s bad books? His choice of allies, which included the Russian Federation, Iran and Cuba, but worse still were the social programs that Chávez implemented to benefit his people, which were socialist in nature, anathema to Washington’s proscriptions. But, tying the U.S. and Venezuela together like Siamese twins is – oil. According to the U.S. Energy Administration, Venezuela is the fourth largest provider of crude oil imports to the U.S., averaging 930 thousand barrels per day. In itscountry report on Venezuela the EIA succinctly noted, “Venezuela contains some of the largest oil and natural gas reserves in the world. It consistently ranks as one of the top suppliers of oil to the U.S. Venezuela is one of the world’s largest exporters of crude oil and the largest in the Western Hemisphere. The oil sector is of central importance to the Venezuelan economy. As a founding member of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Venezuela is an important player in the global oil market.” Venezuela has the largest conventional oil reserves and the second-largest natural gas reserves in the Western Hemisphere and two years ago OPEC reported that of the organization’s 81.33 percent of the globe’s known oil reserves Venezuela had 24.8 percent, exceeding Saudi Arabia with 22.2 percent. According to state oil company Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A. (PDVSA) figures, Venezuela currently has 77.5 billion barrels of oil reserves, the largest in the Western Hemisphere. PDVSA has a production capacity, including its strategic associations and operating agreements, of 4 million barrels per day, the highest production capacity in the Western Hemisphere. To fund his social programs, Chávez was determined to bring the country’s oil sector under government control, putting him into direct conflict with Washington’s belief in free markets. Venezuela’s oil industry had been under private control until 1974, when Venezuela nationalized it, setting up PDVSA. Venezuela’s oil production is centered in the Orinoco Oil Belt, which analysts believe contains the world’s largest reserves of extra-heavy oil, with an estimated 300 billion recoverable barrels. In the 1990s PDVSA began a so-called “oil opening,” where it allowed more and more foreign private companies to extract oil, via majority shares in joint ventures and the operating agreements. But difficulties began with Washington in February 2007, when Chávez announced a new law to nationalize the last remaining oil production sites that are under foreign company control, to take effect on 1 May. Under the law, which allowed foreign companies to negotiate the nationalization terms, earlier joint ventures, involving ExxonMobil, ChevronTexaco, Statoil, ConocoPhillips, and BP, were transformed to give PDVSA a minimum 60 percent stake. The process completed a government initiative begun in 2005, when the Chavez administration transformed earlier “operating agreements” in Venezuela’s older oil fields into joint ventures with a wide variety of foreign companies. Thirty out of 32 such operating agreements were transformed, with most foreign companies accepting the new arrangements, but ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips refused, instituting lawsuits for compensation that continue to this day. The policies had repercussions in the diplomatic sphere. On 28 June 2010 President Obama nominated Palmer as U.S. Ambassador to Venezuela but three months later Chávez announced on his weekly TV program that he would not allow Larry Palmer to take up his post after Palmer told a US senator that morale in the Venezuelan army was low and that members of Chávez’s government had ties to leftist FARC Colombian rebels. On 28 December Chávez flatly refused to accept Palmer because of his derogatory remarks and the following day the U.S. revoked the accreditation of Venezuelan ambassador, Bernardo Álvarez Herrera. And there relations have remained until now, even as oil sales have continued unabated.

**Engagement with Venezuela specifically is key to credibility**

**Griffin, 13** – Harvard editorial writer (John, “Engage with Venezuela,” The Harvard Crimson, 3 April 2013, http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2013/4/3/Harvard-Venezuela-Chavez-death/)

Diplomatically, positive engagement with Venezuela would be a major step toward building American credibility in the world at large, especially in Latin America. Chávez (along with his friends the Castros in Cuba) was able to bolster regional support for his regime by pointing out the United States’ attempts to forcibly intervene in Venezuelan politics. Soon, a number of populist governments in Latin America had rallied around Chávez and his anti-American policies. In 2004, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and three Caribbean nations joined with Venezuela and Cuba to form the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America, an organization in direct opposition to the Free Trade Area in the Americas proposed (but never realized) by the Bush administration. Chávez galvanized these nations—many of whom have experienced American interventionist tactics—by vilifying America as a common, imperial enemy. Unfortunately for the United States, its general strategy regarding Venezuela has often strengthened Chávez’s position. Every time Washington chastises Venezuela for opposing American interests or attempts to bring sanctions against the Latin American country, the leader in Caracas (whether it be Chávez or Maduro) simply gains more evidence toward his claim that Washington is a neo-colonialist meddler. This weakens the United States’ diplomatic position, while simultaneously strengthening Venezuela’s. If Washington wants Latin America to stop its current trend of electing leftist, Chavista governments, its first step should be to adopt a less astringent tone in dealing with Venezuela. Caracas will be unable to paint Washington as an aggressor, and Washington will in turn gain a better image in Latin America.

**This is critical to boost U.S. influence and mold the regional economic framework**

**Goldwyn, 13** – President, Goldwyn Global Strategies, LLC (4/11/2013, David L., “The Impact of the Tight Oil and Gas Boom on Latin America and the Caribbean: Opportunities for Cooperation,” House Committee on Foreign Affairs; Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere; “Energy Opportunities in Latin America and the Caribbean” http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA07/20130411/100622/HHRG-113-FA07-Wstate-GoldwynD-20130411.pdf)

III. The Impact of Hemispheric Energy Trends on U.S. Foreign Policy The tight oil boom will produce competitive pressure on the region’s oil and gas producers. If global oil prices soften, revenues could fall significantly and put major fiscal pressure on governments highly dependent on resource revenues for their budgets. The market will impact these economies far more than any U.S. policy can. But there will be a debate over economic frameworks in the hemisphere, and the U.S. should be a part of it. While U.S. influence in the hemisphere has waned in key areas in recent years, our ability to help these economies revive through energy investment, and to grow through more competitive energy feed stocks can help change this pattern if we take advantage of it. We have key strategic partners in the region including Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Argentina, and Colombia. We can effectively use trade as a tool for good, as witnessed by the US-Colombia Free Trade Agreement. We need to appreciate the salience of legitimate regional issues like poverty and advocate how our economic and political models can alleviate them. Examples of this are addressing trade barriers to agricultural imports, expanding educational opportunities in the U.S. for future leaders, improving the visa application process, dealing with migration issues with Mexico in a spirit of respect and fairness, supporting World Bank and Inter American Development Bank infrastructure programs in the hemisphere, supporting the development of civil society and the capacity of democratic institutions, and treating our relations with our hemispheric neighbors as intrinsically important, not as litmus tests of loyalty to the U.S. on issues external to the region itself. In countries where we face ideological competition, it is crucial that we do not abandon the field. We need to increase our diplomatic engagement and defend our way of thinking. A. Uncertainty in Venezuela Venezuela has long been seen as the leader of a regional group of states seeking to wage an ideological and political competition for regional influence with the U.S. Yet the death of President Chavez, whose charisma has long been regarded as a key facet of the Bolivarian narrative, and Venezuela’s growing economic problems, which were recently reflected by the government’s efforts to devalue the currency by more than 30% against the dollar, have led some observers to believe that the influence of the Venezuelan model has peaked. Many are now forecasting that the Brazilian economic model, which still provides for a generous state role in the economy, yet does so in a more market-friendly and democratic context, will gain clout among states in the region that remain skeptical of liberal economics and the Washington consensus. In the wake of Hugo Chavez’s death, many questions remain about whether political change is possible in Venezuela itself. Indeed, the opposition candidate in the April 14 election to succeed Chavez, Henrique Capriles, is a vocal adherent of the Brazilian model that many say is gaining regional traction. Yet it is widely assumed that Chavez’ handpicked successor, Vice President Nicolas Maduro, will win the election. Several divergent prognostications have been made regarding what a Maduro Presidency would entail for the U.S. While some perceive Maduro as a pragmatist who may be amenable to normalizing bilateral ties, others believe that he will be eager to prove his Bolivarian credentials to Chavez’s constituency and reject any U.S. entreaties to reengage. Still others doubt whether he will be able to retain the Presidency at all should the economic situation deteriorate further. Diosdado Cabello, a fellow Chavez adherent who is President of the National Assembly and is reported to be a popular figure among the Venezuelan Armed Forces, is commonly cited as an individual capable of seizing the Presidency, potentially through forcible means, should an opportunistic situation present itself. The manner in which the next Venezuelan President manages Venezuela’s oil wealth will have significant implications for international oil markets, which remain fairly tight due to supply disruptions in geopolitical hotspots Iran, South Sudan, Yemen, and Syria. In February 2012, the Economist estimated that international markets have lost 1.25 million barrels per day as a result of these and other recent supply disruptions.28 Venezuela is an even more significant player in international markets; EIA estimates that it exports around 1.7 million barrels of crude per day.29 The impacts on Venezuela’s own economy will also be very profound, as Venezuela’s economy is far from diversified and remains nearly entirely dependent on the oil sector. In recent years, PdVSA’s exploration and production capital expenditures have not been sufficient to reverse production declines in the country’s mature conventional fields or to harness the country’s massive oil sands reserves in the Orinoco Belt. These unconventional resources are thought to account for around 90% of Venezuela’s remaining proven oil reserves. In order to maintain production at a reasonable clip, the next Venezuelan President will have to improve the country’s oil and gas investment regime to attract international firms with expertise in enhanced oil recovery techniques in conventional fields and in the unique, challenging technical requirements for producing the extra heavy crude oil in the Orinoco Belt, and that also have the resources to alleviate massive infrastructure bottlenecks that plague the oil sands production. It is hard to be optimistic about Venezuela’s near term prospects. Canadian heavy crudes are likely to fulfill a greater share of the US need for heavy crude. While heavy coking refinery capacity is growing world wide, Venezuela will face a challenging market for its crudes and lower profit margins as the distance to market will grow. B. The Status of Current Dialogues The US has had a number of bilateral and multilateral energy policy forums in the hemisphere over the years. These forums are platforms to understand market dynamics, share best practices on energy efficiency and conservation, share understanding on ways to enhance energy production, and exchange views on how a nation’s energy policies may be enhanced or reformed to promote the nation’s own policy. These policy dialogues are also essential for building the understanding and relationships that are essential for trade promotion and conflict resolution. Numerous dialogues and programs have been enacted since 2008, when I wrote that engagement with the Western Hemisphere needed to be renewed. Among those are a number of programs and initiatives aimed at energy relations. The Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA) was founded at the invitation of President Obama following the April 2009 Summit of the Americas, hosted in Trinidad and Tobago. ECPA was intended to focus on issues including energy efficiency, renewable energy, cleaner and more efficient use of fossil fuels, energy poverty, and infrastructure, and Secretary of State Clinton later proposed expanding the focus to include sustainable forests and land use and climate change adaptation. ECPA brings together governments and public and private sector partners to implement initiatives and complete projects, and boasts numerous initiatives in Central and South America and the Caribbean. Among the ECPA Initiatives are the Colombia Biomass Initiative, which aims to develop a technological plan for the production of energy from agroindustrial biomass, and the Chile Renewable Energy Center, which is intended to serve as a tool and resource for the region as it seeks to increase its use of renewable fuels. Both projects are undertaken in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Energy, which provides technical assistance and opportunities for collaborative work. Numerous dialogues exist today between the U.S. and Brazil. The U.S.-Brazil Strategic Energy Dialogue (SED), a presidential-level partnership aiming to deepen energy cooperation between the two nations, is one of the most significant. Strengthening energy security, the creation of new jobs and industries and reduction of carbon emissions are key goals of the SED. Major topics of the dialogue include biofuels, renewables and the sustainable development of oil and gas resources. The US has a trilateral energy policy dialogue with Canada and Mexico, which has addressed electric power, energy conservation, harmonization of standards and market outlooks. It has taken many forms, but it functions very well. In May 2012 the U.S., Mexico, Canada Map of Potential Carbon Dioxide Storage Capacity was released, identifying capacity in North America for at least 500 years worth of carbon dioxide emissions. The “New North American Carbon Storage Atlas” was created through the North American Carbon Atlas Partnership, and was developed by DOE, Natural Resources Canada, and the Mexican Ministry of Energy. We have many paths for cooperation. What we need now is a sharper focus on what we should prioritize, so we can maximize our impact and make the most of the limited engagement of our senior officials. IV. Energy Security Opportunities for the U.S. The Committee is wise to see the unique period of opportunity that the massive changes in oil and gas markets have created for U.S. foreign policy. While we will be more self-sufficient at home, our national security will still depend on a diverse global supply of oil gas, one able to withstand the inevitable disruptions we will face. If we can take this moment to help the hemisphere increase its own self sufficiency, wean itself from high carbon fuels, access more cost competitive feed stocks for power and transportation, and reduce dependence on subsidized Venezuelan fuel oil, we will have helped our own national security interests and helped to foster a freer, more prosperous, and more climate secure hemisphere. Here I offer six steps that the United States can take to meet its energy security goals in the Hemisphere. 1. Sustain Efforts Aimed at Energy Efficiency and the Adoption of Biofuels and Renewable Technologies Lowering global carbon emissions in order to mitigate the impacts of climate change is an important step towards ensuring global energy security. Latin America is highly dependent upon fossil fuels for its energy needs, most notably oil, coal and natural gas. Fuel oil is still a frequently used fuel for power generation, in spite of the fact that it is relatively inefficient and particularly bad for the environment. Hydropower has long been the favored form of renewable energy in Latin America, but changing weather patterns and droughts have prevented it from being fully reliable. The United States has, as described above, undertaken initiatives aimed at expanding the spread of biofuels and renewables in the Western Hemisphere, and this should remain a priority. The expiration of the U.S. tariff on imported biofuels was a step in the right direction, and more can be done to develop biofuels industries in Latin America. The development of new industries, clean energy research centers and government policies incentivizing the use of renewable technologies for power generation will help to build long-term, sustainable industries in the Hemisphere. Regardless of the power source used, energy efficiency is a worthwhile goal for Latin America. The IEA noted in the World Energy Outlook 2012 that while energy intensity is not particularly high in Latin America, it is primarily because high energy intensity in energy producing nations is offset by low energy use in energy importing nations. Improving energy efficiency, particularly in energy producing nations, will permit more efficient use of energy resources, allowing them to stretch farther. Existing forums like the ECPA already have energy efficiency as an issue of focus and can aid in connecting companies that represent successful and proven efficiency technologies with partners in Latin America. 2. Propagate Advanced Production Technologies Abroad Latin America has significant reserves of oil and gas, including potentially huge unconventional resources. One of the fastest, and perhaps easiest, ways for the U.S. to ensure diversification of energy supplies is to help other nations take advantage of the unconventional energy revolution. This will mean sharing technology, building regulatory regimes, improving environmental safety standards and possibly even developing infrastructure in nations with shale gas and tight oil reserves. The U.S. should continue to expand upon the work that the Department of State and partner agencies are attempting to achieve through UGTEP, offering technical, regulatory, geological and other support to countries that want to develop their shale oil and gas resources. There are also roles for companies to play, sharing their technology and technical expertise through partnerships, investment opportunities or service contracts. Helping other nations develop their domestic resources will increase global energy security by increasing and diversifying global supply. Natural gas is also, as far as fossil fuels go, a relatively low-carbon source of energy, and the expansion of the shale gas boom may offset global coal consumption and carbon emissions, serving as a boon for climate goals as well. By helping other nations, such as Colombia, Brazil and Mexico, adapt to changing energy markets and complex new sources of energy, the U.S. will be simultaneously ensuring its own energy security. 3. Research Ways to Encourage Gas Penetration in the Caribbean With abundant natural gas supply a short distance from the Caribbean, the US should look for ways to back out fuel oil and gasoline as a feedstock for power and transportation. While these nations are trying to maximize renewable energy, they still need a non-intermittent source of power generation. But short driving distance makes CNG or other natural gas technologies a real possibility. The key challenges are moving gas to small islands, ensuring storage or other means of security of supply, and identifying the right forms of vehicle technology. How to make this transition economically is a question for engineers as well as policymakers. The U.S. should design ways that private foundations, in tandem with our national laboratories and perhaps the OAS, can look for near-term, practical ways to increase natural gas utilization. Combined with a permissive policy on natural gas exports to the Caribbean, this could be major step forward for climate and national security for the Caribbean. 4. Reconsider the U.S. Policy Regarding Oil and Gas Exports and Swaps In light of the unconventional revolution, the U.S. will have surpluses of natural gas and even light oil, given that the domestic refining system is primarily configured to process heavy oil. Large price differentials also exist for U.S. resources, largely as a result of infrastructure and policy constraints that keep them trapped in the U.S. Current U.S. policy only permits the export of crude oil in highly limited circumstances. A careful reconsideration of U.S. export policy, particularly towards oil, may be warranted. Allowing some exports or swaps of light oil produced in the U.S. for the heavy oil needed for refineries would enable us to supply our hemispheric neighbors, increase export earnings, and sustain domestic job growth. Granting an additional avenue for sale of energy resources, either oil or gas, will also ensure that artificial barriers to export don’t lead to decreased production, high domestic prices and lost value to the economy, while simultaneously adding to global energy supply stability and security. The hemisphere can also benefit from additional exports of natural gas. Mexico imports costly LNG at oil-linked prices. The Caribbean is dependent on fuel oil for power generation and Brent prices gasoline for transportation. These exports could present a political advantage as well as an economic one, granting the U.S. with another tool to use in the Western Hemisphere, where Venezuelan influence is cemented by subsidized sales of crude oil and products. 5. Complete the U.S.-Mexico Transboundary Agreement On February 20, 2012, the U.S. and Mexico signed a transboundary hydrocarbons agreement that allows for the joint the development of oil and gas reservoirs that cross the international maritime boundary between the two countries in the Gulf of Mexico.30 If implemented, the agreement would end the current moratorium on exploration and production in the border area. While the Mexican Senate ratified the agreement on April 12, 2012, the Obama Administration has not formally submitted the agreement to the U.S. Congress for passage. The entry into force of this agreement would render significant benefits for both the U.S. and Mexico.31 It would provide a means for Pemex to collaborate with private companies in the Gulf of Mexico border area, which would give Pemex a crucial opportunity to gain expertise in deepwater activities that could be applied to the firm’s operations throughout Mexico. This would serve U.S. interests by boosting Mexican production and reducing U.S. dependence on imports from more politically troublesome regions, which have replaced lagging Mexican exports in recent years.32 Conversely, U.S. reticence to implement the agreement may send the wrong signal to Mexico and dampen enthusiasm for energy sector reform at a time when the stage may be set for historic change. Indeed, competent implementation of the agreement could demonstrate to Mexico that its interests can be protected in joint production regimes with U.S. companies and bring about an impetus for broader Mexican energy reforms. 6. Revive Energy Diplomacy and Commercial Engagement Energy diplomacy and commercial advocacy should be vital components of U.S. energy policy in the coming decades. The global energy system is projected to remain dependent upon fossil fuels for the foreseeable future, and as a result, having access to reliable, affordable sources of energy will remain important, as will the stability of energy markets. Energy diplomacy should center on ensuring that the U.S. has good working relationships with the countries that produce and consume energy. Successful energy diplomacy can serve a critical role in managing tensions over energy development, transportation, investment, and other issues. The Department of State has significantly increased its capabilities to conduct energy diplomacy through the establishment of the Energy and Natural Resources Bureau, led by Ambassador Carlos Pascual. Its programs should be robustly funded. We should also deepen the international energy diplomacy capacity of the Department of Energy. The Department of Energy’s relationships with civil servants in ministries across the globe provide a bridge across changes in government here and there. They can talk when the politics of non-energy issues obstruct dialogue among the foreign ministries. It is easier to get Energy Ministers together for regular meetings than Secretaries of State. Their staff should be expanded and serious program budget established to make our cooperation more than rhetorical. For true reform to be achieved, foreign ministers and heads of government will have to be involved, as this will be the key to integrating energy security into foreign policy. The three countries that need robust attention at this time are Mexico, Brazil and Venezuela. Mexico is considering major reforms and we have much we can share at a technical level on gas markets, unconventional oil and gas technology, safe regulation of the deepwater, and energy efficiency. We should create a quiet bilateral mechanism for sharing this information with Mexican ministries, its nascent regulator and PEMEX. Changing global markets also impact Brazil, and we should ensure that the Strategic Energy Dialogue is reactivated as soon as new officials are on board at the Department of Energy. Venezuela is trickier because it is in political transition and there is a great deal of rhetorical hostility. But the US had a technical dialogue with Venezuela that lasted over 30 years. We need to know the new officials at the Ministry and PdVSA and to share our view of market realities, even if we may not agree on them. Sometime in 2013, after the Venezuelan elections, this technical dialogue should be revived, perhaps at the Assistant Secretary, or Deputy Assistant Secretary level. Conclusion Mr. Chairman, the ties between Latin America and the Caribbean and the energy security of the United States are numerous. Here I have addressed only a few of the possible avenues for improving U.S. energy security, and there are undoubtedly more, but the overarching conclusion is that energy security goals in the Hemisphere can be achieved through improved dialogue and relations with allies and adversaries alike. As I stated in 2008, it will require new approaches to energy and foreign policy. It will require fresh policy approaches, money, and creative diplomacy. But more than anything it will require leadership. As a citizen I thank the committee for its leadership on this critical issue.

**This will boost U.S. standing in important Latin American regional forums**

**Delahunt, 12** – chairman of the Venezuela-US Friendship Group and retired U.S. Representative Globe, 30 October 2013, http://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2012/10/30/podium-venezuela/EJ6Jd2yRKfaJ76HYrXb4WJ/story.html)

The recent election in Venezuela offers an opportunity to improve the US-Venezuela bilateral relationship. On Oc. 7th, President Hugo Chavez was reelected to a new six-year term by a nine point margin. I — along with hundreds of other international witnesses — was duly impressed with the transparency of the electoral process and the enthusiasm of Venezuelans for democracy. Eighty-one percent percent of registered voters went to the polls! This turnout was remarkable when compared to the United States and other “mature” democracies. Whether or not one agrees with Chávez’s policies, there can be no doubt that he won these elections fairly. There are so many checks and balances in the electoral system in Venezuela that there is virtually no room for fraud. The voter registry, the voting machines, the electronic ballot and the data transmission system are all fully audited by representatives of all the different political parties and independent observers. Former President Jimmy Carter recently called the Venezuelan voting system “the best in the world.” He noted that the voting machines print out a paper receipt that voters can look at to verify that their selection was recorded correctly, and poll workers check those receipts against the electronic tally. I was particularly struck by the atmosphere of peacefulness and mutual respect in the voting centers, where monitors from both pro-government and opposition groups were present. In contrast with elections past, the two main candidates manifested a similar attitude. Once the election authorities announced the results, opposition candidate Henrique Capriles rapidly conceded defeat, and he quickly scolded “radical” opposition supporters who insisted on alleging that fraud had taken place, despite no evidence to support their claims. Chávez also behaved gracefully, calling Capriles the following day to express his willingness to work together to mitigate the polarization that divided Venezuelans. Most of Venezuela’s political leadership — following a tumultuous power struggle, during which a coup d’Etat and violent protests occurred — appear to have accepted to follow the democratic rulebook and be more tolerant of one another. This is an important step forward, and the United States should encourage Venezuelans to continue seeking common ground, rather than support one group over another, as has at times been the case in recent years. Most importantly, over 55 percent of Venezuelan voters cast their vote in favor of Chávez. The United States should respect this outcome and seek to improve relations in areas where we can agree. Commercial relations between our two countries have generally been excellent, despite political differences, and both countries would greatly benefit from their expansion. Venezuela will no doubt continue to play a central role in the region’s new multilateral cooperation and consultation mechanisms, such as the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the Community of Central American and Caribbean States (CELAC). The United States, which has increasingly found itself isolated in regional forums, would do well to find ways to work with these new groups greaton important issues such as drug trafficking and energy cooperation. Improved relations with Venezuela would greatly facilitate this task. Our government will certainly have important differences with Venezuela, particularly in the area of international relations. But we can agree to disagree, as we do with many other partners throughout the world. I am convinced that the Venezuelan government is prepared to respond favorably to such an initiative.

**Latin American relations check all conflict. Only engagement solves.**

**Zedillo, et al., 8** – Commission Co-Chair for the Brookings Institute Report on the Partnership for the Americas and former President of Mexico (Ernesto, Thomas R. Pickering, etc, “Rethinking U.S.-Latin American Relations: A Hemispheric Partnership for a Turbulent World,” Report of the Partnership for the Americas Commission, The Brookings Institution, November 2008, http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Research/Files/Reports/2008/11/24%20latin%20america%20partnership/1124\_latin\_america\_partnership.PDF)

The Need for a Hemispheric Partnership Historically, the United States and Latin America have rarely developed a genuine and sustained partnership to address regional—let alone global—challenges. Mutual distrust is partly to blame. Also, the LAC countries were often not ready to make stable commitments. The United States had other preoccupations and did not make hemispheric partnership a priority. Problems and solutions were seen from Washington as country-specific and were managed mostly on a country-bycountry basis through bilateral channels. Meanwhile, multilateral forums—such as the Organization of American States and the summits of hemispheric leaders—ran out of steam, became mired in confrontation, or remained underresourced. If a hemispheric partnership remains elusive, the costs to the United States and its neighbors will be high, in terms of both growing risks and missed opportunities. Without a partnership, the risk that criminal networks pose to the region’s people and institutions will continue to grow. Peaceful nuclear technology may be adopted more widely, but without proper safeguards, the risks of nuclear proliferation will increase. Adaptation to climate change will take place through isolated, improvised measures by individual countries, rather than through more effective efforts based on mutual learning and coordination. Illegal immigration to the United States will continue unabated and unregulated, adding to an ever-larger underclass that lives and works at the margins of the law. Finally, the countries around the hemisphere, including the United States, will lose valuable opportunities to tap new markets, make new investments, and access valuable resources. It is important to note at the outset that the term “partnership” as used in this report does not mean equal responsibility for all. The asymmetries between the United States and its neighbors are large and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Partnership here means a type of international cooperation whereby a group of countries identifies common interests, objectives, and solutions, and then each partner country undertakes responsibilities according to its own economic and political capacities to generate shared benefits. Today, four changes in the region have made a hemispheric partnership both possible and necessary. First, the key challenges faced by the United States and the hemisphere’s other countries— such as securing sustainable energy supplies, combating and adapting to climate change, and combating organized crime and drug trafficking—have become so complex and deeply transnational that they cannot be managed or overcome by any single country. Washington needs partners in the LAC region with a shared sense of responsibility and a common stake in the future. For example, drug trafficking and its associated criminal networks have now spread so widely across the hemisphere that they can no longer be regarded as a “U.S. problem,” a “Colombian problem,” or a “Mexican problem.” The threat posed by these networks can only be countered through coordinated efforts across producing, consuming, and transshipment countries, all of which have a shared interest in controlling the flow of arms, money, vehicles, and drugs. The process of combating and adapting to climate change also exemplifies the need for a hemispheric partnership. All carbon-emitting societies contribute to the problem to different degrees, and all will experience its consequences. The solutions—ranging from developing alternative fuels to adapting to ecological shocks—all require sustained cooperation among the hemisphere’s countries.

**Failure to rebuild ties on oil issues allows China to solidify its stronghold and use oil as a diplomatic weapon against the U.S.**

**Hurst, 8** – political-military research analyst with the Foreign Military Studies Office and a Lieutenant Commander in the United States Navy Reserve (Cindy, “China's Global Quest for Energy; Rocky U.S. Relationship with Venezuela is Playing into China's Energy Policy Despite The Ocean Between Them,” 8 September 2008, www.thecuttingedgenews.com/index.php?article=740&pageid=&pagename=)

The U.S. rocky relationship with Venezuela is playing into China’s hands, perhaps better than Beijing expected. Venezuela exports approximately 60 percent of its oil to the U.S. However, since Hugo Chavez came into power in Venezuela in 1999, the U.S. and Venezuela have maintained a tense relationship, paving a path of continuous energy deals with China. Both China and Venezuela have been striking "International cooperation deals" that would not only not only provide increased oil exports to China, but also bolster Venezuela’s economy and oil infrastructure. In 2004, Chavez, who has visited China at least five times since 1999, signed such eight agreements on energy cooperation with the Asian country. According to China Daily, Venezuela currently ships nearly 300,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil and fuel to China. 80,000 of this is crude oil, which is up from 39,000 bpd the year before. In addition to various business arrangements between Venezuela’s state-run oil company and China Petroleum that include purchasing Venezuelan fuel oil and power plant fuel, Chinese companies are seeking to invest in oil exploration and production in the country. In return Chavez expects and is receiving Chinese assistance in the areas of telecommunications, food production and culture. The list of joint project is long, including not only oil sales from existing supply, but also the exploration and development of new fields and the development of older fields. In fact, Chavez visited China in December 2004, where he declared that Venezuela was ready to help China establish its own strategic petroleum reserve. He also spoke “of a budding strategic alliance between the two countries, and signed an agreement that would allow Chinese companies to gain developmental rights to 15 oil fields in eastern Venezuela. Although this would appear to be an excellent opportunity for China, there are still a number of hurdles to overcome before the full export potential can be realized. One issue facing China is transportation. China and Venezuela have a big ocean between them. While Chavez is opening the doors and allowing China access to Venezuela’s oil, transporting the oil is still costly. A tanker capable of hauling 500,000 barrels would be profitable on a short haul. However, that same size tanker will undoubtedly lose money hauling oil all the way to Asia. Currently, supertankers are not permitted to pass through the Panama Canal, which would save time and money by drastically cutting back the travel distance to transport the oil. In September 2007, the Panamanian government began a massive effort to widen the 93-year old canal. But the project is estimated to cost $5 billion and will take up to eight years to complete. The new canal will be able to accommodate maximum capacity ships. China will likely benefit most as it ranks second to the U.S. as the canal’s biggest user. But that will be years from now. Another alternative to delivering the oil to China is to build a pipeline from Venezuelan oil fields across Colombia to Pacific ports in Colombia or Ecuador. Unfortunately such a pipeline would currently be vulnerable to sabotage because it would run across a war zone where rebels have long made a habit of attacking the country’s existing pipelines. Additionally, the necessary Pacific port facilities currently do not exist and would have to be constructed. A third alternative would be an existing, refurbished inter-oceanic pipeline located in Panama. Large-scale oil shipments from Venezuela to China would dramatically increase the pipeline’s use. Additionally, the Venezuelan and Panamanian governments have been negotiating the use of the pipeline to pump the oil for quicker access to China. The pipeline reportedly has a capacity of 800,000 bpd. However, the pumps were installed to move oil from the Pacific to the Atlantic and would require modification or reversal to send the fuel the other direction. Chavez has also signed a contract to have China construct a number of supertankers, which will eliminate its dependency on renting these tankers. It will also, according to Chavez, allow him to create one of the greatest fleets in the world. Additionally, Venezuela plans to manufacture parts for the tankers, which will enable it to conduct much of its own maintenance. China’s interest in Venezuela’s oil poses a potential threat to U.S. interests. Venezuela is the U.S.’s fourth largest oil supplier after Canada, Mexico and Saudi Arabia. Tensions between the U.S. and Venezuela have been flaring since an April 2002 coup briefly removed Chavez from office. Chavez put the blame on the U.S., accusing Washington of sponsoring the attempted overthrow as well as a devastating oil lockout in 2002-2003. With a severe distrust of the Bush administration, and a marked “anti-imperialist viewpoint,” Chavez has voiced concerns that President Bush had plans to have him assassinated, adding that if he were killed the U.S. could “forget Venezuelan oil.” As the Venezuelan economy stands today, there is very little likelihood that Venezuela would stop exporting oil to the U.S. Venezuela depends too heavily on its oil industry. In one study it was estimated that over 60 percent of Venezuela’s population live in poverty, earning less than $2 per day. Using the revenues from Venezuela’s oil industry, Chavez has been able to offer a number of programs promoting literacy, job training, land reform, subsidized food and small loans. He has also used the revenue for health care and to import Cuban doctors. Once Venezuela secures an alternate export partner in China to replace the U.S., it could hurt the U.S., which depends on Venezuela to provide oil for 12 to 15 percent of its consumption rate. Despite statements made by Venezuelan officials, such as Ali Rodriguez, president of Venezuela’s state-owned oil company, PDVSA, who called the assumption of replacing its U.S. business with China “absurd,” Chavez has made a number of threats, including that of putting an embargo on oil shipments to the U.S. The U.S. currently has the infrastructure in place, such as refineries capable of processing Venezuela’s crude. Refineries in China are not currently capable of processing Venezuela’s heavy crude oil. In May of this year, however, China and Venezuela agreed to build a refinery in China’s Guangdong province. The refinery will be capable of processing up to 400,000 bpd and will make Chavez’s goal of shipping one million bpd of oil to china by 2011 a reality. As China and Venezuela continue to work together, it will become easier for Chavez to use oil as a geopolitical weapon. China’s influence in certain countries could eventually backfire against the U.S. as certain major U.S. oil supplying nations find an oil export substitute in China. The Venezuelan government and its political disagreements and strong words with the Bush administration provides a perfect example of a country that could potentially cut off the U.S. in favor of doing business with China. Should China be able to carry the Venezuelan oil business with adequate purchases, oil could be used as a weapon of diplomacy against the U.S. Finally China, knowing that it could face a bleak future if its appetite is not curbed, is also searching for technology that will stretch its resources.

**Triggers great power conflict with China**

**Salameh, 11** – international oil economist, a consultant to the World Bank in Washington, DC on energy affairs and a technical expert of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in Vienna (Mamdouh G., “China’s Oil ‘Adventure’ into Venezuela,” International Association for Energy Economics, Second Quarter 2011, www.iaee.org/en/publications/newsletterdl.aspx?id=130)

China’s Global Oil Diplomacy China’s growing involvement in Venezuela is an integral part of its global oil diplomacy. China is very aware that its robust economic growth would falter without secure oil supplies. China’s global oil diplomacy is, therefore, geared towards ensuring that this never happens. The growing dependence on oil imports has created an increasing sense of ‘energy insecurity’ among Chinese leaders. The Chinese military argue that China’s energy security needs to be taken ‘seriously and dealt with strategically’16 That means less reliance on the Middle East, less transportation of oil via sea lanes policed by the U.S. Navy, more oil brought in by pipeline across Asia and by tanker across the Pacific and more capability for the Chinese navy to protect Chinese tankers. Henry Kissinger has warned of a potential great-power conflict over oil: this is it. For decades the doctrine of peaceful rise has meant that China has tried to secure energy and raw materials without confronting the United States and the West. China’s long-standing willingness to deal with states that the West regards pariahs is in part a recognition that dealing with Sudan, Angola, Iran or Uzbekistan allows China to avoid direct confrontation with Western interests. However, the larger China has become, the sheer scale of its energy needs has forced it more and more to intrude into areas that the United States regards as its own sphere of influence such as Venezuela. China’s penetration into the U.S. backyard could have profound political and economic implications for the U.S., as it is dependent for one-third of its oil on imports from South American oil suppliers that it can’t afford to lose to China. China’s global oil diplomacy could bring it into conflict with the United States unless both countries find a constructive accommodation that allows them to do business. Conclusions Under the cloak of Washington’s indifference, President Chavez is making steady progress in cementing strategic relations with China principally in the oil field. For Chavez, such a strategy enables him to achieve his political ambitions of eliminating U.S. political influence in his country and also reducing his country’s dependence on oil exports to the United States.

**U.S. assistance prevents exclusive Chinese influence**

**Fillingham, 13** –Managing Editor & Asia Analyst and MA in Chinese Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London (Zachary, “Post-Chavez US-Venezuelan Relations: Headed for a Thaw?” 10 March 2013, http://www.geopoliticalmonitor.com/post-chavez-us-venezuelan-relations-headed-for-a-thaw-4790)

Current polls indicate that Maduro would triumph in the coming election, a scenario that does not bode well for a thaw in US-Venezuelan relations. Maduro has dropped several indications that he plans to carry on his predecessor’s anti-American tone, notably by suggesting that the U.S. might be behind Chavez’s illness and by kicking out two U.S. military attaches under the accusation of “trying to destabilize Venezuelan politics.” But to take the inevitability of another United Socialist government as proof of a perpetual flatline in US-Venezuelan relations would be premature. It is a short-term consideration, and it’s only in the medium term that things will likely get interesting.First off, Maduro will have to grapple with the problem plaguing every political system that favors individual personality over rule of law. A vacuum has opened up at the very top of Venezuelan politics, and it remains to be seen whether Maduro has the charisma, and perhaps more importantly, the personal networks with which to fill it. The Chavez-era Venezuelan state was one that operated on a complex system of personal patronage that led all the way to the top; supporters were rewarded and detractors were marginalized. It remains to be seen whether this system will function smoothly with its head cut off. Political patronage goes hand in hand with Venezuela’s other pressing issue: an increasingly dysfunctional economy. Many Chavez-era policies could be described as political patronage on a mass scale, and while these policies did help Venezuela’s poor, they tended to be inefficient and short-sighted. For example, the Chavez government’s adult literacy program cost anywhere from $543 to $977 per adult learner. Compare that to Brazil’s program that uses pre-existing educational infrastructure to achieve a cost of $2.50 per learner. In Venezuela’s case, most of this money went into hiring adult literacy trainers, thus providing people with jobs- but only for as long as the government’s finances can hold out. And by all indications, Venezuela’s finances aren’t going to hold out for very long. The country is currently running a deficit of over 20 percent, and its national inflation rate fluctuates between 20 and 30 percent. Though it presides over one of the world’s largest oil reserves and is a card-carrying member of OPEC, Venezuela’s oil yields have been dropping throughout the Chavez era due to a lack of foreign investment. The same is true of Venezuela’s food industry. A lack of foreign investment, inefficiency, and costly subsidies have stunted overall output, resulting in food shortages that are now showing themselves in the huge lineups spilling out of government food depots nationwide. A reoccurring theme of Chavez’s economic policy was a willful ignorance regarding the creation of infrastructure and social capital that could drive economic growth beyond the era of direct government handouts. Given the structural challenges that the Venezuelan economy now faces, challenges that will preclude the government’s ability to continue Chavez-era patronage ad infinitum, a Maduro government will inevitably be faced with an economic reckoning of sorts. In the aftermath of this economic reckoning, there will be an opportunity for both domestic opposition forces within Venezuela, and American foreign policy to make inroads. Just to recap: what we are likely to see is a Maduro win, followed by a politico-economic crisis that ushers in either a return to credible multi-party democracy or a descent into conspicuous authoritarianism. But how will this impact US-Venezuelan relations? Given its precarious economic situation, Venezuela will need outside assistance in the near future. And while some would say that China is best suited to step up and bail out Caracas, there are a few reasons to question whether this will actually come to pass. First of all, The Chinese Development Bank has already provided a huge amount of money to the Chavez government, about $40 billion between 2008 and 2012 alone. Thus, if Venezuela were to be faced with a default, it would be Chinese investors with their money on the line. Any debt renegotiations would surely include provisions that didn’t sit well with the Venezuelan public. After all, there have already been agreements reached between Venezuela and the Chinese state-owned company Citic Group that have raised populist alarm bells regarding the signing of mineral rights over to foreign companies. In this context, a limited rapprochement makes sense from a Venezuelan point of view, as it would balance against a preponderance of Chinese economic influence. Now that the “Bolivarian Revolution” is all but discredited, and countries like Brazil have proven that it’s possible to alleviate poverty through trade and keep US influence at arm’s length, a US-Venezuelan thaw is theoretically possible. However, authorities in Washington will likely have to endure another round of vitriol and wait until the dust settles in Venezuelan domestic politics before their window of opportunity presents itself.

**Aff is a prerequisite to other forms of engagement – now is the key time to use leverage to change internal Venezuelan policy**

**Roberts, 13** – master’s degree in international and development economics from Yale University and also holds a master of business administration from the University of Pittsburgh, Research Fellow For Economic Freedom and Growth, Center for International Trade and Economics (CITE), and Sergio Daga, Visiting Senior Policy Analyst, Center for International Trade and Economics (CITE) (James, “Venezuela: U.S. Should Push President Maduro Toward Economic Freedom,” Issue Brief #3911, 4-15-13)

Hugo Chavez’s hand-picked successor, former trade union boss Nicolás Maduro, appears to have defeated Governor Henrique Capriles by a narrow margin in a contentious and hard-fought special election on April 14. Venezuela is in such shambles after 14 years of seat-of-the-pants mismanagement that Maduro—assuming his victory is confirmed—may ultimately be forced to pursue more moderate policies and seek help from the U.S. to restore stability. The Obama Administration and Congress should exploit this opening by using U.S. leverage to push Venezuela to turn from Chavez’s failed experiment in oil-cursed[1] “21st-century socialism” toward economic freedom. An Economy in Ruins The foundations of economic freedom in Venezuela have crumbled. When Chavez took office in 1999, Venezuela scored 54 out of 100 possible points in The Heritage Foundation/Wall Street Journal’s annual Index of Economic Freedom. Today, however, after 14 years of Chavez’s soft authoritarian populism, Venezuela merits a score of just 36 points. This nearly 20-point plunge is among the most severe ever recorded by a country in the history of the Index. Its 2013 rank—174th out of 179 countries—places Venezuela among the most repressed nations in the world.[2] Venezuela’s dismal economic freedom score is reflected in statistics that translate into real-time hardship for Venezuelans, who must spend more of their incomes on higher prices for necessities—if they can find them on empty store shelves. There are scarcities of nearly all staple food and fuel products. In fact, according to the Banco Central of Venezuela’s (BCV) shortages index, Venezuela faces the most severe food shortages in four years.[3] And what food is available comes at a price: Mary O’Grady reports in The Wall Street Journal that “over the past 10 years inflation in food and nonalcoholic beverages is 1,284%.”[4] Financial disequilibrium in Venezuela is the result of a sharply widening fiscal deficit that reached almost 15 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) last year.[5] Government control of the formerly independent BCV also contributed to a massive expansion of the money supply. There are anecdotal reports in Caracas of people paying as much as 23 bolívars for one U.S. dollar in the black market as of early April. The official rate is just 6.3 bolívars per dollar—and that is after a significant 32 percent devaluation in February.[6] These problems were aggravated by Chavez’s foreign adventurism—which drained billions of petrodollars from the economy to keep afloat the failed economy in Fidel Castro’s Cuba—as well as generous subsidies to his Chavista cronies in the region through such schemes as ALBA and PetroCaribe. Corruption and Weak Rule of Law As reported in the Index, political interference in Venezuela’s judicial system has become routine, and corruption is rampant. The landscape in Caracas and elsewhere in the country is littered with half-finished, publicly funded infrastructure and housing projects. The government funds needed to complete them often disappear. As government expanded under Chavez, corruption became institutionalized. Chavez doubled the size of the public sector, many of whose 2.4 million[7] employees have no real job other than to work to keep the regime in power. A World Economic Forum (WEF) survey found little trust among businesses, politicians, the judicial system, and the police in Venezuela.[8] The tragic result is that Venezuela is now one of the most dangerous countries of the world. According to the Venezuelan Violence Observatory, in 2012 nearly 22,000 people were murdered.[9] An inefficient and non-transparent regulatory environment that is hostile to private foreign direct investment obstructs long-term development and hampers entrepreneurial growth. The investment regime is tightly controlled by the state and favors investors from China, Russia, Iran, and other democracy-challenged countries.[10] Investor protection in Venezuela is ranked at 140 out of 144 countries, according to the WEF report.[11] In 1998, before Chavez took power, there were more than 14,000 private industrial companies in Venezuela; in 2011, after 13 years of extensive nationalizations and expropriations, only about 9,000 remained.[12] The Chavez government did make one product very inexpensive for Venezuelans: Generous energy subsidies mean a car can be filled up with 15 gallons of gasoline for less than one U.S. dollar.[13] Although that might buy short-term political advantage for the Chavista government, in the long term these energy subsidies are very destructive to future economic growth, since Venezuelan companies have a distorted cost base and thus cannot compete globally. Operations of the state oil company, PDVSA, have also deteriorated significantly under Chavez. When he took office, PDVSA was producing 3.5 million barrels per day (bbl/d); today, it is down to 2.5 bbl/d.[14] Social Programs and Inequality Ironically, Chavez’s years in power did not result in much reduction of poverty and inequality. Although some measures of income inequality (such as the Gini coefficient) did improve under Chavez,[15] according to a recently published research paper by Darryl McLeod and Nora Lustig[16] that used data for 18 Latin American countries, market democracies such as Chile and Brazil were far more successful at reducing inequality and poverty than the populist Chavista regimes. Despite its vast oil wealth, Venezuela’s economic growth performance has also been poor. Between 1999 and 2012, average annual per capita growth was just 1.1 percent, while in the top four Latin American countries (Panama, Peru, the Dominican Republic, and Chile) the rate was 3.6 percent.[17] Not surprisingly, the rate of private investment in Venezuela—under 5 percent—is also one of the lowest in the region. In Peru and Chile, it is almost 20 percent.[18] U.S. Policy Toward the New Maduro Government Washington should insist on strict conditionality before sending a new U.S. ambassador to Caracas or assenting to any new lending to Venezuela by international financial institutions until the new government: Produces a comprehensive plan for reform that reduces the size of the public sector, reverses nationalizations and expropriations of land and enterprises with just compensation to owners, restores the independence of the central bank and judicial institutions, reforms the electoral system, and submits to an internationally supervised audit of the government’s books during the Chavez years; Takes steps to privatize PDVSA to bring in international equity partners with the expertise and financial capacity to restore PDVSA to the high level of professional operational and managerial expertise for which it was widely respected prior to 1999; Immediately stops all subsidies to Cuba and terminates wasteful and economically destabilizing subsidy programs such as PetroCaribe and ALBA; Ceases cooperation with international state sponsors of terrorism (such as Iran) and joins the international community’s cooperative efforts in the fight against transnational crime, narco-trafficking, and terrorism; and Restores freedom of the press and access to information for all Venezuelans. Use U.S. Leverage The foundations of economic freedom in Venezuela were severely weakened during the 14-year misrule by Chavez. Although Chavez’s death may aggravate instability and further polarize Venezuela, it need not be that way. Venezuela is in need of immediate and sweeping reforms, but these changes will take time, effort, determination, and, above all, dedicated reformers in Venezuela. The Obama Administration should step into the breach with active and forward-looking policies to bring Venezuela back into the globalized economic system.

## 2AC

### 2AC – China DA

#### US-China influence isn’t zero-sum

Xiaoxia 5-6 (Wang. Staff Writer for the Economic Observer. “In America's Backyard: China's Rising Influence In Latin America” The Economic Observer, 5/6/13 http://worldcrunch.com/china-2.0/in-america-039-s-backyard-china-039-s-rising-influence-in-latin-america/foreign-policy-trade-economy-investments-energy/c9s11647)

For South America, China and the United States, this is **not a zero-sum game, but a multiple choice of mutual benefit**s and synergies. Even if China has become the Latin American economy’s new upstart, it is still **not in a position to challenge the strong and diverse influence that the United States has accumulated** over two centuries in the region.

### AT: Soft Power

#### Structural factors ensure Chinese soft power will fail

Keck, 13 – assistant editor of The Diplomat (Zachary, "Destined To Fail: China’s Soft Power Push," The Diplomat, 1-7-13, <http://thediplomat.com/2013/01/07/destined-to-fail-chinas-soft-power-offensive/?all=true)//SMS>

Yet even as China inaugurated its first organization dedicated to enhancing Beijing’s soft power, a number of disparate events in China were illustrating why the CCP’s charm offensive is doomed to fail. For example, in recent weeks the Chinese government has redoubled its efforts to censor the internet. After social media users in China exposed a series of scandals involving low-level government officials, the CCP adopted new regulations that require internet service providers to quickly delete “illegal” posts and turn over the evidence to government officials. Additionally, after trying to require citizens to use their real names on social media sites like Weibo, the new regulations require citizens to use their real identities when signing up with an internet provider. More secretly, according to many inside China, authorities have been strengthening the great firewall to prevent users from employing various methods in order to gain access to a growing number of sites that are banned. China is hardly the only government concerned about the political instability unfettered internet access can generate. In fact, last month [China joined](http://news.yahoo.com/un-telecom-chief-surprised-us-led-treaty-snub-110120544--finance.html) 89 countries in supporting a United Nations telecommunications treaty that over 20 nations opposed over fears that it would open the door to greater government control over cyberspace. But while China’s suppression of information may resonate with political elites in authoritarian states, the world is living in the information age and attempts to restrict the flow of information for political reasons will not endear China to the global masses that soft power seeks to attract. China’s internet policies also conflict with the stated goals of its soft power offensive in more concrete ways as well. For example, one of the primary goals of the CPDA is to increase the number of people-to-people exchanges with other countries. However, if the CCP is successful in preventing users from accessing popular sites like Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, and the New York Times, it is likely to discourage foreigners from living or studying abroad in China. Similarly, blocking access to these sites inhibits communication between Chinese and foreigners over cyberspace. Along with tighter restrictions on the Internet, Chinese authorities have also increased their scrutiny on media outlets, both domestic and foreign. Domestically, the CCP ushered in the New Year by [closing down](http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1120153/yanhuang-chunqiu-website-closed-down-after-editorial-constitution) the fiercely liberal magazine, Yanhuang Chunqiu, ostensibly because its registration had been invalid since August 2010. Then, on Friday, 51 prominent journalists issued an open letter demanding the resignation of Tuo Zhen, the Communist Party’s propaganda chief in Guangdong Province, who they accused of “raping” the Southern Weekly’s editorial page when he allegedly altered its annual New Year’s Greeting right as it went to press, and without the knowledge or consent of the editor. The journalists were later joined by over two dozen prominent academics from the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong, and Taiwan who published their own open letter calling for Tuo's resignation. Southern Weekly (also referred to as Southern Weekend) is a highly regarded reform-minded Guangdong newspaper, and its annual New Year’s Greeting has traditionally pushed the bounds of acceptable political discussion in China. [This year’s editorial originally](http://cmp.hku.hk/2013/01/03/30247/) parodied Xi Jinping’s "Chinese Dream" by calling for the realization of the “dream of constitutionalism in China” where civil rights and [the rule-of-law are respected](http://thediplomat.com/china-power/rule-of-law-in-china-past-present-and-future/) and upheld. After Tuo’s changes, the editorial expressed gratitude to the Communist Party for helping the country achieve the Chinese Dream. According to David Bandurski, editor of [China Media Project](http://cmp.hku.hk/), "This kind of direct hands-on interference is really something new” and extreme even by China's strict regulation of domestic media. Indeed, after the government tried to silence the growing outrage over Tuo's actions, including by shutting down Southern Weekly staff members' personal Weibo accounts, the entire editorial staff at the newspaper decided to stage a strike, marking the first time in over two decades that the editorial staff of a major Chinese newspaper has gone on strike over government censorship, according to the South China Morning Post. China also continued its campaign against foreign journalists and news organizations last week when Chris Buckley, an Australian-national and China correspondent for the New York Times, was forced to leave the country [because Beijing](http://rendezvous.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/12/31/is-china-retaliating-against-western-journalists/) wouldn’t renew his visa. Following Buckley’s departure the New York Times said its China bureau chief, Philip Pan—author of Out of Mao’s Shadow—has been waiting since March to receive his own credentials. Beijing later claimed Buckley hadn’t submitted the proper paperwork, but his case follows on the heels of Al Jazeera’s Melissa Chan’s [expulsion from the](http://articles.latimes.com/2012/may/14/local/la-me-Melissa-Chan-20120514) country and the Washington Post’s Andrew Higgins finally ending his three-year quest to gain reentry into China, which failed even after the newspaper enlisted the help of Henry Kissinger. Thus, the more plausible explanation for Buckley’s inability to renew his visa is that Beijing is retaliating against foreign journalists because of the extraordinary reporting organizations like the New York Times have been doing on politically taboo subjects in China, such as [stories on the enormous amount of wealth](http://thediplomat.com/china-power/wen-jiabaos-riches-and-political-reform-in-china/) the families of senior leaders have accumulated. This reporting is also why the websites of the New York Times and Bloomberg News are no longer accessible in China, and why reporters from these organizations [weren’t able](http://rendezvous.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/11/15/we-were-excluded-from-xis-big-moment-but-heard-his-first-words/) to attend the unveiling of the Politburo Standing Committee at the 18th Party Congress in November. its ability to tolerate (much less cultivate) South Korean rapper Psy, and the “flash mobs” he’s inspired in places as varied as [Jakarta](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZ2hFlLMBg4), Bangkok, [Sydney](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xD9vM6v6JJ8), Dhaka, [Mumbai](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kihryyOcY8k), Dubai,[American](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdRm4hhb8wY) college [campuses](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWetGqX9uFc) and shopping [malls](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGtO_XU5yTI), Taipei, [Hong Kong](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFg1JiY_R1o), and, yes, the Chinese [mainland](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jw5gPSnvaLw). to export its cultural products, as Peng Kan, the author of the op-ed rightly notes, through official communication channel. Indeed, it’s telling that China’s most popular non-governmental figures abroad are all opponents of the CCP. One such individual is democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo, who celebrated his 57th birthday on December 28th and the 3rd anniversary of being sentenced to an 11-year prison term on December 25th. This sentence only increased Liu’s international stature where he has been celebrated widely and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010 (which the CCP responded to by placing his wife under house arrest). Indeed Liu’s international renowned was on display last month when 134 Nobel laureates [sent Xi Jinping a letter](http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/nobel-laureates-urge-china-release-jailed-peace-prize-winner-liu-xiaobo-article-1.1213088) urging him to release Liu. Eclipsing Liu in popularity at least in the West, however, is Ai Weiwei, the famous Chinese artist and dissident. Ai Weiwei’s remarkable artistic talent made him famous in some circles, initially including the CCP and across the globe before his turn to social activism. It is undeniable, however, that much of his popularity has come from his courageous and witty challenge to Communist Party rule in China. It is this charismatic political dissent that explains why documentaries of him [win at Sundance](http://aiweiweineversorry.com/), Nicholas Kristof of the New York Times interviews him while visiting China, and his “[Gangam](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n281GWfT1E8) Style” parody becomes an instant You Tube sensation, despite the fact that [its underlying](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2012/10/24/explaining-ai-weiweis-grass-mud-horse-obsession/) political message is lost on almost all its viewers. hardly alone in In fact, this problem is practically inherent in authoritarian states (just ask Vladimir Putin). and David and Goliath is one of the most recognizable stories from Jewish and Christian religious texts. But this fact does not make Liu and Ai Weiwei any less damaging to the CCP’s ability to project soft power. and the soft power individuals like Ai Weiwei command under the current political leadership. Pan—author of Out of Mao’s Shadow—has been waiting since March to receive his own credentials. Beijing later claimed Buckley hadn’t submitted the proper paperwork, but his case follows on the heels of Al Jazeera’s Melissa Chan’s [expulsion from the](http://articles.latimes.com/2012/may/14/local/la-me-Melissa-Chan-20120514) country and the Washington Post’s Andrew Higgins finally ending his three-year quest to gain reentry into China, which failed even after the newspaper enlisted the help of Henry Kissinger. Thus, the more plausible explanation for Buckley’s inability to renew his visa is that Beijing is retaliating against foreign journalists because of the extraordinary reporting organizations like the New York Times have been doing on politically taboo subjects in China, such as [stories on the enormous amount of wealth](http://thediplomat.com/china-power/wen-jiabaos-riches-and-political-reform-in-china/) the families of senior leaders have accumulated. This reporting is also why the websites of the New York Times and Bloomberg News are no longer accessible in China, and why reporters from these organizations [weren’t able](http://rendezvous.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/11/15/we-were-excluded-from-xis-big-moment-but-heard-his-first-words/) to attend the unveiling of the Politburo Standing Committee at the 18th Party Congress in November. Finally, the CCP’s soft power offensive is doomed to fail because of its ability to tolerate (much less cultivate) “cultural ambassadors.” In the realm of soft power, a county’s entertainers, artists, and intellectuals are some of its strongest assets. One needs only to look to South Korean rapper Psy, and the “flash mobs” he’s inspired in places as varied as [Jakarta](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZ2hFlLMBg4), Bangkok, [Sydney](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xD9vM6v6JJ8), Dhaka, [Mumbai](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kihryyOcY8k), Dubai,[American](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sdRm4hhb8wY) college [campuses](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWetGqX9uFc) and shopping [malls](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OGtO_XU5yTI), Taipei, [Hong Kong](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFg1JiY_R1o), and, yes, the Chinese [mainland](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jw5gPSnvaLw). A country as large and dynamic as China undoubtedly has many potential worldwide celebrities. And yet, as a China Daily op-ed points out, China “is still far from making a product like Gangnam Style. China does export a large amount of cultural products every year, but few of them become popular abroad.” The major reason China fails to export its cultural products, as Peng Kan, the author of the op-ed rightly notes, is that “Government organizations and enterprises are the main force behind the exports….But these organizations and enterprises… cannot promote satires like Gangnam Style through official communication channel. But cultural products without entertainment value rarely become popular in overseas markets.” Indeed, it’s telling that China’s most popular non-governmental figures abroad are all opponents of the CCP. One such individual is democracy advocate Liu Xiaobo, who celebrated his 57th birthday on December 28th and the [3rd anniversary](http://www.hrichina.org/content/360) of being sentenced to an 11-year prison term on December 25th. This sentence only increased Liu’s international stature where he has been celebrated widely and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010 (which the CCP responded to by placing his wife under house arrest). Indeed Liu’s international renowned was on display last month when 134 Nobel laureates sent Xi Jinping a letter urging him to release Liu. Eclipsing Liu in popularity at least in the West, however, is Ai Weiwei, the famous Chinese artist and dissident. Ai Weiwei’s remarkable artistic talent made him famous in some circles, initially including the CCP and across the globe before his turn to social activism. It is undeniable, however, that [much of his popularity](http://thediplomat.com/china-power/ai-weiwei-help-floods-in/) has come from his courageous and witty challenge to Communist Party rule in China. It is this charismatic political dissent that explains why documentaries of him win at Sundance, Nicholas Kristof of the New York Times [interviews him](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/30/opinion/sunday/kristof-hitting-china-with-humor.html?_r=0) while visiting China, and his “Gangam [Style](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n281GWfT1E8)” parody becomes an instant You Tube sensation, despite the fact that its underlying political message is lost on almost all its viewers. China is hardly alone in making dissidents it persecutes famous internationally. In fact, this problem is practically inherent in authoritarian states (just ask Vladimir Putin). There’s a nearly universal tendency for people to sympathize with an “underdog” who is courageously battling a powerful force like a government, which is why a [Tunisian street vendor](http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/01/201111684242518839.html) setting himself on fire can spark uprisings throughout the Arab world, and David and Goliath is one of the most recognizable stories from Jewish and Christian religious texts. But this fact does not make Liu and Ai Weiwei any less damaging to the CCP’s ability to project soft power. Symbolic figures like Liu and Ai Weiwei ingrain into people’s minds the perception that the CCP is synonymous with injustice. And hardly any emotion is as universally held as the righteousness of justice, however one defines it. On a more primeval basis, people are attracted to confidence, and attempts to suppress information and dissidents creates the perception that, despite all its power and remarkable achievements, the CCP remains at its core fearful and paranoid. Few people are attracted to, much less want to emulate, those they consider fearful or paranoid. Which is why, despite China’s ancient history of soft power, and the soft power individuals like Ai Weiwei command, modern China’s soft power will remain limited under the current political leadership.

### 2AC – Neoliberalism

#### Extinction comes first

Bok, 88 (Sissela, Professor of Philosophy at Brandeis, Applied Ethics and Ethical Theory, Rosenthal and Shehadi, Ed.)

The same argument can be made for Kant’s other formulations of the Categorical Imperative: “So act as to use humanity, both in your own person and in the person of every other, always at the same time as an end, never simply as a means”; and “So act as if you were always through your actions a law-making member in a universal Kingdom of Ends.” No one with a concern for humanity could consistently will to risk eliminating humanity in the person of himself and every other or to risk the death of all members in a universal Kingdom of Ends for the sake of justice. To risk their collective death for the sake of following one’s conscience would be, as Rawls said, “irrational, crazy.” And to say that one did not intend such a catastrophe, but that one merely failed to stop other persons from bringing it about would be beside the point when the end of the world was at stake. For although it is true that we cannot be held responsible for most of the wrongs that others commit, the Latin maxim presents a case where we would have to take such responsibility seriously – perhaps to the point of deceiving, bribing, even killing an innocent person, in order that the world not perish. To avoid self-contradiction, the Categorical Imperative would, therefore, have to rule against the Latin maxim on account of its cavalier attitude toward the survival of mankind. But the ruling would then produce a rift in the application of the Categorical Imperative. Most often the Imperative would ask us to disregard all unintended but foreseeable consequences, such as the death of innocent persons, whenever concern for such consequences conflicts with concern for acting according to duty. But, in the extreme case, we might have to go against even the strictest moral duty precisely because of the consequences. Acknowledging such a rift would post a strong challenge to the unity and simplicity of Kant’s moral theory.

#### Violence decreasing in the status quo – neo-lib decreases incentive for war

Gat, 13 (AZAR GAT, DPhil in History (University of Oxford, 1986); Ezer Weitzman Professor of National Security, Political Science Department, Tel Aviv University; recent books: War in Human Civilization (Oxford University Press, 2006); Victorious and Vulnerable: Why Democracy Won in the 20th Century and How It Is Still Imperiled (Hoover Institution, Rowman & Littlefield, 2010); Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism (Cambridge University Press, 2013). Is war declining – and why? Azar Gat Department of Political Science, University of Tel Aviv azargat@post.tau.ac.il , March 19th 2013)

When quite **a number of scholars** **simultaneously and independently** of one another arrive at very similar conclusions on an **issue of cardinal theoretical and practical significance**, their thesis deserves, and has received, great attention. The thesis is that **war and violence** in general have progressively **decreased in recent times, during the modern era, and** even throughout history. Of course, despite their unanimity, all these scholars could still be wrong. Indeed, each of them tells a similar story of people’s disbelief at their findings, most notably that **we live in the most peaceful period in** human **history**. Some of them even explain the general incredulity by the findings of evolutionary psychology according to which we tend to be overly optimistic about ourselves but overly pessimistic about the world at large. Having myself written about the marked decrease in deadly human violence (Gat, 2006), I agree with the authors’ general thesis. However, their unanimity falters over, and they are less clear about, the historical trajectory of and the reasons for the decline in violence and war, questions that are as important as the general thesis itself. Previous Section Next Section Hobbes was right, and Rousseau wrong, about the state of nature Steven Pinker’s The Better Angels of Our Nature (2011) towers above all the other books surveyed here in size, scope, boldness, and scholarly excellence. It has deservedly attracted great public attention and has become a best-seller. Massively documented, this 800-page volume is lavishly furnished with statistics, charts, and diagrams, which are one of the book’s most effective features. The book, spanning the whole human past as far back as our aboriginal condition, points to two major steps in the decline of violence. The first is the sharp decline in violent mortality which resulted from the rise of the state-Leviathan from around 5,000 years ago. This conclusion is based on the most comprehensive studies of the subject published over the past 15 years (Keeley, 1996; LeBlanc, 2003; Gat, 2006), which demonstrate on the basis of anthropological and archaeological evidence that Hobbes’s picture of the anarchic state of nature as a very violent one was fundamentally true. Pinker rightly summarizes that violent mortality with the rise of states dropped from a staggering estimated 15% of the population, 25% of the men, in pre-state societies, to about 1–5%. The main reason for this drop is the enforcement of internal peace by the Leviathan, but also, less noted by Pinker, lower mobilization rates and a smaller exposure of the civilian population to war than with tribal groups, as will be explained shortly. This conclusion regarding the dramatic drop in violent mortality with the transition to the state is at odds with the claim made by Jack Levy & William Thompson in their book, The Arc of War (2011). As the book’s title implies, Levy & Thompson posit a great increase in warfare during history, before a decrease during the past two centuries. Thus, the book claims that mortality in fighting greatly increased, ‘accelerated’ in the authors’ language, with the transition to the state. They reach this conclusion by making several mistaken assumptions. First, although professing ignorance about the distant past because of the lack of evidence on the behavior of hunter-gatherer societies before the adoption of agriculture some 10,000 years ago, they cite and are heavily influenced by the old Rousseauite anthropology of the generation after the 1960s, which recent studies have refuted. Obviously, one does not have to accept the above findings regarding the pervasiveness and great lethality of prehistoric warfare. But Levy & Thompson simply do not engage with them. They accept as true the Rousseauite premise that sparse human population could not possibly have had that much to fight about. However, recently extant hunter-gatherer societies prove the opposite. Australia is our best laboratory of hunter-gatherer societies, because that vast continent was entirely populated by them and ‘unpolluted’ by agriculturalists, pastoralists or states until the arrival of the Europeans in 1788. And the evidence shows that the Australian tribes fought incessantly with one another. Even in the Central Australian Desert, whose population density was as low as one person per 35 square miles, among the lowest there is, conflict and deadly fighting were the rule. Much of that fighting centered on the water-holes vital for survival in this area, with the violent death rate there reckoned to have been several times higher than in any state society. In most other places, hunting territories were monopolized and fiercely defended by hunter-gatherers because they were quickly depleted. Even among the Inuit of Arctic Canada, who were so sparse as to experience no resource competition, fighting to kidnap women was pervasive, resulting in a violent death rate 10 times higher than the USA’s peak rate of 1990, itself the highest in the developed world. In more hospitable and densely populated environments casualties averaged, as already mentioned, 15% of the population and 25% of the men, and the surviving men were covered with scars (Gat, 2006: chs 2, 6). We are not dealing here with a piece of exotic curiosity. Ninety-five percent of the history of our species Homo sapiens sapiens – people who are like us – was spent as hunter-gatherers. The transition to agriculture and the state is very recent, the tip of the iceberg, in human history. Furthermore, the human state of nature turns out to be no different than the state of nature in general. Here too, science has made a complete turnabout. During the 1960s people believed that animals did not kill each other within the same species, which made humans appear like a murderous exception and fed speculations that warfare emerged only with civilization. Since then, however, it has been found that animals kill each other extensively within species, a point pressed on every viewer of television nature documentaries. There is nothing special about humans in this regard. Thus, lethal human fighting did not ‘emerge’ at some point in history, as Levy & Thompson posit. Previous Section Next Section Violent death sharply decreased with the rise of the Leviathan As mentioned earlier and as Pinker well realizes, violent mortality actually dropped steeply with the emergence of the state-Leviathan. Here is where Levy & Thompson make a second mistake. For measuring the lethality of warfare they use evidence of battle mortality, but this is highly misleading for various reasons. First, pre-state tribes’ main fighting modes were not the battle but the raid and the ambush – capturing the enemy by surprise and often annihilating entire sleeping camps: men, women, and children. Second, the size of battles merely indicates the size of the states and their armies, which are obviously larger than tribal groups in absolute terms. Yet the main question is relative casualties, what percentage of the population died violently. And here the fact is that while states and their armies grew by a factor of tens, hundreds, and thousands, giving a spectacular impression of large-scale fighting, relative casualties actually decreased under the state, and not only because of internal peace. Indeed, casualties decreased precisely because states grew large. Take Egypt, for example, part of the ‘acceleration’ of war with the emergence of states in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and China, according to Levy & Thompson. The size of the Egyptian army with which Pharaoh Ramses II fought the Hittite empire at the Battle of Kadesh (commonly dated 1274 BCE) was 20,000–25,000 soldiers. This was a very large army by the standards of the time. Yet the total population of Egypt was about 2–3 million, so the army constituted 1% of the population at most. This was very much the standard in large states and empires throughout history because of the great financial and logistical problems of maintaining large armies for long periods at great distances from home. Thus, in comparison to the high military participation rates of small-scale tribal societies, participation rates, and hence war casualties, in large states’ armies were much lower. Moreover, in contrast to the great vulnerability of women and children in small-scale tribal warfare, the civilian population of Egypt was sheltered by distance from the theaters of military operations and not often exposed to the horrors of war. Such relative security, interrupted only by large-scale invasions, is one of the main reasons why societies experienced great demographic growth after the emergence of the state. It is also the reason why civil war, when the war rages within the country, tends to be the most lethal form of war, as Hobbes very well realized. Warfare and feuds in the pre- and early-modern eras Levy & Thompson further posit that between the 14th and early 19th centuries, Europe was the scene of a second ‘acceleration’ in the historical trajectory of violence. This is very much in line with the prevailing perceptions regarding early modern European history, but these perceptions are most probably wrong, and for the same reason as before: Levy & Thompson count absolute battle casualties, and obviously states became more centralized during this period and armies grew in number, so battles also grew in size. Yet it was the anarchy and feudal fragmentation in Europe between the fall of the Roman Empire and 1200 that were responsible for the pervasive insecurity and endemic violence that characterized the Dark Ages and resulted in, among other things, a sharp demographic decline. Again, small-scale usually meant more, not less, violent mortality. The focus on early modern Europe is misleading also in another way: in the late Middle Ages the Mongol conquests inflicted on the societies of China, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe casualties and destruction that were among the highest ever suffered during historical times. Estimates of the sharp decline experienced by the populations of China and Russia, for example, vary widely. Still, even by the lowest estimates they were at least as great, and in China almost definitely much greater, than the Soviet Union’s horrific rate in World War II of about 15%. The receding of medieval anarchy in the face of the growing European state-Leviathans was the first step towards a steep decline in the continent’s violent mortality rate beginning in early modernity and continuing to the present day. The studies and data cited by Pinker with respect to the domestic aspect of this trend are strikingly paralleled by those of Robert Muchembled’s History of Violence (2012). The work of a historian, the book meticulously documents, on the basis of French legal records, a 20-fold decrease in homicide rates between the 13th and 20th centuries. Earlier studies of other parts of Europe, starting with Gurr (1981), have come up with similar findings. Like Pinker, Muchembled attributes the steep decline to the state’s growing authority, as its justice system effectively replaced and deterred ‘private justice’, vendetta, and pervasive violence, all of them endemic in unruly societies. Correspondingly, again like Pinker, Muchembled invokes Norbert Elias’s (2000) ‘civilizing process’, whereby the defense of honor by sword and knife, a social norm and imperative in most traditional societies, is gradually given up among both the nobility and the general populace. The civilizing process is partly a function of the growing authority of the state’s rule and justice system. But there were other factors involved, which Pinker excels in identifying and weaving together. Although he is not a historian, his historical synthesis is exemplarily rich and nuanced. He specifies the growing humanitarian sensibilities in Europe of the Enlightenment, which he traces to, among other things, the gradual improvement in living conditions, growing commercial spirit and, above all, the print revolution with the attendant values and habits of reasoning, introspection, and empathy that it inculcated among the reading elites. As Pinker points out, not only did homicide rates decline but also other previously common forms of violence, such as judicial disembowelment and torture, were becoming unacceptable by the 18th century. This was the beginning of a continuous process which during the following centuries would bring about, among other things, the abolition of slavery and the decline of capital punishment, tyranny, and political violence in the developed world – most notably in the areas where the values of Enlightenment humanitarianism triumphed. Both Pinker and Muchembled identify a change in the trend towards increased violence and homicide rates in the United States and Europe from the 1960s on. They attribute this change (Pinker is particularly elaborative here) to the erosion of public authority and some reversal of the ‘civilizing process’ with the cults of youth culture, defiance of authority, radical ideologies of violence by the ‘oppressed’, and the fragmentation of the stable family structure. Pinker identifies a return to a downward trend in violence from about 1990 on, which he attributes to an ebbing of much of the above through reasserted state action and changes in the public mood. A last point worth mentioning in this context: Muchembled reveals that throughout the steep decline in homicide rates, from medieval times to the present, 90% or more of all cases have been perpetrated by men, especially between the ages of 20 and 30 years old. As Daly & Wilson (1988: 145–149) have shown, this ratio is found in each and every society studied around the globe, from hunter-gatherers to agricultural and industrial societies, irrespective of the vastly different homicide rates among them. Previous Section Next Section The decline of war and the three `Long Peaces' after 1815 We now move to the decline of war, which is our main concern here. Most people are surprised to learn that the occurrence of war and overall mortality in war sharply decreased after 1815, most notably in the developed world. The ‘Long Peace’ among the great powers after 1945 is more recognized and is widely attributed to the nuclear factor, a decisive factor to be sure, which concentrated the minds of all the protagonists wonderfully. The (inter-)democratic peace has been equally recognized. But in actuality, the decrease in war had been very marked before the nuclear era and encompassed both democracies and non-democracies. In the century after 1815, wars among economically advanced countries declined in their frequency to about one-third of what they had been in the previous centuries, an unprecedented change. Indeed, the Long Peace after 1945 was preceded by the second longest peace among the great powers, between 1871 and 1914, and by the third longest peace, between 1815 and 1854 (Gat, 2006: 536–537, 608). Thus, the three longest periods of peace by far in the modern great powers system all occurred after 1815. Clearly, one needs to explain the entire trend, while also accounting for the glaring divergence from it: the two World Wars. Previous Section Next Section Is modern war more lethal and destructive than before? In his earlier works, Levy (1983) was among the first to document the much-reduced frequency of war after 1815. But what brought about this change? Levy & Thompson assume – this is perhaps the most natural hypothesis – that wars declined in frequency because they became too lethal, destructive, and expensive. Supposedly, a trade-off of sorts was created between the intensity and frequency of warfare: fewer, larger wars supplanting many smaller ones. This hypothesis barely holds, however, because, again, relative to population and wealth wars have not become more lethal and costly than earlier in history. Furthermore, as Levy & Thompson rightly document, the wars of the 19th century – the most peaceful century in European history – were particularly light, in comparative terms, so there is no trade-off here. True, the World Wars, especially World War II, were certainly on the upper scale of the range in terms of casualties. Yet, as already noted, they were far from being exceptional in history. Once more, we need to look at relative casualties, general human mortality in any number of wars that happen to rage around the world, rather than at the aggregate created by the fact that many states participated in the World Wars. I have already mentioned the Mongol invasions, but other examples abound. In the first three years of the Second Punic War, 218–16 BCE, Rome lost some 50,000 citizens of the ages of 17–46, out of a total of about 200,000 in that age demographic (Brunt, 1971). This was roughly 25% of the military-age cohorts in only three years, the same range as the Russian and higher than the German rates in World War II. This, and the devastation of Rome’s free peasantry during the Second Punic War, did not reduce Rome’s propensity for war thereafter. During the Thirty Years War (1618–48) population loss in Germany is estimated at between one-fifth and one-third – either way higher than the German casualties in World War I and World War II combined. People often assume that more developed military technology during modernity means greater lethality and destruction, but in fact it also means greater protective power, as with mechanized armor, mechanized speed and agility, and defensive electronic measures. Offensive and defensive advances generally rise in tandem. In addition, it is all too often forgotten that the vast majority of the many millions of non-combatants killed by Germany during World War II – Jews, Soviet prisoners of war, Soviet civilians – fell victim to intentional starvation, exposure to the elements, and mass executions rather than to any sophisticated military technology. Instances of genocide in general during the 20th century, much as earlier in history, were carried out with the simplest of technologies, as the Rwanda genocide horrifically reminded us. Nor have wars during the past two centuries been economically more costly than they were earlier in history, again relative to overall wealth. War has always involved massive economic exertion and has been the single most expensive item of state spending (e.g. massively documented, Bonney, 1999). Examples are countless, and it will suffice to mention that both 16th- and 17th-century Spain and 18th-century France were economically ruined by war and staggering war debts, which in the French case brought about the Revolution. Furthermore, death by starvation in premodern wars was widespread. Previous Section Next Section Is it peace that has become more profitable? So if wars have not become more costly and destructive during the past two centuries then why have they receded, particularly in the developed world? The answer is the advent of the industrial–commercial revolution after 1815, the most profound transformation of human society since the Neolithic adoption of agriculture. The correlation between the decline of war in the developed world and the process of modernization, both unfolding since 1815, is surely not accidental, and the causation is not difficult to locate. In the first place, given explosive growth in per capita wealth, about 30- to 50-fold thus far, the Malthusian trap has been broken. Wealth no longer constitutes a fundamentally finite quantity, and wealth acquisition progressively shifted away from a zero-sum game. Secondly, economies are no longer overwhelmingly autarkic, instead having become increasingly interconnected by specialization, scale, and exchange. Consequently, foreign devastation potentially depressed the entire system and was thus detrimental to a state’s own wellbeing. This reality, already noted by Mill (1848/1961: 582), starkly manifested itself after World War I, as Keynes (1920) had anticipated in his criticism of the reparations imposed on Germany. Thirdly, greater economic openness has decreased the likelihood of war by disassociating economic access from the confines of political borders and sovereignty. It is no longer necessary to politically possess a territory in order benefit from it. Of the above three factors, the second one – commercial interdependence – has attracted most of the attention in the literature. But the other two factors have been no less significant. Thus, the greater the yield of competitive economic cooperation, the more counterproductive and less attractive conflict becomes. Rather than war becoming more costly, as is widely believed, it is in fact peace that has been growing more profitable. Referring to my argument in this regard, Levy & Thompson (2011: 72–75) excused themselves from deciding on the issue on the grounds of insufficient information regarding the cost of premodern war. But as already noted, the information on the subject is quite clear.

#### Latin America proves anti-neoliberal movements need specific political proposals – the alt alone is doomed to failure

Sader, 8 – PhD Poli Sci Univ of Sau Paolo (Emir, THE WEAKEST LINK? Neoliberalism in Latin America New Left Review 52, July-August 2008 <http://newleftreview.org/II/52/emir-sader-the-weakest-link-neoliberalism-in-latin-america>)

The **entire framework of political and ideological struggle in Latin America** has thus been remodelled under neoliberal hegemony. The radical reversal of the balance of power imposed by the dictatorships of the preceding decades was further reinforced by the new world order. The abandonment of popular forces by former nationalist or social-democratic allies, together with the harsh social consequences of free-market economics, have propelled social movements into the forefront of the resistance to neoliberalism—the third and latest strategy from below. The Zapatistas, the landless peasant movement (MST) in Brazil, the indigenist movements of Bolivia and Ecuador, the piqueteros or unemployed workers’ activists in Argentina—these are just some of the groups that have pioneered the new militancy. They have resisted to the best of their ability while neoliberalism stripped the state of its functions, pushed through the wholesale privatization of public enterprises and expropriated rights to formal employment, health and education. Opposition to NAFTA was the central plank of the Zapatista platform unveiled in 1994. Landless peasants in Brazil have taken action against sell-offs, and the resistance to water privatization in Cochabamba in 2000 was the starting point for a remarkable new phase in the history of the Bolivian left. Something similar took place in Ecuador, where indigenist movements demonstrated their power of veto against two neoliberal administrations—under Abdalá Bucaram in 1997 and Jamil Mahuad in 2001—forcing both presidents from office. Later mobilizations, this time led by urban movements formed to defend citizens’ rights, overthrew a third government, that of Lucio Gutiérrez, in 2005. The difficulties experienced by the neoliberal model itself in Mexico, Brazil and Argentina, combined with the pressure of popular resistance to it, opened the door to a new phase, in which the left camp formulated urgent alternatives in the context of the crisis of hegemony across the continent. This posed dilemmas to which some movements responded positively, whereas others held back. A common position among the latter was to use their critiques of the traditional left, the neoliberal state and standard political practices to justify a sweeping repudiation of parties, state and politics in general, taking refuge in what they called ‘the autonomy of social movements’. At a time when neoliberalism was sharpening its assault on the state, in favour of the market; on politics, in favour of economics; and on political parties, in favour of corporations, a certain ambiguity crept into the distinction between movements that championed the ‘social’ dimension to the detriment of politics, parties and states, and those same neoliberal arguments. A new tendency arose within the left or the overall **resistance to neoliberalism, embodied in social movements and NGOs, and articulated around the dichotomy of ‘state versus civil society’**. The World Social Forum reinforced this tendency by welcoming social movements and NGOs but remaining closed to political parties, arguing that this space belonged to civil society. There are two main problems with this position. Firstly, it blurs the boundaries with neoliberal discourse, since as we pointed out above, the latter likewise regards the state and party politics as its great enemies. Secondly, given that neoliberalism is characterized by the wholesale expropriation of rights, **it can only be overcome in the political sphere**: through the universalization of rights enacted by the governing authority of the state. **Otherwise, the struggle against neoliberalism would remain perpetually on the defensive, having discarded the political instruments necessary for its own realization**. **Some movements have remained trapped in this paradox, ostensibly embodying hubs of resistance yet unable to move forward into challenging neoliberal hegemony, via a fresh articulation of the social with the political. Their critique of the state is subordinated to the terms of the theoretical discourse of neoliberalism, structured around the polarization of state versus private.** This polarity is designed to demonize the state, take control of the private sphere (in which market relations are embedded) and abolish the indispensable framework for the democratization and defeat of neoliberalism: the public sphere. The real polarization is between the public sphere and the market sphere, in that the neoliberal project is committed to the infinite extension of market relations, whereas the state is not so much a pole as a space of hegemonic dispute between the two spheres. The construction of an anti-neoliberal alternative must begin with the reorganization or recasting of the state in favour of the public sphere, universalizing citizens’ rights while divorcing the state and general social relationships from the market. To democratize means to de-marketize, to recuperate for the terrain of people’s rights that which neoliberalism has delivered into the hands of the market. Limiting the field of action to the ‘social’ as opposed to the ‘political’, proclaiming the autonomy of social movements as a principle, means condemning oneself to impotence, and ultimately to defeat. The cases of Bolivia, Ecuador and Argentina provide instructive examples of these alternatives. In Bolivia, the new left was constructed upon a critique of the blind economism of the traditional left, which classified indigenous peoples solely as campesinos—peasants—because their means of subsistence could be defined as small-scale rural production. This economism had robbed the Aymara, Quechua and Guaraní peoples of their deep and ancient identity. The new critique—explicitly voiced by Alvaro García Linera, current vice-president of Bolivia—empowered the construction of a new political subject: the indigenous movement. In alliance with other social forces, the movement went on to found the MAS—Movimiento al Socialismo—in order to unite the forces built up since 2000 towards effective action in the political sphere and hegemony at the national level, through the candidacy and presidency of Evo Morales. Since 2000 and leading up to Evo’s election six years later, the militant activism of indigenous movements succeeded in preventing the privatization of the water supply that was to be exploited by a French company, and overthrew the neoliberal governments of Sánchez de Lozada and of his vice-president Carlos Mesa. Morales was elected on a platform that pledged to nationalize natural resources, undertake agrarian reform and convene a Constituent Assembly, charged with redefining Bolivia as a multinational, multi-ethnic, multicultural state. The indigenous movement progressed from specific issues—such as water—through a struggle against the national government, to the creation of a party rooted in social movements, and finally to the construction of an alternative anti-neoliberal project for Bolivia to be implemented by a state re-founded on new lines. Similar events took place in Ecuador, where the resistance to neoliberalism spearheaded by indigenous movements brought down two governments. Movements such as Pachakutik and CONAIE now placed their trust in a military man, Lucio Gutiérrez, who had played a role in the fall of the second government and participated in the World Social Forum at Porto Alegre; there were to be several indigenous representatives in his cabinet. But even before taking office, Gutiérrez travelled to Washington to sign agreements with the Bush Administration, betraying his campaign pledges on economic policy and the military base at Manta, where US troops were stationed. The indigenous movements withdrew their support and pulled out of the government, but they were divided. Some leaders remained loyal to Gutiérrez until the end, and the indigenous forces were so weakened by the process that they played little part in the 2005 uprisings that led to his fall, which was the work mostly of urban movements. During the 2006 presidential election, the left was represented by Rafael Correa, a young Christian economist who had briefly served in the government of Gutiérrez’s vice-president and campaigned on an anti-neoliberal platform which presented itself as the political continuation of all the grass-roots mobilizations of recent years. At first the indigenous movements did not stir, mistrustful of institutional participation after their experiences in the Constituent Assembly and Gutiérrez’s government. When they finally fielded a candidate in the shape of their leader, Luis Macas, the space of the left was already occupied by Correa and his largely urban followers, although Correa also attracted the support of the indigenous population. The movement in Ecuador proved unable to transcend the dilemma between the ‘autonomy of the social’ and the need to reconnect with the political sphere, remaining split between three options: the traditional form of supporting and participating in governments; withdrawal from the institutional political fray; and the belated fielding of an assertive but isolated candidate who took only 2 per cent of the vote. And so a movement with an extraordinary history failed to progress from the path of pure resistance to that of the construction of alternatives, and found itself excluded when the time came to plan for post-neoliberalism. In Bolivia, by contrast, indigenous movements did prove equal to making this transition. The foundation of MAS and the candidacy of its leader, Evo Morales, expressed a new way of linking social movements to the political sphere. Evo continued as president of the Coca Growers’ Federation of Cochabamba, his native province, at the same time as he became the leading candidate of the Bolivian left and won election as President of the Republic. This achievement is a milestone in the history of the Latin American left, and more specifically in the history of anti- and post-neoliberal struggles. The piqueteros of Argentina also illustrate the dilemma facing the new movements. These groups sprang to prominence during the terminal crisis of peso–dollar parity—an extreme and radical example of financial neoliberalism—by organizing mass demonstrations and road blocks, attracting many who had been pauperized by the effects of the currency peg. There was also a proliferation of factory takeovers, in which workers successfully rescued concerns that had been abandoned or closed by their proprietors. This early conflict with the De la Rúa government—which had inherited the dollar-parity policy from the Menem administration, and stuck with it until it blew up in their faces—marked the beginning of the deepest crisis ever faced by the Argentine state. In December 2001, after angry demonstrations against his government, De la Rúa fled from the Casa Rosada in a helicopter. Over the following days, several more presidents came and went. The bankruptcy of the economic model was obvious, and the possibility of a non-neoliberal government openly discussed. When new elections were called, Carlos Menem came up with an even more radical proposal: full dollarization of the Argentine economy. This would imply severing the country from processes of regional integration, which might not have recovered from the blow, and would also be damaged by Menem’s plan to boost US free-trade ambitions by signing a bilateral treaty between the two countries. Faced with this crisis of hegemony for the traditional political parties—the Partido Radical in disarray after De la Rúa’s resignation, the Peronists bitterly divided—the social movements coined the famous slogan, ¡Que se vayan todos!: Out with the lot of them! This amounted to a refusal to take part in the electoral process, yet without suggesting any way in which power might be rethought or reorganized. It was a quintessential expression of the ‘autonomy of social movements’, disdainful of politics but lacking any alternatives. From a position of strength, one can indeed get rid of ‘the lot of them’. Without organized political forces, the slogan is **merely a way to bow out from the fight for an alternative hegemony.** In the Argentine case, this enabled Menem to win the first electoral round in 2002 and a relatively obscure provincial governor, Néstor Kirchner, to win the second. Kirchner set out to project, from within Peronism, the image of a moderate alternative to Menem in the mould of Lula or Tabaré Vázquez. Thus the crisis of hegemony was overcome. Kirchner capitalized on the fury of the streets, and the contempt for the Menem and De la Rúa governments. From a centre-left position, he set about repairing the cracks in state legitimacy and winning over many sectors of the piqueteros, whose more radical wings were thus isolated and weakened. In all these instances, the notion of the autonomy of the social served not to help the regrouping of mass forces intent on organizing new forms of political action, nor as a way to construct alternative forms of power, but rather as a refusal to confront the issue of power. The clearest theoretical expositions of such tendencies are to be found in the works of Toni Negri and John Holloway. They argue explicitly for the abandonment of power, of the political sphere, on grounds that power corrupts everything since its forms of representing the popular will are intrinsically tainted and distorting; the will of the people can only be legitimately represented within the social sphere. Furthermore, Negri portrays the state as a conservative brake on globalization. Yet neither makes any attempt to construct concrete anti-neoliberal strategies; their prescriptions lead only to the inertia of the social movements. The WSF, for its part, made the need to regulate flows of finance capital one of its founding theses; yet this can only take place—as, for example, in the case of Venezuela—through state action.

#### Only neoliberalism enables innovation – solves the environment and decreases poverty

Lomborg 11

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Climate alarmists and campaigning environmentalists argue that the industrialized countries of the world have made sizable withdrawals on nature’s fixed allowance, and unless we change our ways, and soon, we are doomed to an abrupt end. Take the recent proclamation from the United Nations Environment Program, which argued that governments should dramatically cut back on the use of resources. The mantra has become commonplace: our current way of living is selfish and unsustainable. We are wrecking the world. We are gobbling up the last resources. We are cutting down the rainforest. We are polluting the water. We are polluting the air. We are killing plants and animals, destroying the ozone layer, burning the world through our addiction to fossil fuels, and leaving a devastated planet for future generations. In other words, humanity is doomed. It is a compelling story, no doubt. **It is also fundamentally wrong**, and the consequences are severe. Tragically, exaggerated environmental worries—and the willingness of so many to believe them—could ultimately prevent us from finding smarter ways to actually help our planet and ensure the health of the environment for future generations. Because, our fears notwithstanding, we actually get smarter. Although Westerners were once reliant on whale oil for lighting, we never actually ran out of whales. Why? High demand and rising prices for whale oil spurred a search for and investment in the 19th-century version of alternative energy. First, kerosene from petroleum replaced whale oil. We didn’t run out of kerosene, either: electricity supplanted it because it was a superior way to light our planet. For generations, we have consistently underestimated our capacity for innovation. There was a time when we worried that all of London would be covered with horse manure because of the increasing use of horse-drawn carriages. Thanks to the invention of the car, London has 7 million inhabitants today. Dung disaster averted. In fact, would-be catastrophes have regularly been pushed aside throughout human history, and so often because of innovation and technological development. We never just continue to do the same old thing. We innovate and avoid the anticipated problems. Think of the whales, and then think of the debate over cutting emissions today. Instead of singlemindedly trying to force people to do without carbon-emitting fuels, we must recognize that we won’t make any real progress in cutting CO2 emissions until we can create affordable, efficient alternatives. We are far from that point today: much-hyped technologies such as wind and solar energy remain very expensive and inefficient compared with cheap fossil fuels. Globally, wind provides just 0.3 percent of our energy, and solar a minuscule 0.1 percent. Current technology is so inefficient that, to take just one example, if we were serious about wind power, we would have to blanket most countries with wind turbines to generate enough energy for everybody, and we would still have the massive problem of storage. We don’t know what to do when the wind doesn’t blow. Making the necessary breakthroughs will require mass improvements across many technologies. The sustainable response to global warming, then, is one that sees us get much more serious about investment into alternative-energy research and development. This has a much greater likelihood of leaving future generations at least the same opportunities as we have today. Because what, exactly, is sustainability? Fourteen years ago, the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development report “Our Common Future,” chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, provided the most-quoted definition. Sustainable development “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The measure of success, then, is whether or not we give future generations the same opportunities that we have had. This prompts the question: have we lived unsustainably in the past? In fact, by almost any measure, humans have left a legacy of increased opportunity for their descendants. And this is true not just for the rich world but also for developing countries. In the last couple of hundred years we have become much richer than in all previous history. Available production per capita—the amount that an average individual can consume—increased eightfold between 1800 and 2000. In the past six decades, poverty has fallen more than in the previous 500 years. This decade alone, China will by itself lift 200 million individuals out of poverty. While one in every two people in the developing world was poor just 25 years ago, today it is one in four. Although much remains to be done, developing countries have become much more affluent, with a fivefold increase in real per capita income between 1950 and today. But it’s not just about money. The world has generally become a much better educated place, too. Illiteracy in the developing world has fallen from about 75 percent for the people born in the early part of the 1900s to about 12 percent among the young of today. More and more people have gained access to clean water and sanitation, improving health and income. And according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, the percentage of undernourished people in the developing world has dropped from more than 50 percent in 1950 to 16 percent today. As humans have become richer and more educated, we have been able to enjoy more leisure time. In most developed countries, where there are available data, yearly working hours have fallen drastically since the end of the 19th century: today we work only about half as much as we did then. Over the last 30 years or so, total free time for men and women has increased, thanks to reductions in workload and housework. Globally, life expectancy today is 69. Compare this with an average life span of 52 in 1960, or of about 30 in 1900. Advances in public health and technological innovation have dramatically lengthened our lives. We have consistently achieved these remarkable developments by focusing on technological innovation and investment designed to create a richer future. And while major challenges remain, the future appears to hold great promise, too. The U.N. estimates that over this century, the planet’s human inhabitants will become 14 times richer and the average person in the developing world a whopping 24 times richer. By the end of the century, the U.N. estimates we will live to be 85 on average, and virtually everyone will read, write, and have access to food, water, and sanitation. That’s not too shabby. Rather than celebrating this amazing progress, many find it distasteful. Instead of acknowledging and learning from it, we bathe ourselves in guilt, fretting about our supposed unsustainable lives. Certainly many argue that while the past may have improved, surely it doesn’t matter for the future, because we are destroying the environment! But not so fast. In recent decades, air quality in wealthy countries has vastly improved. In virtually every developed country, the air is more breathable and the water is more drinkable than they were in 1970. London, renowned for centuries for its infamous smog and severe pollution, today has the cleanest air that it has had since the Middle Ages. Today, some of the most polluted places in the world are the megacities of the developing world, such as Beijing, New Delhi, and Mexico City. But remember what happened in developed countries. Over a period of several hundred years, increasing incomes were matched by increasing pollution. In the 1930s and 1940s, London was more polluted than Beijing, New Delhi, or Mexico City are today. Eventually, with increased affluence, developed countries gradually were better able to afford a cleaner environment. That is happening already today in some of the richest developing countries: air-pollution levels in Mexico City have been dropping precisely because of better technology and more wealth. Though air pollution is by far the most menacing for humans, water quality has similarly been getting better. Forests, too, are regrowing in rich countries, though still being lost in poor places where slash-and-burn is preferable to starvation.

### 2AC – Syria Strike Good DA (LT)

#### Syrian legislation won’t pass

Sherman and Bresnahan, 9/5

Jake Sherman and John Brenahan, “President Obama could lose big on Syria in House,” 9/5/13, <http://www.politico.com/story/2013/09/obama-syria-house-vote-96347.html>

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“Obama’s political capital spreads thin,” 9/4/13, http://www.politico.com/story/2013/09/obamas-political-capital-spreads-thin-96306.html

If the House voted today on a resolution to attack Syria, President Barack Obama would lose — and lose big. That’s the private assessment of House Republican and Democratic lawmakers and aides who are closely involved in the process. If the Senate passes a use-of-force resolution next week — which is no sure thing — the current dynamics suggest that the House would defeat it. That would represent a dramatic failure for Obama, and once again prove that his sway over Congress is extraordinarily limited. The loss would have serious reverberations throughout the next three months, when Obama faces off against Congress in a series of high-stakes fiscal battles. (VIDEO: VandeHei, Allen analysis on Syria situation) Several Republican leadership aides, who are counting votes but not encouraging a position, say that there are roughly one to two dozen “yes” votes in favor of military action at this time. The stunningly low number is expected to grow a bit. But senior aides say they expect, at most, between 50 and 60 Republicans to vote with Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) and Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.), who support the president’s plan to bomb Syria to stop Bashar Assad from using chemical weapons on his people. That would amount to less than one-third of the House Republican Conference. That would mean the vast majority of the 200 House Democrats will need to vote with Obama for the resolution to pass. But Democrats privately say that Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) can only round up between 115 and 130 “yes” votes. (Also on POLITICO: Pelosi enforcers wobble on Syria) High-level congressional sources believe there is some time — but not much — for Obama, Boehner and Pelosi to turn things around. But any vote to authorize an attack on Syria will be extraordinarily close, according to people in both parties with direct knowledge of the political dynamics in the House Republican Conference and Democratic Caucus. Boehner and Cantor back the president’s plan for “limited, proportional” strikes in Syria. Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) is not convinced it’s the right decision. McCarthy’s calculus seems to be more in line with many House Republicans — he has spoken to many of his allies in the last week, and the support for a U.S. strike on Syria is incredibly low, sources familiar with those discussions says say. House leaders plan to takes up the Syria resolution only if it passes the Senate first.

#### Economic engagement with LA is popular – top priority for Boehner, Republicans view it as a means to check Iran

Palmer, 13 (Doug Palmer, writer for Reuters- Reuters is an international intelligence agency based in London. May 8, 2013. “Top Republican Urges deeper engagement in Latin America.” http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/08/us-usa-trade-boehner-idUSBRE84718520120508)

(Reuters) - The Congress' top Republican called on Tuesday for deeper economic engagement with Latin America as a bulwark against Iran's attempt to gain influence in the region and the destabilizing effects of international drug cartels. "The best defense against an expansion of Iranian influence in Latin America - and against the destructive aspirations of international criminals in the region - is for the United States to double down on a policy of direct engagement," U.S. House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner said at the State Department. "We must be clear that we will be there, with our friends and partners in the region, committed to fighting and winning the war for a free, stable, and prosperous hemisphere," Boehner said in a speech to the Council of Americas, which represents companies that do business in Latin America. Boehner said Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's visits to [Venezuela](http://www.reuters.com/places/venezuela?lc=int_mb_1001), Cuba, Nicaragua and Ecuador this year "underscored the designs Iran has for expanding its influence in Latin America, and its eagerness to forge [bonds](http://www.reuters.com/finance/bonds?lc=int_mb_1001) with governments in the Western Hemisphere that have demonstrated a lesser interest in freedom and democracy." Iran's attempt to gain influence was one of three "major threats" facing Latin America, Boehner said, along with the violence caused by drug trafficking and the possibility of the United States losing interest in the region. "The threat of U.S. disengagement is the most serious of the three threats I have identified because if it occurs, the other two threats will multiply exponentially," he said. Boehner called for a re-energized "Plan Colombia" program, referring to the billions of dollars in military aid the United States has poured into the country. "Colombia still has the second largest insurgency in the world, and we need to take seriously the threat it still poses to the people of Colombia and to the region," he said. Boehner received an award from the group for his work last year on winning congressional approval of free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea. The pacts were negotiated during the Republican administration of President George W. Bush. But President [Barack Obama](http://www.reuters.com/people/barack-obama?lc=int_mb_1001), a Democrat, did not submit the agreements to Congress until October 2011, after negotiating changes to make them more palatable to Democrats and securing a commitment for renewal of a worker retraining program known as trade adjustment assistance. Boehner called the upcoming entry-into-force of the U.S-Colombia agreement on May 15 "an important moment for the prosperity" of the Western Hemisphere and said it was vital the Panama agreement be fully implemented in the months ahead. He said it was important the United States "keep the momentum going" by negotiating new agreements to open markets to American exports. He expressed disappointment that Obama has not sought legislation known as "Trade Promotion Authority" which would help the White House do that. In an apparent reference to Argentina's expropriation of Spanish oil giant Repsol's subsidiary YPF and the billions in unpaid debt obligations the country still owes foreign investors, Boehner said the United States "must also be clear about what we expect from all of our neighbors." "We will insist that every nation honor the rule of law, meet its obligations, and respect international norms. That means paying debts to bondholders, honoring legal commitments and the decisions made by international arbiters, and respecting private property," he said. "Some governments in the region have demonstrated an alarming willingness to drift away from such norms when it suits their objectives. When this occurs, it's harmful not only to the people of those countries, but to the potential of all of the Americas. And it cannot be excused."

#### Presidential leadership’s irrelevant – ideology, institutional roadblocks, constituencies

Jacobs and King 10

Lawrence Jacobs and Desmond King 10, University of Minnesota, Nuffield College, 8-2010 “Varieties of Obamaism: Structure, Agency, and the Obama Presidency,” Perspectives on Politics, 793-802

But personality is not a solid foundation for a persuasive explanation of presidential impact and the shortfalls or accomplishments of Obama's presidency. Modern presidents have brought divergent individual traits to their jobs and yet they have routinely failed to enact much of their agendas. Preeminent policy goals of Bill Clinton (health reform) and George W. Bush (Social Security privatization) met the same fate, though these presidents' personalities vary widely. And presidents like Jimmy Carter—whose personality traits have been criticized as ill-suited for effective leadership—enjoyed comparable or stronger success in Congress than presidents lauded for their personal knack for leadership—from Lyndon Johnson to Ronald Reagan.7 Indeed, a personalistic account provides little leverage for explaining the disparities in Obama's record—for example why he succeeded legislatively in restructuring health care and higher education, failed in other areas, and often accommodated stakeholders. Decades of rigorous research find that impersonal, structural forces offer the most compelling explanations for presidential impact.8 Quantitative research that compares legislative success and presidential personality finds no overall relationship.9 In his magisterial qualitative and historical study, Stephen Skowronek reveals that institutional dynamics and ideological commitments structure presidential choice and success in ways that trump the personal predilections of individual presidents.10 Findings point to the predominant influence on presidential legislative success of the ideological and partisan composition of Congress, entrenched interests, identities, and institutional design, and a constitutional order that invites multiple and competing lines of authority. The widespread presumption, then, that Obama's personal traits or leadership style account for the obstacles to his policy proposals is called into question by a generation of scholarship on the presidency. Indeed, the presumption is not simply problematic analytically, but practically as well. For the misdiagnosis of the source of presidential weakness may, paradoxically, induce failure by distracting the White House from strategies and tactics where presidents can make a difference. Following a meeting with Obama shortly after Brown's win, one Democratic senator lamented the White House's delusion that a presidential sales pitch will pass health reform—“Just declaring that he's still for it doesn't mean that it comes off life support.”11 Although Obama's re-engagement after the Brown victory did contribute to restarting reform, the senator's comment points to the importance of ideological and partisan coalitions in Congress, organizational combat, institutional roadblocks, and anticipated voter reactions. Presidential sales pitches go only so far.

#### Obama does it anyway

Fox News, 9/6

Fox News, “Obama leaves door open to Syria strike even if congress says no,” 9/6/13

http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2013/09/06/obama-leaves-door-open-to-syria-strike-even-if-congress-says-no/#ixzz2eB7yAzHD

But the White House, in the end, left the door open a crack for the president to proceed with a strike even without congressional approval. "There is no change in our position. As the president has said, he has the authority to act, but his intention is to do so with the approval of the Congress," National Security Council spokeswoman Caitlin Hayden said. The Obama administration has been fuzzy on that question all week. Secretary of State John Kerry has said repeatedly he is not so much as "contemplating" the possibility of Congress rejecting the use-of-force measure, because that scenario would be too "dire." But as the projected "no" votes piled up this week, it has forced the administration to contemplate that scenario more seriously. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid formally introduced the use-of-force resolution on Friday, teeing up a vote for next week. He said he thinks he can round up the 60 votes likely necessary to pass it; but the House is seen as a bigger challenge. In what initially appeared to be a concession to the authority of Congress, Deputy National Security Adviser Tony Blinken said Friday morning that the president did not intend to act without lawmakers' support. "The president of course has the authority to act but it's neither his desire nor his intention to use that authority absent Congress backing him," he said on NPR's "Morning Edition."

#### Winning controversial issues creates a bandwagon effect

Hirsh, 13

Michael Hirsh is chief correspondent for National Journal. He also contributes to 2012 Decoded. Hirsh previously served as the senior editor and national economics correspondent for Newsweek, based in its Washington bureau. He was also Newsweek’s Washington web editor and authored a weekly column for Newsweek.com. (“There’s No Such Thing as Political Capital”, National Journal, 2/7/2013, http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/there-s-no-such-thing-as-political-capital-20130207)

But the abrupt emergence of the immigration and gun-control issues illustrates how suddenly shifts in mood can occur and how political interests can align in new ways just as suddenly. Indeed, the pseudo-concept of political capital masks a larger truth about Washington that is kindergarten simple: You just don’t know what you can do until you try. Or as Ornstein himself once wrote years ago, “Winning wins.” In theory, and in practice, depending on Obama’s handling of any particular issue, even in a polarized time, he could still deliver on a lot of his second-term goals, depending on his skill and the breaks. Unforeseen catalysts can appear, like Newtown. Epiphanies can dawn, such as when many Republican Party leaders suddenly woke up in panic to the huge disparity in the Hispanic vote. Some political scientists who study the elusive calculus of how to pass legislation and run successful presidencies say that political capital is, at best, an empty concept, and that almost nothing in the academic literature successfully quantifies or even defines it. “It can refer to a very abstract thing, like a president’s popularity, but there’s no mechanism there. That makes it kind of useless,” says Richard Bensel, a government professor at Cornell University. Even Ornstein concedes that the calculus is far more complex than the term suggests. Winning on one issue often changes the calculation for the next issue; there is never any known amount of capital. “The idea here is, if an issue comes up where the conventional wisdom is that president is not going to get what he wants, and he gets it, then each time that happens, it changes the calculus of the other actors” Ornstein says. “If they think he’s going to win, they may change positions to get on the winning side. It’s a bandwagon effect.”

### 2AC – Shunning DA

#### Human rights concerns should be weighed pragmatically

Kennedy, 2 (David, Professor of Law at Harvard, Harvard Human Rights Journal, “The International Human Rights Movement: Part of the Problem?” vol. 15, Spring 2002, www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/hrj/iss15/kennedy.shtml)

I. Thinking Pragmatically About Human Rights

My purpose in pulling these concerns together is to encourage other well-meaning legal professionals to adopt a more pragmatic attitude toward human rights. My hope is that we will develop a stronger practice of weighing the costs and benefits of their articulation, institutionalization and enforcement. Of course, the best human rights practitioners are already intensely strategic and practical in thinking about their work. But it is often tempting (for those within and without the movement) to set pragmatic concerns aside, to treat human rights as an object of devotion rather than calculation. And even the most intense practical evaluations of human rights initiatives too often stop short of considering the full range of potential down sides or negative knock on consequences in their enthusiasm to move forward with efforts whose up side potential seems so apparent.

#### Shunning causes injustices – it should be avoided if it will negatively impact oppressed people

Beversluis, 89 (Eric H. April 1989. “On Shunning Undesirable Regimes: Ethics and Economic Sanctions.” Public Affairs Quarterly, April, vol. 3, no. 2)

Finally, shunning can itself **cause injustices**. Should we shun a nation that violates the rights of some or all of its citizens if the burden will fall primarily on those victims? For example, sanctions against South Africa are often rejected on the grounds that they will hurt the South African blacks the most. Yet it is not clear what weight this argument has. Certainly shunning will cause economic hardship for South Africa, hardship which the oppressive regime may well transfer to the black people. But the oppressed people may welcome that additional burden, since it may, as it were, lighten their overall burden by recognizing their plight and their worth (lVtlrde, dignity) as human beings. It may give them the moral encouragement needed to carryon their struggle. Finally, the cries of the black people against apartheid, along with their strikes and boycotts, seem to be evidence that they themselves are willing to make the sacrifices to fight apartheid. In other cases, however, the burden of shunning may in no way help the oppressed people. Then shunning itself would **clearly be unjust** and should not be done; alternative sanctions must be devised which will affect the offending members of the society.

### 2AC – Brazil Negotiations CP

#### “Resolved” doesn’t require immediacy

PTE, 9 (Online Plain Text English Dictionary 2009 http://www.onelook.com/?other=web1913&w=Resolve)

Resolve: “To form a purpose; to make a decision; especially, to determine after reflection; as, to resolve on a better course of life.”

#### Or certainty

Webster’s 9 – Merriam Webster 2009

(http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/resolved)

# Main Entry: 1re·solve # Pronunciation: \ri-zälv, -zolv also -zäv or -zov\ # Function: verb # Inflected Form(s): **re·solved**; re·solv·ing 1 : to become separated into component parts; also : to become reduced by dissolving or analysis 2 : to form a resolution : determine 3 : **consult, deliberate**

#### Neither does should – it’s a persuasive recommendation

Words and Phrases, 2 (“Words and Phrases: Permanent Edition” Vol. 39 Set to Signed. Pub. By Thomson West. P. 370)

Cal.App. 5 Dist. 1976. Term “should,” as used in statutory provision that motion to suppress search warrant should first be heard by magistrate who issued warrant, is used in regular, persuasive sense, as recommendation, and is thus not mandatory but permissive. West’s Ann.Pen Code, § 1538.5(b).---Cuevas v. Superior Court, 130 Cal. Rptr. 238, 58 Cal.App.3d 406 ----Searches 191.

#### **Brazil says no – acting against U.S. interests increases international perceptions that Brazil has leverage**

PBS 12 (Meeting with Obama, and Rousseff to discuss US Brazil Relations, “U.S., Brazil 'Disagree More Than They Agree,' Analyst Says,” April 2012, <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/world/jan-june12/brazil_04-09.html>)

MARGARET WARNER: A country once best known by Americans for postcard-perfect beaches and a passion for the game of soccer, Brazil has emerged as a powerhouse competitor in the global economy, achieving the number six world GDP ranking this year. Along with Russia, India and China, it's part of the so- called BRIC club of rapidly developing economies. Now this country of 200 million, Latin America's largest, is demanding to be taken more seriously on the world political stage as well. And, today, President Dilma Rousseff was given a cordial welcome by President Obama at the White House. PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA: I'm -- feel very fortunate to have such a capable and far-sighted partner as President Rousseff. DILMA ROUSSEFF, President of Brazil (through translator): The U.S.-Brazil bilateral relations are, for Brazil, a very important relationship, not only from a bilateral but also from a multilateral perspective. "Americans and Brazilians love to talk about a strategic relationship. Yet, the U.S. rarely consults with Brazil on the important, global issues." - Peter Hakim, Inter-American Dialogue MARGARET WARNER: But though the hemisphere's two biggest democracies should be natural allies, they often don't see eye to eye. PETER HAKIM, president emeritus, Inter-American Dialogue: It would certainly be hard to say the U.S. and Brazil are adversaries or in conflict, but the fact is, they disagree more than they agree. MARGARET WARNER: Peter Hakim is senior fellow and president emeritus at Inter-American Dialogue in Washington. PETER HAKIM: Americans and Brazilians love to talk about a strategic relationship. Yet, the U.S. rarely consults with Brazil on the important global issues. MARGARET WARNER: That shouldn't be surprising, given Brazil's history of being a thorn in the U.S. side. In 2010, then President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva tried to broker a deal with Turkey on Iran's nuclear program and derail Secretary of State Clinton's push for U.N. sanctions against Tehran. Brazil has staked out positions contrary to Washington's on Cuba, climate change, and the 2009 coup in Honduras as well. PETER HAKIM: Brazil is in many respects still learning what it means to be a global power. And the way it's been successful, ironically, is not by joining with the United States, which would have been one route, but rather in opposition to the United States, that it sort of has gained its international prestige precisely by showing its independence of the United States. MARGARET WARNER: When Dilma Rousseff won Brazil's 2010 presidential election campaign, Washington had high hopes she would be easier to work with than her one-time boss and mentor Lula. The former Marxist-guerrilla-turned-technocrat has been less assertive and flamboyant on the global stage. Noted Eurasia group analyst Joao Augusto de Castro Neves. JOAO AUGUSTO DE CASTRO NEVES, analyst, Eurasia Group: President Dilma's foreign policy is a little bit less rhetorical or ideological than President Lula's, her predecessor, was. I think that in the sense that more risk-averse diplomacy, that more conservative in some sense diplomacy is good for not only relations with Brazil and the United States, but actually for Brazil's goals abroad.

#### Alt cause – Rousseff’s leadership destroys Brazil’s credibility as willing to stand up to the US

Ristovic, 12 – Master’s Student, Public Diplomacy, Annenberg School of Communication, University of Southern California, Research Intern, Center on Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California (Aleksandra, April/May 2012, “Brazil’s Soft Power and Dilma’s Dilemma,” PDiN Monitor Volume 3, Issue 4, Center on Public Diplomacy, University of Southern California, http://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/index.php/pdin\_monitor/article/brazils\_soft\_power\_and\_dilmas\_dilemma/)//Hensel

While Brazil has made great strides in its public diplomacy efforts, the transfer of leadership from Lula to Rousseff has **changed the tone** of the country’s soft power. Under Lula, Brazil’s independent voice was obvious: his charismatic leadership successfully cultivated formal diplomatic ties with every member of the UN General Assembly even while pursuing an independent foreign policy characterized by its non-alignment with Western powers such as the United States. On taking office, it seemed at first that Ms. Rousseff would maintain Lula’s activist foreign policy that sought to play the middleman between Asia, Africa, and the developed world. But after one year, it appears that President Rousseff is more inclined to agree with the U.S. than was her predecessor. This inclination has **weakened Brazil’s image** as a country unafraid to oppose U.S. and European policies when necessary.

**Trade will never collapse**

**Ikenson, 9**

[Daniel, associate director of the Center for Trade Policy Studies at the Cato Institute, “ A Protectionism Fling: Why Tariff Hikes and Other Trade Barriers Will Be Short-Lived,” March 12, 2009, http://www.cato.org/pub\_display.php?pub\_id=10651]

Although some governments will dabble in some degree of protectionism, the combination of a sturdy rules-based system of trade and the economic self interest in being open to participation in the global economy will limit the risk of a protectionist pandemic. According to recent estimates from the International Food Policy Research Institute, if all WTO members were to raise all of their applied tariffs to the maximum bound rates, the average global rate of duty would double and the value of global trade would decline by 7.7 percent over five years.8 That would be a substantial decline relative to the 5.5 percent annual rate of trade growth experienced this decade.9

But, to put that 7.7 percent decline in historical perspective, the value of global trade declined by 66 percent between 1929 and 1934, a period mostly in the wake of Smoot Hawley's passage in 1930.10 So the potential downside today from what Bergsten calls "legal protectionism" is actually not that "massive," even if all WTO members raised all of their tariffs to the highest permissible rates.

If most developing countries raised their tariffs to their bound rates, there would be an adverse impact on the countries that raise barriers and on their most important trade partners. But most developing countries that have room to backslide (i.e., not China) are not major importers, and thus the impact on global trade flows would not be that significant. OECD countries and China account for the top twothirds of global import value.11 Backsliding from India, Indonesia, and Argentina (who collectively account for 2.4 percent of global imports) is not going to be the spark that ignites a global trade war. Nevertheless, governments are keenly aware of the events that transpired in the 1930s, and have made various pledges to avoid protectionist measures in combating the current economic situation.

In the United States, after President Obama publicly registered his concern that the "Buy American" provision in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act might be perceived as protectionist or could incite a trade war, Congress agreed to revise the legislation to stipulate that the Buy American provision "be applied in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements." In early February, China's vice commerce minister, Jiang Zengwei, announced that China would not include "Buy China" provisions in its own $586 billion stimulus bill.12

But even more promising than pledges to avoid trade provocations are actions taken to reduce existing trade barriers. In an effort to "reduce business operating costs, attract and retain foreign investment, raise business productivity, and provide consumers a greater variety and better quality of goods and services at competitive prices," the Mexican government initiated a plan in January to unilaterally reduce tariffs on about 70 percent of the items on its tariff schedule. Those 8,000 items, comprising 20 different industrial sectors, accounted for about half of all Mexican import value in 2007. When the final phase of the plan is implemented on January 1, 2013, the average industrial tariff rate in Mexico will have fallen from 10.4 percent to 4.3 percent.13

And Mexico is not alone. In February, the Brazilian government suspended tariffs entirely on some capital goods imports and reduced to 2 percent duties on a wide variety of machinery and other capital equipment, and on communications and information technology products.14 That decision came on the heels of late-January decision in Brazil to scrap plans for an import licensing program that would have affected 60 percent of the county's imports.15

Meanwhile, on February 27, a new free trade agreement was signed between Australia, New Zealand, and the 10 member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to reduce and ultimately eliminate tariffs on 96 percent of all goods by 2020.

While the media and members of the trade policy community fixate on how various protectionist measures around the world might foreshadow a plunge into the abyss, there is plenty of evidence that governments remain interested in removing barriers to trade. Despite the occasional temptation to indulge discredited policies, there is a growing body of institutional knowledge that when people are free to engage in commerce with one another as they choose, regardless of the nationality or location of the other parties, they can leverage that freedom to accomplish economic outcomes far more impressive than when governments attempt to limit choices through policy constraints.

#### Brazilian influence causes biofuel expansion

Dalgaard, 12 – PhD @ London School of Economics and Political Science; Graduate Teaching Assistant at London School of Economics; Assistant Editor at Royal United Services Institute; Researcher at Brazilian Institute of International Relations; Energy Analyst (Klaus Dalgaard, June 2012, London School of Econmics and Political Science “The energy statecraft of Brazil: promoting biofuels as an instrument of Brazilian foreign policy, 2003-2010” <http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/585/1/Dalgaard_Energy_Statecraft_Brazil_2012.pdf)//JES>

The ‘conditionalist’ approach to the economic statecraft literature in International Relations and Foreign Policy Analysis seeks to establish the conditions under which economic instruments of foreign policy are likely to be effective. This thesis applies these conditions to a specific set of economic instruments of foreign policy, namely energy resources, the use of which is here referred to as ‘energy statecraft’. The conditions for successful implementation of energy resources as an instrument of foreign policy set forth in this study serve as a theoretical framework to test a specific case study of energy statecraft: Brazilian biofuels. The choice of Brazil as the only case study in this thesis is justified by its uniqueness in energy statecraft on two different levels: empirical and theoretical. Empirically, among the relatively few energy-exporting countries that use their energy resources as instruments of their foreign policy, Brazil is the only one that uses biofuels for that purpose, whereas other countries that implement energy statecraft mostly do so with petroleum and/or natural gas. Theoretically, Brazil’s promotion of biofuels to third countries is also unique because it is pursued through soft power – attraction by encouraging emulation of its own successful experience with biofuels – rather than through hard power: bribes or coercion. The case study is also analysed in the context of a decade characterised by energy security concerns, including worries over increasingly scarce traditional energy resources, skyrocketing oil prices, unreliability of conventional energy supplies, and environmental threats. All of these factors have boosted the advancement of biofuels worldwide. Finally, the means through which Brazil pursues its goal of turning ethanol into a global commodity is tested against the conditional criteria set out in the theoretical framework. The thesis concludes that this particular foreign policy strategy has been fruitless, with little progress made towards achieving its goal of ‘commoditizing’ ethanol in the short term, though its long-term prospects seem promising. Theoretically, the strategy’s ineffectiveness is attributed to the international context in which it took place, rather than any inherent characteristic of energy resources as an instrument of foreign policy.

#### That causes ecocide – specifically the Amazon

Specht, 13 – Legal Advisor, Pearlmaker Holsteins, Inc., B.A., LSU (Jonathan, April 24, 2013, Environmental Law and Policy Jounral At U.C. Davis “Raising Cane: Cuban Sugarcane Ethanol’s Economic and Environmental Effects on the United States”, UC Davis, 4-24-13, http://environs.law.ucdavis.edu/issues/36/2/specht.pdf)//JES

The full debate over the environmental consequences of the Brazilian biofuel production111 is largely beyond the scope of this Article. Still, the primary issue in this dispute is worth noting, because it accentuates one of the most significant differences between the U.S. corn-based ethanol industry and the potential Cuban sugarcane-based ethanol industry. In Brazil, the expansion of sugarcane production to meet demand for ethanol production has led to land use changes107 that parallel the expansion of corn production for ethanol in the United States. Clearing portions of the Amazon rainforest — one of the most significant repositories of carbon on Earth112 — would represent an environmental cost of ethanol production that outweighs its benefits. The Amazon region, however, is largely unsuitable for sugarcane production.113 But, sugarcane production is contributing to destruction of another sensitive habitat, the bio-diverse Cerrado savannah region of Brazil.114 Cuban sugarcane-based ethanol would have the environmental benefits of Brazilian sugarcane-based ethanol without its most obvious negative factor, damaging habitat in the Cerrado. The environmental effects of biofuels depend on a number of factors. Whether or not a given type of biofuel is environmentally beneficial “depends on what the fuel is, how and where the biomass was produced, what else the land could have been used for, how the fuel was processed and how it is used.”115 Taken together, these factors point to sugarcane-based ethanol grown in Cuba as one of the most environmentally friendly biofuels possible. The environmental benefits of using sugarcane to produce ethanol are numerous. First, it is much more energy efficient to derive ethanol from sugarcane than corn. Making ethanol from corn only creates approximately 1.3 times the amount of energy used to produce it, but making ethanol from sugarcane creates approximately eight times the amount of energy used to produce it.116 Second, unlike much of the corn presently grown in Great Plains states, sugarcane grown in Latin America does not need to be irrigated.117 Third, sugarcane requires relatively small amounts of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides.118 Fourth, whereas most U.S. ethanol refineries are powered by coal or natural gas,119 sugarcane ethanol refineries can be powered by bagasse, a natural product left over from the sugar refining process.120 In fact, refineries powered with bagasse can even produce more electricity than they need and sell. Each of these factors in favor of sugarcane ethanol is true of ethanol from Brazil as well as of any potential ethanol from Cuba. However, there are additional environmental factors that clinch Cuban sugarcane-based ethanol as one of the most environmentally friendly fuel sources available to the United States under current technology.123 First, because Cuba is closer to the United States, transporting ethanol from Cuba to the United States would require less energy than transporting ethanol from Brazil to the United States (especially if it is used in Florida, an option further explored in the section on economic effects).124

#### Extinction

Walsh, 12 senior writer for TIME magazine, covering energy and the environment; graduate @ Princeton University; (Bryan, TIME Magazine, “Amazonia: What’s Happening to the World’s Biggest Rain Forest?”, http://science.time.com/2012/01/18/amazonia-whats-happening-to-the-worlds-biggest-rain-forest/)//JES

I’d say you have to see the Amazon for yourself to understand how vast it is, but I’ve been there—and even I can’t imagine it. The rain forest is more than 2 million sq. miles—two-thirds the size of the continental United States—and the river system of the gigantic basin produces 20% of the world’s freshwater discharge. The forest holds 100 billion metric tons of carbon—equivalent to more than 10 years’ worth of global fossil-fuel emissions. And the Amazon is the global capital of wildlife biodiversity, with more species calling the forest and rivers home than scientists could ever hope to name. **It’s safe to say that as the Amazon goes, so goes the planet**

**MARKED**

**’s environment.** The problem is that the Amazon is anything but secure. As Amazon basin nations like Brazil have grown economically, they’ve moved to cut down the forest, making room for agriculture. (Which, it should be noted, is exactly what Americans did to their own once vast Eastern forests.) The human population in the Brazilian Amazon has grown from 6 million in 1960 to 25 million in 2010, while forest cover has declined to about 80% of its original area. Deforestation rates have slowed in recent years, but as a new review in this week’s Nature shows, the Amazon basin is changing, under pressure from natural variability in the weather, drought, global warming and deforestation. The question remains: just how resilient is the Amazon? MORE: Rain Forest for Ransom From the Nature article, written by Eric Davidson of the Woods Hole Research Center and his colleagues: Although the basin-wide carbon balance remains uncertain, evidence is emerging for a directional change from a possible sink towards a possible source. Where deforestation is widespread at local and regional scales, the dry season duration is lengthening and wet season discharge is increasing. We show that the forest is resilient to considerable natural climatic variation, but global and regional climate change forcings interact with land-use change, logging and fire in complex ways, generally leading to forest ecosystems that are increasingly vulnerable to degradation. Specifically, researchers worry about Climate and weather change: Drought is a fact of life, even in the ultra-wet Amazon. The El Niño effect can produce lengthy droughts, while the corresponding La Niña effect can lead to increased flow and even flooding. The Nature paper notes that the intact Amazon forest—with its deep roots that can access soil water—is resistant to normal seasonal droughts, but that the transitional forests and Cerrado (the tropical savannah) are much more vulnerable. But even the existing forest may find it difficult to withstand lengthy droughts of the sort that may become more common with climate change—the severe 2005 drought in the southwestern Amazon resulted in the loss of several tons of living tree biomass carbon per hectare. Deforestation and land-use change: It’s not quite true that the Amazon is being clear cut—as the Nature paper describes, more small land holders in the Amazon, even farmers, keep mature or secondary forests on more than half of their land. Much of the forest that’s being lost is being converted to cropland for soybeans—Brazil is a major producer—as well as pastureland for cattle. Still, attempts to curb deforestation in the Amazon appear to be working—forest clearing has fallen from about 11,000 sq. miles a year in 2004 to less than 3,000 sq. miles a year in 2011. But if deforestation continues, it could change the very climate of the Amazon, resulting in less precipitation over the region. There are even models that suggest that deforestation exceeds 40% of the Amazon basin, a tipping point could be reached that would vastly reduce precipitation and result in a forest “dieback.” That would be bad. Forest fire: It’s no surprise that drought increases forest fire in the Amazon—about 15,000 sq. miles of forest burned during the El Nino-influenced drought of 1998. But as fires become more common, they can reduce rainfall (because of the action of the smoke in the atmosphere) and retard forest regrowth. Fires keep the Amazon from bouncing back. Greenhouse gases: Right now the Amazon is a major carbon sink, sucking up and storing some of the greenhouse gases we emit—gases that would otherwise accelerate the warming of the atmosphere. Disturb the Amazon—as we’re doing—and the system may become less efficient at storing that carbon, thus speeding climate change. The good news here is that studies indicate that the mature, intact Amazon forest is still accumulating carbon. But as the forest is disturbed, it causes a net loss for carbon, and the Amazon goes from being an ally to an enemy in the fight against warming. The conclusion here is the Amazon is an unimaginably complex system, once that needs more systematic study before we can know what’s really happening within the forest. But it would be better to understand that now—instead of waiting to see the consequences of change.

## 1AR

### 1AR – Say Yes

#### Their argument is too general – oil is distinct for Maduro

**Neuman & Thompson ‘13**

("A Leader Cries, 'I Am Chavez', as U.S. Seeks Policy Clues", March 6, William and Ginger, www.nytimes.com/2013/03/07/world/americas/a-leaders-cry-in-venezuela-i-am-chavez.html?pagewanted=all)

Among oil executives and analysts, **there was cautious optimism that Mr. Chávez’s death could soften the hostility his government had toward foreign investment in exploration and refining**. “It makes sense that **Maduro will be more pragmatic to get the country going,” said Jorge R. Piñon, former president of Amoco Oil Latin America**. He said he had talked with several oil executives and come away surprised by their optimism.

“**Industry executives believe that there is a high probability that a Maduro administration will be** a bit more **realistic on** what is needed to increase **the country’s oil production**,” Mr. Piñon added, “**and change the investment model to attract more foreign investment.”**

### 1AR – Politics

### UQ

#### **Congress won’t authorize the strike – multiple reasons**

Ornstein 9/1 (Norm Ornstein, resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, PhD from the University of Michigan, member of the Advisory Board of the Future of American Democracy Foundation, serves on the Advisory Board of the Institute for Law and Politics at the University of Minnesota Law School, member of the Board of Directors of the nonpartisan election reform group Why Tuesday?, one of Foreign Policy’s Top 100 Global Thinkers of 2012, 9-1-13, “Showdowns and Shutdowns,” <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/09/01/showdowns_and_shutdowns_syria_congress_obama>) gz

For several reasons, however, this time is much dicier. One, Congress and the country are war weary after far more than a decade of debilitating conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and skeptical, if not cynical, about any promises to keep the next one very limited. Two, there is a new and powerful bipartisan coalition developing on foreign and national security policy, pairing liberal Democrats and Tea Party Republicans who are want deep cuts in defense spending, a serious curtailment of aggressive intelligence gathering, and a retrenchment of American power and involvement abroad.¶ ¶ But there are two other reasons that spell even more serious trouble for the president. First is the deep and growing tribalism that has taken over American politics -- leaving foreign and national security policy practically the only areas where there is a bipartisan coalition, but in this case the wrong one. That may combine in a toxic fashion with the almost-uncontrollable desire by a large number of Republicans to oppose the president no matter what, undermine his policies, sabotage the laws enacted during his tenure, and inflict failure on him wherever possible. If that sentiment prevails for only a sliver of Republican lawmakers who otherwise might accept the resolution, it is trouble.¶ ¶ Then there is the overload of business on the congressional agenda when the two houses return on Sept. 9 -- with only nine legislative days scheduled for action in the month. We have serious confrontations ahead on spending bills and the debt limit, as the new fiscal year begins on Oct. 1 and the debt ceiling approaches just a week or two thereafter. Before the news that we would drop everything for an intense debate on whether to strike militarily in Syria, Congress-watchers were wondering how we could possibly deal with the intense bargaining required to avoid one or more government shutdowns and/or a real breach of the debt ceiling, with devastating consequences for American credibility and the international economy.¶ ¶ Beyond the deep policy and political divisions, Republican congressional leaders will likely use both a shutdown and the debt ceiling as hostages to force the president to cave on their demands for deeper spending cuts. Avoiding this end-game bargaining will require the unwavering attention of the same top leaders in the executive and legislative branches who will be deeply enmeshed in the Syria debate. The possibility -- even probability -- of disruptions caused by partial shutdowns could complicate any military actions. The possibility is also great that the rancor that will accompany the showdowns over fiscal policy will bleed over into the debate about America and Syria.

### Link Turn

#### **Boehner is key to Syria**

Today Online, 9/4

“Obama gets top Republican support on Syria strike,” 9/4/2013, (http://www.todayonline.com/world/americas/obama-gets-top-republican-support-syria-strike)//bghs-ms

The top Republican in Congress, House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner, said taking action is something “the United States as a country needs to do”. Mr Boehner emerged from a meeting at the White House and said the United States has “enemies around the world that need to understand that we’re not going to tolerate this type of behaviour”. Mr Obama on Saturday unexpectedly stepped back from ordering a military strike under his own authority and announced he would seek congressional approval. The president urged Congress to hold a prompt vote once it returns from holiday next week. He also tried to assure the public that involvement in Syria will be a “limited, proportional step”. “This is not Iraq, and this is not Afghanistan,” Mr Obama said. He met with top lawmakers hours before he leaves on a three-day trip to Europe, with a visit to Sweden and a G-20 summit in Russia The US says it has proof that the Assad regime is behind sarin gas attacks that Washington claims killed at least 1,429 people, including more than 400 children. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which collects information from a network of anti-regime activists, says it has so far only been able to confirm 502 dead. The Obama administration argues that the US must exert global leadership in retaliating for what apparently was the deadliest use of chemical weapons anywhere over the past 25 years. Mr Boehner’s support is key, but opposition Republicans in Congress do not speak with one voice. Democrats, too, were divided, although it appeared the administration’s biggest concern was winning support among deeply conservative Republicans who have battled with the president on issue after issue since winning control of the House three years ago. And after a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, polls show most Americans opposed to any new military action overseas.

#### Their link arguments assume a Chavez government – his death changed the equation

Spetalnick ‘13

Matt Spetalnick – White House correspondent who has covered news on four continents for Reuters, from Latin American coups and drug wars – Reuter’s – March 6th, 2013 – “Despite new hopes, U.S. treads cautiously after death of Venezuela's Chavez” – http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/03/06/uk-venezuela-chavez-usa-idUKBRE92504920130306

Washington's challenge will be to figure out how far to go in seizing the opening to engage with Venezuelan leaders as well as its political opposition without giving the impression of U.S. meddling following the socialist president's death after a two-year battle with cancer. "We're not interested in having a confrontational relationship with Venezuela," a senior U.S. official told Reuters. "We're going to have to see how things evolve. It's a dynamic period." For Washington, a major test will be whether Venezuela follows its own constitution - which has been widely interpreted to require a special election to pick Chavez's successor - and if such a vote is conducted in a free and fair way in "accordance with hemispheric norms," the official said. Washington had accused Chavez and his allies of electoral abuses, such as intimidating foes and misusing state media during his 14-year rule. Chavez had created headaches for successive U.S. administrations with his strong anti-American rhetoric and his alliances with some of Washington's main foes, including Cuba and Iran. The question now is whether his leftist "revolution" and incendiary foreign policy can live on without his dominant personality at the helm. In a normally divided Washington, Chavez's death brought a rare moment of bipartisan agreement, with Republicans and Democrats alike seeing it as a chance to turn a page after a long period of strained U.S.-Venezuelan ties