# Facebook 1ac

### Advantage 1 is Misinfomation

#### Facebook has created a stagnant social media market—absent antitrust intervention nothing will change:

Fiona M. Scott Morton, & David C. Dinielli, June 2020 (Theodore Nierenberg Professor of Economics at the Yale University School of Management & senior advisor with the beneficial technology team at Omidyar Network, “Roadmap for an Antitrust Case Against Facebook,” <https://www.omidyar.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Roadmap-for-an-Antitrust-Case-Against-Facebook.pdf>, Retrieved 7/28/2021)

This is the narrative we draw from the UK facts: Facebook in its early years competed with a number of other social networks, for example, MySpace and Friendster and Orkut. Facebook in those early years promised users that it would not harvest their personal data. Facebook differentiated itself on this basis and that helped it attract users. Consumers began joining Facebook in increasingly high numbers, which made it an attractive destination for advertisers as well. Facebook’s growth also made it increasingly attractive to publishers, who viewed Facebook as an important distribution platform for their content. Facebook was making money from advertising, but knew it could sell even more advertising, at higher prices, if it could help advertisers serve digital ads that were targeted at the people most likely to buy their products. Therefore, quietly, Facebook began collecting user data without being fully transparent with its users or the public about what it was doing. Facebook also duped publishers into assisting in the data collection by convincing them to install plug-ins that allowed Facebook users to share the publisher content on Facebook. The plug-ins, though, also provided Facebook with a backdoor through which to spy on its users and harvest their data. Facebook was able to grow its base at least in part by deceiving users and others about its data policies. This deception was critical, because it occurred during a time period in which Facebook was growing rapidly. Social networks are subject to something called “tipping,” which results from a characteristic of some markets that economists call “network” effects. A social network becomes more attractive and valuable to new users as more and more of their friends join the same network. If posting on more than one network is a hassle, eventually one network becomes so popular that the market “tips”; small networks are no longer attractive to users, and the winning network essentially controls the whole market. In the UK, and likely in the United States, the social network market has tipped, so that virtually everyone is on Facebook. Facebook also unfairly maintained and increased its power in the social network market. It carried out a series of acquisitions of small and nascent competitors, among them Instagram and WhatsApp (both at significant premiums), in a strategy that appears designed to stave off potential rivals rather than to take advantage of business synergies or efficiencies. It invited application companies such as game developers onto its platform and allowed them to interoperate with Facebook only until those complementary service providers posed competitive threats to its social network business, at which point Facebook disabled the interoperability or purchased them outright. The result is that we now have a stagnant social network market. Facebook’s sites (including Instagram) account for 75% of all user time spent on social networks, and Facebook.com captures roughly one-half of the billions spent annually on digital display advertising. These percentages have been stable for years, but Facebook’s revenues, both in an absolute sense and as a multiple of its costs, are rising. No rival in the last decade has captured more than 5% of the social network market. And because the market is characterized by strong network effects, barriers to entry are high already. Without antitrust or regulatory intervention, it is unlikely that anything is going to change. Facebook can collect monopoly rents, manage the flow of information to most of the nation, and engage in virtually unlimited surveillance into the foreseeable future. We do not address potential remedies in this paper, except to note that, because of the market’s network effects and tendency to tip, remedial measures might need to include mandatory interoperability among competing platforms and complements. Our goal here is not to determine solutions, but rather to examine the UK evidence made public by the CMA and explain how similar evidence in the US might support a finding of liability in a monopolization case here in the US.

#### Lack of competition among social media causes Facebook to incentivize misinformation:

David McLaughlin & Ben Brody, 7/30/2020 (Bloomberg, “Big Tech CEOs Endure Hours of Withering Questions From Congress,” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/on-small-business/big-tech-ceos-endure-hours-of-withering-questions-from-congress/2020/07/29/404522e4-d1fb-11ea-826b-cc394d824e35_story.html>, Retrieved 8/2/2021)

The chief executives of four U.S. technology giants endured withering, rapid-fire questioning for more than five hours from lawmakers who accused their companies of using their power to crush rivals and squash competition. Alphabet Inc.’s Google, Facebook Inc., Apple Inc. and Amazon.com Inc. were criticized for the power they wield over digital markets: Google’s control over internet search and online advertising; Apple’s tight grip over apps; Facebook’s acquisition of rivals; and Amazon’s leverage over third-party sellers. “These companies as they exist today have monopoly power,” said Representative David Cicilline of Rhode Island, who is leading a yearlong House investigation into the companies. “Some need to be broken up, all need to be heavily regulated,” Cicilline said as he adjourned the hearing after it stretched into the evening. ADVERTISING The chief executives of the four companies -- Alphabet’s Sundar Pichai, Facebook’s Mark Zuckerberg, Apple’s Tim Cook and Amazon’s Jeff Bezos -- testified before the House antitrust committee from remote locations. They were unfailingly polite, even though lawmakers frequently cut them off because of a rigorously enforced five-minute rule per member. Lawmakers peppered the executives with questions about specific examples intended to show the companies have thwarted competitive threats. The hearing marked an escalation of antitrust scrutiny in the sector, with the internet platforms, which have a combined value of nearly $5 trillion, already under investigation by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission and the Justice Department. States across the country are also probing Facebook and Google. The testimony and documents produced by the panel could be used to inform those inquiries. The lawmakers uncovered several potentially damning examples of anti-competitive behavior. “It could be a watershed moment,” said Alex Petros, policy counsel of left-leaning think tank Public Knowledge, which advocates for stronger antitrust enforcement. “This could put pressure on both the DOJ and FTC to really conduct full investigations.” Cicilline, who said he expects the committee to complete its report in a month, attacked Pichai over the practices of his Google unit’s search engine, accusing it of stealing content with the goal of keeping users on its site, rather than directing them to other sources on the web. “The evidence seems very clear to me as Google became the gateway to the internet it began to abuse its power,” he said. “It used its surveillance over web traffic to identify competitive threats and crush them.” Any business that wants to be found on the web, he added, “must pay Google a tax.” Wednesday’s session was the first time Bezos has testified before Congress and the hearing marks the first time all four tech leaders have appeared together. Democrats split up their questions to focus on the market power of Google, Facebook, Amazon and Apple, while Republicans largely complained about anticonservative bias at Google and Facebook. Republican Jim Jordan of Ohio cited numerous examples that he said showed tech companies, including Twitter Inc., silencing conservative views. “I’ll just cut to the chase: Big tech is out to get conservatives,” he said. “That’s not a suspicion, that’s not a hunch, that’s a fact.” Jerrold Nadler of New York, the Democrat who chairs the House Judiciary Committee, said documents obtained by the committee showed Facebook bought Instagram in 2012 to “neutralize” an emerging competitor. He asked why Instagram shouldn’t be broken off from Facebook. “Facebook saw Instagram as a threat that could potentially siphon business away from Facebook,” Nadler said. “And so rather than compete with it, Facebook bought it. This is exactly the type of anti-competitive acquisition that the antitrust laws were designed to prevent.” Zuckerberg said Instagram faced many competitors at the time and that Instagram succeeded because of Facebook’s investments. Cicilline also targeted Facebook over content on its platform, saying the company has an incentive to carry misinformation, hate speech and violent content because it drives the most engagement and therefore is more profitable. Zuckerberg disputed that claim, arguing it’s not what users want to see. “Facebook gets away with it because you’re the only game in town,” he said. “There’s no competition forcing you to police your own platform. Allowing this misinformation to spread can lead to violence, and frankly I believe it strikes at the very heart of American democracy.”

#### Misinformation on social media causes people to not get vaccinated:

Young Anna Argyris, 6/15/2021 (College of Communication Arts and Sciences @ MSU, “Ask the Expert: Social media’s impact on vaccine hesitancy,” <https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2021/ask-the-expert-social-medias-impact-on-vaccine-hesitancy>, Retrieved 8/2/2021)

Though COVID-19 vaccines are widely available, many people in the United States have not received the vaccine and don’t plan on getting one. Assistant professor Young Anna Argyris, in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences, sheds light on the data and social media influences behind vaccine hesitancy. How do visuals on social media influence people’s likelihood to get vaccinated? Visuals on social media like memes, videos, photos, posters and emojis are processed faster, accepted without being questioned, and remembered for a longer period than text posts. Especially since the visual often includes a personalized dramatization of vaccine injuries — like an individual having a life-threatening seizure after receiving a vaccine. Since social media has rapidly grown as a source of news, more and more people are obtaining health information from social media. As a result, visual messaging on social media has significant associations with people’s intentions to get vaccinated — not only against COVID-19, but also for other immunizations. Specifically, our latest study has shown that individuals’ engagement with anti-vaccine messages on social media has a negative impact on their intentions to get vaccinated, while their engagement with pro-vaccine messages has no significant association. What propaganda techniques are used by anti-vaccination groups to influence the conversation around vaccines? Is this leading to more vaccine hesitancy? Anti-vaccination groups use all the four propaganda techniques known to be effective in political campaigns. They define the pressing issue as vaccine safety/injuries and inefficacy and blame pharmaceutical companies for “cutting corners” to rapidly produce vaccines. They also make moral judgements by suggesting a coalition between corrupted politicians and profit-driven health care industries and recommend rejecting vaccines as a remedy to this problem. How can we frame the message around vaccines on social media to encourage higher participation in vaccination efforts? Prior studies on health communication have shown the importance of emphasizing the benefits of taking a health behavior rather than portraying the harms of refusing to take the health behavior. Also, focusing on the immediate and personalized benefits have been found more effective than distant, societal benefits. The revised mask mandate by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is in alignment with these findings: Make clear the tangible, immediate and personal benefits of getting COVID-19 vaccines such as, “You can finally take off your masks as long as you get vaccinated!” Conversely, focusing on societal, long-term benefits, such as the creation of herd immunity, has been known to be ineffective for encouraging individuals to take health behaviors. A well-known example of this communication strategy is to encourage safe sex practices during the HIV epidemic. Instead of focusing on the severe consequences of not using those health practices, communication specialists emphasized the benefits of practicing safe sex — you can enjoy your life freely if you practice safe sex. In short, the rhetoric for encouraging immunizations on social media should emphasize immediate and personalized benefits of taking the vaccines, rather than long-term protective or societal benefits. The effectiveness will also magnify if these benefits can be visually framed in photos, videos, memes, and/or posters, for the augmented persuasiveness of visual stimuli than textual narratives. How can social media users tell the difference between high quality vaccination information on social media and propaganda or misinformation? Discerning accurate information from misinformation is a challenge that individuals may not be able to completely resolve. Social media puts us in a bubble called, “Echo chambers” where we are surrounded by like-minded individuals who reinforce our own existing views rather than being challenged by different views. Studies have shown that debiasing individuals especially from anti-vaccine beliefs is an extremely challenging task because health beliefs are deeply ingrained in our cultural backgrounds, political/religious beliefs and lifestyle choices. Thus, it is recommended to prevent populations that are especially vulnerable and susceptible to health misinformation from being exposed to it in the first place. It is essential to suppress the propagation of vaccine misinformation via social media. These solutions can be embedded in tools like fact-checkers installed in our web browsers that warn readers if the information to be presented is likely to be false. One of your projects focused on mothers in particular. What are the challenges mothers face in making decisions about whether to get their children vaccinated for COVID-19? Mothers make over 90% of health decisions for children on their own or jointly with their children and/or partners. In any case, even though the gender roles are changing in this society, mothers still remain the key decision-makers for health-related issues for children. We need to recognize the intensity of stress that mothers feel when they must make decisions that directly affect their children’s well-being. In such emotion-laden circumstances, individuals’ tendency to choose a status quo option — inaction, or refusing to take any action at all — increases disproportionally. So, they end up with the non-decision, “let’s wait and see,” which is manifested in “vaccine hesitancy.” The intense stress that mothers experience when making vaccination decisions is a crucial factor that increases their tendency to delay or deny immunizations for their children. You designed a machine learning algorithm to detect anti-vaccination messages online. Can you tell us a little about how that works? How else could this technology be used? Our deep-learning anti-vaccine detector recognizes multimodal content in social media posts, including text (comments and responses), hashtags and visual elements with 97% of accuracy. To the best of our knowledge, this accuracy has thus far been the highest reported in the literature on anti-vaccine detection. And I dare to say the 97% of accuracy is higher than human’s detection accuracy. In my experience, humans frequently make errors when they must classify thousands of social media posts due to fatigue they experience after many hours of repeating the same classification task. Our algorithm doesn’t get tired. In addition, this algorithm can be easily plugged into a web browser to function as a fact-checker that sends a warning message to the user when they are about to be exposed to vaccine misinformation. What reasons do most people give for not getting vaccinated? Whether based in science or fact, are they sharing these reasons on social media? Anti-vaccine messages have diverse themes, all of which converge to vaccine safety/injuries and the conspiracy theory on the alliance between corrupted politicians/government and the profit-driven pharmaceutical industry. Many of these posts in fact provide statistics, test results and even seemingly tangible evidence to back their claims. These messages are so elaborated and appear to be trustworthy that even most educated individuals can easily fall prey.

#### An increase in vaccinations is critical to stop the spread of Covid and the Delta variant:

Dr. Tom Frieden, 7/23/2021 (director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention during the Obama administration, “Delta is dangerous and spreading -- but vaccination can stop it,” [https://www.cnn.com/ 2021/07/23/health/delta-variant-danger-frieden/index.html](https://www.cnn.com/%202021/07/23/health/delta-variant-danger-frieden/index.html), Retrieved 8/2/2021)

(CNN)I'm hearing from vaccinated people who are frightened about breakthrough cases, the Delta variant and new waves of Covid. But people who are fully vaccinated are not the ones who should be most concerned. As new cases continue to climb almost everywhere, here's what I expect to happen over the coming weeks. Globally, we're far from the end of the pandemic. Delta is at least two times more contagious than the original strain of the virus, which means that it will infect and kill more people. Many countries that have avoided big surges so far don't have access to the vaccines they need to protect their populations. Many of these countries will likely see explosive spread of Covid over the coming weeks and months. Already stressed health systems will become overwhelmed with cases, and many people will get sick and die. But in places with high rates of vaccination, including much of the United States, the worst is over. Though we'll likely also see big increases in US cases, future waves won't be as deadly. That's because 80% of the most vulnerable Americans -- people over age 65 -- are fully vaccinated. Simply put: Fewer vulnerable people means fewer deaths. Whereas the US infection fatality rate before vaccines became available was 1 in 200, that rate could shrink to less than 1 in 500 or even as low as 1 in 1,000 in the coming months because of the strong protection provided by vaccines -- even if we see many breakthrough infections. In places where disease continues to spread, deaths may increase, particularly among adults who are not vaccinated. Because the people most vulnerable to Covid have a high vaccination rate, the increase in deaths will be much smaller than the past horrific increases. But we have to prepare ourselves for the eventuality that more people will die -- some of whom will be young and otherwise healthy. In the months ahead, more cases won't correlate to more deaths the same way as earlier in the pandemic. This graph from the UK shows why. Death rates have plummeted, especially among older groups, even as case rates have increased, because most of the elderly are vaccinated. But even though the rates are far lower than they were, people in all age groups are still dying. Vaccines have saved hundreds of thousands of lives already and will save hundreds of thousands more, but they're not 100% effective. No vaccine is. They provide great protection -- not perfect protection. More cases will lead to more breakthrough infections, which is expected, but vaccines drastically reduce risk of hospitalization and death from Covid. People who are vaccinated are also less likely to spread the virus, so people around them are safer, although they aren't protected completely. When breakthrough infections do occur among vaccinated people, the vast majority are mild. For most, Covid will be no more serious than the common cold. Unfortunately, some breakthrough infections will be less mild, requiring hospitalization and, in rare cases, resulting in death. That doesn't change the reality that vaccination is the best way to protect ourselves from Covid. We need better data on severe breakthrough infections, but my guess is that they're more likely to occur in people of advanced age or who have serious underlying health conditions such as lung disease or immunosuppression, including immunosuppression from medications. It's possible that the mRNA vaccines are more protective against Covid than other vaccines; studies will determine whether this is the case. It is neither necessary nor wise for our public health systems to attempt to track every single breakthrough case that causes no or only mild symptoms. There are simply going to be too many, and there is little benefit to tracking illnesses that are no worse than a cold. Instead, it makes sense -- as is being done -- to do special studies of all breakthrough infections as part of specific population-based studies, and also to try to track every severe Covid illness after vaccination. This should give us much better information about who is most at risk of serious illness from Covid after vaccination, and might lead to different dosing recommendations for some groups. When you see headlines claiming that a significant proportion of hospitalized patients somewhere have been fully vaccinated, don't be alarmed. Most of those stories actually underscore the fact that vaccines are working exceptionally well against variants of concern, including Delta. Where most people are vaccinated, most cases will be among the vaccinated. The worst is over in the United States, but, on average, 200-300 people are still dying every day from a disease that didn't exist 18 months ago. If that rate continues for the next 12 months, that would total 100,000 deaths -- more, even, than occur each year from diabetes or from the horrific opioid epidemic. Delta is spreading, and in some areas is spreading rapidly. How the virus affects you when you encounter it depends on whether your body has been prepared to recognize and fight it -- or is caught off guard. People who remain unvaccinated should be especially concerned about the rapid rise of Delta, which now makes up at least 83% of sequenced cases in the United States. The more cases there are, the more uncontrolled spread there will be, and the higher the risk that even more dangerous variants can emerge. Variants remain the wild card for the trajectory of the pandemic. Delta may not be the worst strain the virus deals us, but we can reduce the risk of other dangerous variants by vaccinating widely as well as continuing to tamp down spread. Vaccination, masks, ventilation and physical distancing can stop Covid, including Delta. Our slow pace of vaccination has given the virus extra time to adapt and mutate, but we can wrest the advantage back by using the best weapon in our arsenal -- vaccines -- complemented by measures that slow spread of the virus including masking, ventilation and avoiding events that can amplify spread of the virus.

#### The Delta variant threatens the US economy—increasing vaccination rates is the key to solvency:

Noah Smith, 8/1/2021 (assistant professor of finance at Stony Brook University, “Why the delta variant threatens to undermine the economic recovery,” <https://lacrossetribune.com/opinion/columnists/noah-smith-why-the-delta-variant-threatens-to-undermine-the-economic-recovery/article_6e2e3eb5-a9c4-5a28-b707-83d1051b0bcd.html>, Retrieved 8/2/2021)

The U.S. economic recovery is being threatened by the COVID-19 delta variant. Increasing vaccination rates is the most important thing the U.S. can do to sustain the economy over the next few months. Beyond that, however, full recovery might require creating new vaccines against delta and other emerging variants. U.S. stock markets and Treasury yields took big dips in recent days before rebounding. Despite the bounce-back, the volatility is evidence that investors are worried about the health of the recovery. It’s not just markets, either — there are some concrete signs of economic weakness, such as a week with an unexpectedly high number of initial jobless claims. The lights aren’t flashing red yet, but these are clear warning signs. The obvious reason is the delta variant of COVID-19. This variant, which is both more infectious and more resistant to vaccines than previous versions of the virus, has become the dominant strain in the U.S. As a result, cases are rising again. If the U.S. ends up looking anything like the U.K., the country is in for another big wave of disease. The economic risk isn’t a renewed policy of lockdowns and mandatory social distancing; the American populace and government officials seem to have had their fill of such restrictive measures. But in fact, lockdowns were never a very big contributor to the economic devastation of 2020. Evidence on the timing and the strictness of government-mandated social distancing measures has shown that economic harm occurred pretty much regardless. Nor did state-level reopenings give economies much of a boost. But if lockdowns weren’t what hurt the economy, what was it? It was simply widespread fear of the virus. The existence of a deadly, highly contagious plague is a powerful reason to order from Amazon.com instead of going to a store, or to dine at home instead of going to a restaurant. Some people went out, heedless of the danger, but that paltry demand wasn’t enough to sustain local service businesses, which laid off workers. After the initial wave, when masking became commonplace and people began to understand the risks of what they were facing, economic activity wasn’t so hobbled by fear, even during the disheartening fall and winter surge in late 2020 and early 2021. But it was only after vaccines became widely available that local economies really began to roar back to life. Delta puts that rapid recovery under threat. Its high infectiousness means that even a fairly substantial percent of vaccinated Americans won’t be enough to protect the unvaccinated from getting the virus. And America has quite a lot of unvaccinated people, thanks in part to a right-wing campaign against the (safe and highly effective) vaccines. Even an apparent recent positive shift in Fox News’ tone toward vaccines is unlikely to counteract the corrosive effect of months of highly politicized anti-vaccination propaganda. And while some of those unvaccinated Americans will doubtless be as macho in their defiance of delta as they were with the original version of the coronavirus, some will deem it more prudent to avoid crowded indoor spaces just a little bit more. Meanwhile, even vaccinated Americans may be hesitant to go out in the face of delta. The mRNA vaccines from Moderna Inc. and Pfizer Inc.-BioNTech SE significantly lower the risk of becoming infected with delta, and in the vast majority of cases they prevent the vaccinated from getting sick enough to be hospitalized or die. But they don’t entirely eliminate the risks — there’s a fairly substantial number of “breakthrough” infections, even among the fully vaccinated. And while that’s rarely life-threatening, there remains the possibility of the protracted symptoms called “long COVID,” even among young people. Perhaps if this were March 2020, this level of risk wouldn’t be enough to deter Americans from going out to eat and shop. But they’ve had a year to adapt to the habits of social distancing, and many may just decide to extend their pandemic life a little while longer until the threat of delta has passed. To monitor whether this is happening, keep an eye on OpenTable restaurant reservation data. So far it doesn’t look too bad, but if that changes, watch out. What can anyone do to allay this possibility? As before, only defeating the virus through more comprehensive vaccination will bring the economy fully, reliably back. We need an intensified public information campaign — including the right-wing media — to make that happen. But in the longer term, confidence might improve with rapid government approval of vaccine boosters specifically designed for delta and other variants that may now be emerging. Ultimately, it may take several iterations of vaccination to clean COVID out of the U.S. economy.

#### Economic Decline Risks World War III:

Jomo Kwame Sundaram & Vladimir Popov, 2/12/2019 (Jomo Kwame Sundaram, a former economics professor, was United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, and received the Wassily Leontief Prize for Advancing the Frontiers of Economic Thought in 2007 & Vladimir Popov, a former senior economics researcher in the Soviet Union, Russia and the United Nations Secretariat, is now Research Director at the Dialogue of Civilizations Research Institute in Berlin, “Economic Crisis Can Trigger World War,” <http://www.ipsnews.net/2019/02/economic-crisis-can-trigger-world-war/>, Retrieved 8/2/2021)

KUALA LUMPUR and BERLIN, Feb 12 2019 (IPS) - Economic recovery efforts since the 2008-2009 global financial crisis have mainly depended on unconventional monetary policies. As fears rise of yet another international financial crisis, there are growing concerns about the increased possibility of large-scale military conflict. More worryingly, in the current political landscape, prolonged economic crisis, combined with rising economic inequality, chauvinistic ethno-populism as well as aggressive jingoist rhetoric, including threats, could easily spin out of control and ‘morph’ into military conflict, and worse, world war. Crisis responses limited The 2008-2009 global financial crisis almost ‘bankrupted’ governments and caused systemic collapse. Policymakers managed to pull the world economy from the brink, but soon switched from counter-cyclical fiscal efforts to unconventional monetary measures, primarily ‘quantitative easing’ and very low, if not negative real interest rates. But while these monetary interventions averted realization of the worst fears at the time by turning the US economy around, they did little to address underlying economic weaknesses, largely due to the ascendance of finance in recent decades at the expense of the real economy. Since then, despite promising to do so, policymakers have not seriously pursued, let alone achieved, such needed reforms. Instead, ostensible structural reformers have taken advantage of the crisis to pursue largely irrelevant efforts to further ‘casualize’ labour markets. This lack of structural reform has meant that the unprecedented liquidity central banks injected into economies has not been well allocated to stimulate resurgence of the real economy. From bust to bubble Instead, easy credit raised asset prices to levels even higher than those prevailing before 2008. US house prices are now 8% more than at the peak of the property bubble in 2006, while its price-to-earnings ratio in late 2018 was even higher than in 2008 and in 1929, when the Wall Street Crash precipitated the Great Depression. As monetary tightening checks asset price bubbles, another economic crisis — possibly more severe than the last, as the economy has become less responsive to such blunt monetary interventions — is considered likely. A decade of such unconventional monetary policies, with very low interest rates, has greatly depleted their ability to revive the economy. The implications beyond the economy of such developments and policy responses are already being seen. Prolonged economic distress has worsened public antipathy towards the culturally alien — not only abroad, but also within. Thus, another round of economic stress is deemed likely to foment unrest, conflict, even war as it is blamed on the foreign. International trade shrank by two-thirds within half a decade after the US passed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act in 1930, at the start of the Great Depression, ostensibly to protect American workers and farmers from foreign competition! Liberalization’s discontents Rising economic insecurity, inequalities and deprivation are expected to strengthen ethno-populist and jingoistic nationalist sentiments, and increase social tensions and turmoil, especially among the growing precariat and others who feel vulnerable or threatened. Thus, ethno-populist inspired chauvinistic nationalism may exacerbate tensions, leading to conflicts and tensions among countries, as in the 1930s. Opportunistic leaders have been blaming such misfortunes on outsiders and may seek to reverse policies associated with the perceived causes, such as ‘globalist’ economic liberalization. Policies which successfully check such problems may reduce social tensions, as well as the likelihood of social turmoil and conflict, including among countries. However, these may also inadvertently exacerbate problems. The recent spread of anti-globalization sentiment appears correlated to slow, if not negative per capita income growth and increased economic inequality. To be sure, globalization and liberalization are statistically associated with growing economic inequality and rising ethno-populism. Declining real incomes and growing economic insecurity have apparently strengthened ethno-populism and nationalistic chauvinism, threatening economic liberalization itself, both within and among countries. Insecurity, populism, conflict Thomas Piketty has argued that a sudden increase in income inequality is often followed by a great crisis. Although causality is difficult to prove, with wealth and income inequality now at historical highs, this should give cause for concern. Of course, other factors also contribute to or exacerbate civil and international tensions, with some due to policies intended for other purposes. Nevertheless, even if unintended, such developments could inadvertently catalyse future crises and conflicts. Publics often have good reason to be restless, if not angry, but the emotional appeals of ethno-populism and jingoistic nationalism are leading to chauvinistic policy measures which only make things worse. At the international level, despite the world’s unprecedented and still growing interconnectedness, multilateralism is increasingly being eschewed as the US increasingly resorts to unilateral, sovereigntist policies without bothering to even build coalitions with its usual allies. Avoiding Thucydides’ iceberg Thus, protracted economic distress, economic conflicts or another financial crisis could lead to military confrontation by the protagonists, even if unintended. Less than a decade after the Great Depression started, the Second World War had begun as the Axis powers challenged the earlier entrenched colonial powers. They patently ignored Thucydides’ warning, in chronicling the Peloponnesian wars over two millennia before, when the rise of Athens threatened the established dominance of Sparta! Anticipating and addressing such possibilities may well serve to help avoid otherwise imminent disasters by undertaking pre-emptive collective action, as difficult as that may be. The international community has no excuse for being like the owners and captain of the Titanic, conceitedly convinced that no iceberg could possibly sink the great ship.

#### Vaccines are also crucial to stopping future pandemics—but reassuring the public about their safety is crucial:

Julie L. Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H., and Barton F. Haynes, M.D., 2/4/2021 (New England Journal of Medicine, “Vaccine Innovations — Past and Future,” <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/nejmp2029466>, Retrieved 8/2/2021)

Vaccination is a powerful method of disease prevention that is relevant to people of all ages and in all countries, as the Covid-19 pandemic illustrates. Vaccination can improve people’s chances of survival, protect communities from new and reemerging health threats, and enhance societal productivity. But achieving the promise of vaccination requires much more than the vaccines themselves. It requires appropriate incentives to encourage the timely discovery and development of innovative, effective, safe, and affordable products; effective financing and delivery programs; and credible scientific leaders who can provide evidence-based policy recommendations and reassure the public about the value of the vaccines. Since its inception 50 years ago, the National Academy of Medicine (NAM), previously known as the Institute of Medicine (IOM), has been an authoritative resource on medical issues, including vaccination, and a global leader in vaccine-policy development. FDA Licensure Dates for Selected Innovative Vaccines since 1970. It’s hard to overstate the benefits that innovative vaccines deployed in the past five decades have had on morbidity and mortality (see timeline).1 The incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases among U.S. children has decreased dramatically, an achievement that is attributable in part to high vaccine-coverage rates. By the 2018–2019 school year, coverage rates among kindergarteners exceeded 90% in all but two states, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Four vaccine-preventable illnesses have been eliminated from the Americas: smallpox in 1971, poliomyelitis in 1994, and rubella and congenital rubella syndrome in 2015 (one of us is an executive vice president at Merck, which produces vaccines for rubella, among other vaccines). Moreover, between 2011 and 2020, immunization programs in low-income countries saved an estimated 23.3 million lives.2 Perhaps the most notable immunization-related accomplishment during the past half century was the eradication of smallpox, which was verified by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1980. In addition, global cases of paralytic polio have decreased by 99.95% from the estimated 350,000 cases in 1988,3 when the global polio-eradication program was announced, and two of the three wild-type polioviruses, WPV types 2 and 3, have been eradicated. Other important achievements during this period include the 1986 approval of the first vaccine based on recombinant technology, a hepatitis B vaccine that not only has reduced rates of the infection in many countries but was also the first vaccine to reduce cancer risk. In 1987, the first polysaccharide-protein conjugate vaccine was licensed; since then, the incidence of invasive Haemophilus influenzae type b disease among children has fallen dramatically. In 2009, a vaccine for Neisseria meningitidis group A became the first licensed vaccine specifically designed for certain people in low-income countries. Achieving broad population health benefits associated with vaccination requires effective policies that create incentives for vaccine development, ensure financing of vaccines, and improve access. After a measles outbreak in 1989–1991, the U.S. Vaccines for Children Program was authorized in 1993 to ensure that eligible children would have free access to all CDC-recommended vaccines. To address remaining gaps, the IOM in 2000 issued a landmark report that recommended policy and programmatic improvements to strengthen U.S. immunization programs. One outcome of this effort was the requirement included in the 2010 Affordable Care Act that plans provide first-dollar coverage (coverage without copayments or other cost sharing) for vaccines recommended by the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for children and adults up to age 26. Policy advances have also enhanced the effects of vaccination globally. The WHO launched the Expanded Program on Immunization in 1974 to increase access to vaccines. Beginning in 2000, the benefits of this program were greatly enhanced by the creation of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, an international public–private partnership that provides financial and programmatic support to ensure that children in the poorest countries have access to vaccines. In 2017, with the support of the NAM and other organizations, this model was used as a framework for the creation of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations to fund innovative vaccines and other countermeasures against pathogens that cause devastating public health consequences, such as the Ebola virus and now SARS-CoV-2. Because vaccines are usually administered to healthy people, maintaining the highest safety standards isn’t only an ethical imperative but is also essential to sustaining public trust. The story of vaccine progress has been punctuated by both real and misguided safety concerns for as long as vaccines have been in use. Such concerns have included adverse events associated with vaccination itself, quality lapses in the manufacturing process, and false alarms regarding vaccine safety. The potential for financial gain has fueled liability suits related to putative safety concerns. The NAM has conducted ongoing objective assessments of vaccine safety to help address concerns. Between 2000 and 2004, its Immunization Safety Review Committee evaluated evidence pertinent to various vaccine-safety topics and set a new standard for independent scientific review that remains relevant as the NAM contributes to coronavirus-related policies. Vaccine confidence depends on trust in the safety and efficacy of the products themselves, trust in vaccine manufacturers and the clinicians who administer vaccines, and trust in policymakers who assess the scientific evidence and promulgate vaccination recommendations. Failures in any of these areas can have substantial long-term public health consequences, as was the case with misinformation about measles vaccines. Enduring mistrust stemming from a discredited study that associated childhood vaccination with autism has been linked to recent outbreaks of measles in the United States. Sustaining both vaccine safety and trust in vaccination will become increasingly complex. Vaccines continue to be approved, and more vaccines have become accessible in resource-limited countries, but safety surveillance systems are less evolved in many low-income regions than in high-income regions. Similarly, vaccines are being manufactured in regions where regulatory oversight isn’t always optimal, and counterfeit vaccines remain a threat. Emerging infections may require rapid availability of new vaccines before comprehensive safety studies are complete. Perhaps most important, the speed and reach of communication on social media platforms have created unprecedented opportunities for users to amplify misinformation and flame the fears of parents and other stakeholders in the immunization ecosystem. Moving forward, vaccines against a range of infectious agents will need to be developed. New and reemerging pathogens, such as SARS-CoV-2 and new influenza strains, regularly appear. Viruses that are capable of spreading by vector or airborne routes — one of the most important pandemic threats — continue to emerge. More than 1.5 million as yet unknown viruses are estimated to exist in animals worldwide, and 38 to 50% of them are candidates to spread to humans.4 Global-surveillance and virus-discovery programs are therefore important, and they may be able to predict pandemics. In 2011, the IOM commissioned the development of a strategic multiattribute ranking tool for vaccines to facilitate evaluation of new vaccine targets and help guide decisions about prioritizing vaccine-development efforts. When pandemics emerge, rapid responses are necessary. Vaccines aren’t the only available tool: passive administration of antibodies for prevention or treatment of infectious diseases has been used for many years. The Pandemic Prevention Platform program of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency aims to develop a new form of passive antibody protection that can slow viral epidemics starting within 60 days after identification of the pathogen and until a vaccine can be made. Thanks to new technology, the vaccine-development process is also being condensed. Experimental vaccines were developed and ready for phase 1 clinical trials in 20 months for SARS after the epidemic began in 2003 and in slightly more than 3 months for Zika virus in 2016. The response to the Covid-19 pandemic is a prime example of how rapidly new vaccines can now be designed. By the time the WHO declared Covid-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020, at least 37 groups from biotechnology companies and academic institutions were working on vaccine candidates.5 These candidates include live attenuated, inactivated, DNA, messenger RNA, viral vector, and spike-protein–based vaccines. Less than 1 year later, the first Covid-19 vaccine-efficacy trials have now been completed, and the first vaccines are authorized for emergency use. Many approved vaccines, such as those against measles and polio, were made using attenuated or killed versions of the virus without detailed knowledge of viral pathogenesis. In contrast, current strategies for vaccine design rely on new technologies that lead to a deeper understanding of the immune system and of host–pathogen interactions. For new experimental HIV and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccines, a detailed structural understanding of antibody interactions with the HIV envelope or the RSV prefusion form of the fusion (F) protein is needed. Vaccines remain the most effective tool for preventing infectious diseases and improving global health. Remarkable progress has been made with the use of vaccines, including the eradication of smallpox and the control of childhood diseases such as measles, mumps, rubella, and polio. New insights into the functioning of the immune system on a cellular and molecular level have made possible the rapid development of new vaccines. Difficulties facing vaccinologists include predicting the type and timing of the next pandemic; developing vaccines to combat rapidly changing pathogens such as HIV-1, influenza, and multidrug-resistant bacteria; and establishing rapid-response strategies to control emerging and reemerging infectious diseases. The future holds great promise for vaccine-mediated control of global pathogens, but providing affordable access to effective vaccines for everyone who could benefit from them remains an important challenge.

#### New pandemics threaten human extinction:

Lakshmi Supriya, PhD., 4/19/2021 (Lakshmi Supriya got her BSc in Industrial Chemistry from IIT Kharagpur (India) and a Ph.D. in Polymer Science and Engineering from Virginia Tech (USA)., “Humans versus viruses - Can we avoid extinction in near future?”, <https://www.news-medical.net/news/20210419/Humans-versus-viruses-Can-we-avoid-extinction-in-near-future.aspx>, Retrieved 8/2/2021)

Expert argues that human-caused changes to the environment can lead to the emergence of pathogens, not only from outside but also from our own microbiome, which can pave the way for large-scale destruction of humans and even our extinction. Whenever there is a change in any system, it will cause other changes to reach a balance or equilibrium, generally at a point different from the original balance. Although this principle was originally posited by the French chemist Henry Le Chatelier for chemical reactions, this theory can be applied to almost anything else. In an essay published on the online server Preprints\*, Eleftherios P. Diamandis of the University of Toronto and the Mount Sinai Hospital, Toronto, argues that changes caused by humans, to the climate, and everything around us will lead to changes that may have a dramatic impact on human life. Because our ecosystems are so complex, we don’t know how our actions will affect us in the long run, so humans generally disregard them. Changing our environment Everything around us is changing, from living organisms to the climate, water, and soil. Some estimates say about half the organisms that existed 50 years ago have already become extinct, and about 80% of the species may become extinct in the future. As the debate on global warming continues, according to data, the last six years have been the warmest on record. Global warming is melting ice, and sea levels have been increasing. The changing climate is causing more and more wildfires, which are leading to other related damage. At the same time, increased flooding is causing large-scale devastation. One question that arises is how much environmental damage have humans already done? A recent study compared the natural biomass on Earth to the mass produced by humans and found humans produce a mass equal to their weight every week. This human-made mass is mainly for buildings, roads, and plastic products. In the early 1900s, human-made mass was about 3% of the global biomass. Today both are about equal. Projections say by 2040, the human-made mass will be triple that of Earth’s biomass. But, slowing down human activity that causes such production may be difficult, given it is considered part of our growth as a civilization. Emerging pathogens Although we are made up of human cells, we have almost ten times that of bacteria just in our guts and more on our skin. These microbes not only affect locally but also affect the entire body. There is a balance between the good and bad bacteria, and any change in the environment may cause this balance to shift, especially on the skin, the consequences of which are unknown. Although most bacteria on and inside of us are harmless, gut bacteria can also have viruses. If viruses don’t kill the bacteria immediately, they can incorporate into the bacterial genome and stay latent for a long time until reactivation by environmental factors, when they can become pathogenic. They can also escape from the gut and enter other organs or the bloodstream. Bacteria can then use these viruses to kill other bacteria or help them evolve to more virulent strains. An example of the evolution of pathogens is the cause of the current pandemic, the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Several mutations are now known that make the virus more infectious and resistant to immune responses, and strengthening its to enter cells via surface receptors. The brain There is evidence that the SARS-CoV-2 can also affect the brain. The virus may enter the brain via the olfactory tract or through the angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) pathway. Viruses can also affect our senses, such as a loss of smell and taste, and there could be other so far unkown neurological effects. The loss of smell seen in COVID-19 could be a new viral syndrome specific to this disease. Many books and movies have described pandemics caused by pathogens that wipe out large populations and cause severe diseases. In the essay, the author provides a hypothetical scenario where a gut bacteria suddenly starts producing viral proteins. Some virions spread through the body and get transmitted through the human population. After a few months, the virus started causing blindness, and within a year, large populations lost their vision. Pandemics can cause other diseases that can threaten humanity’s entire existence. The COVID-19 pandemic brought this possibility to the forefront. If we continue disturbing the equilibrium between us and the environment, we don’t know what the consequences may be and the next pandemic could lead us to extinction.

### Advantage 2 is Democracy

#### Facebook’s monopoly status undermines democratic discourse:

Fiona M. Scott Morton, & David C. Dinielli, June 2020 (Theodore Nierenberg Professor of Economics at the Yale University School of Management & senior advisor with the beneficial technology team at Omidyar Network, “Roadmap for an Antitrust Case Against Facebook,” <https://www.omidyar.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Roadmap-for-an-Antitrust-Case-Against-Facebook.pdf>, Retrieved 7/28/2021)

CONCLUSION Facebook has a monopoly in social media and/or social networks, whether considered in lay or legal or economic terms. The CMA has quantified the nature and extent of Facebook’s control of the UK market. More important, the CMA has explained how Facebook came to acquire and maintain its monopoly. The facts made public by the CMA demonstrate that Facebook grew its market share in part by deploying “dark patterns, skulduggery, and other” misleading and fraudulent behavior regarding its data collection efforts so that it could, on one hand, placate users, and on the other, endear itself to advertisers (whose interest was targeted ads) in order to sell them valuable and expensive advertising. Users were not aware that their data was being collected in such abundance, either through deliberate design and control of privacy policies or by the flouting of such policies. Facebook also hoodwinked publishers into participating (largely unknowingly) in its data gathering efforts; publishers installed plug-ins that allowed Facebook to spy on their users as they traversed the web and collect their data. Facebook used its ill-gotten data to raise rivals’ costs by making them unable to compete with its apparent combination of privacy and targeting. Facebook embarked on a series of acquisitions designed to eliminate competition from nascent competitors operating as social networks. And it manipulated its APIs so as to control and limit any threat posed by complementary service providers. Facebook eliminated competition by cutting off applications on its own platform that were popular with users because those applications represented potential competition that it feared. And when API manipulation was insufficiently protective, Facebook simply gobbled up those potential competitors outright. Because the social media market is characterized by network effects that make it especially subject to tipping, and Facebook has been aggressively pursuing policies that take advantage of those characteristics, the company is now insulated from competition and can inflict harms on all three categories of its constituents. Regarding users: the lack of competition leaves users with less innovation in social media, a lower quality of content and interface, more surveillance with less privacy, a platform that exploits their emotions and behavioral biases, and higher prices for goods and services. Regarding advertisers: Facebook prevented them from analyzing the true quality of Facebook’s advertising, while raising prices and failing to protect brand safety. Regarding publishers: Facebook expropriated the value of their business by taking relationships they had created with their own readers, using those to sell ads to those same audiences while sharing less ad revenue than would be generated by a competitive market. We now find ourselves in a world in which social networks are dominated by a single firm—Facebook—that appears to be able to take almost any action, whether about price, politics, or psychology, without losing its position. Recent events underscore what we might be missing, as politicians as well as members of the polity decry the power of just a few internet platforms in shaping the democratic discourse on issues ranging from voting rights protection to police-involved violence to the pandemic. Imagine if there were a dozen social networks rather than one, how differently these democratic issues would manifest themselves; users would be able to depart from a platform that did not adhere to their standard of quality or values. But this world with choice requires Facebook to be compelled to compete.

#### ~~\*Facebook’s monopoly practices undermine journalist profits:~~

~~Fiona M. Scott Morton, & David C. Dinielli, June 2020 (Theodore Nierenberg Professor of Economics at the Yale University School of Management & senior advisor with the beneficial technology team at Omidyar Network, “Roadmap for an Antitrust Case Against Facebook,”~~ [~~https://www.omidyar.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Roadmap-for-an-Antitrust-Case-Against-Facebook.pdf~~](https://www.omidyar.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Roadmap-for-an-Antitrust-Case-Against-Facebook.pdf)~~, Retrieved 7/28/2021)~~

~~Harm to Content Providers (Publishers) Publishers and other content providers are horizontal competitors of Facebook in the market for the supply of display advertising space. Facebook’s market power allows it to earn profit from content providers who post on Facebook, profit that in a more competitive environment would likely go to the original content provider. Facebook keeps 27% of ad spend for ad placed on websites when users land there through a Facebook post.165 It is the user who is posting a piece from a publisher like HuffPo, and that piece helps Facebook platform remain relevant and engaging, and yet Facebook can keep a supra-competitive piece of any advertising that results from views because it does not face competition. The lack of revenue for journalism has caused some governments around the world to begin to require Facebook to pay for the journalism it benefits from.166 Facebook also developed a format called Instant Articles (IA) that facilitates the fast loading of publisher pages on the Facebook Mobile App. Facebook passes along a portion of ad spend that appears alongside IA but Facebook captures the data, because the user is visiting a Facebook-cached page rather than a page residing on the original publisher’s server. In this way, Facebook captures both traffic and ad spend that might otherwise go to publishers.167 An advertiser that wishes to reach particular consumers has a choice to advertise on Facebook or on the site of the publisher. Because Facebook can track publishers’ customers, it can target ads to those readers when they are on Facebook, monetizing the value and brand loyalty of the publisher, thus reducing the publisher’s revenue.168 The publishers’ financial incentive to invest and create new content is below competitive levels because Facebook’s conduct lowers the return it gets from such investment, and its business is harmed. All of these methods of reducing publisher revenue below competitive levels result in less investment in, and production of, content relative to what consumers would get in a competitive market. Internet content is a source of consumer welfare benefit to users; news sites with more reporters, cooking sites with more recipes, travel sites with more itineraries—these are all examples of the type of investment a content provider will create in response to financial incentives. The lack of this content harms consumers.~~

#### ~~\*Monopolization of ad revenue undermines effective journalism—killing local journalism:~~

~~Jerrold Nadler, et al, 2020 (Chair, Committee on the Judiciary, INVESTIGATION OF COMPETITION IN DIGITAL MARKETS,~~ [~~https://judiciary.house.gov/uploadedfiles~~](https://judiciary.house.gov/uploadedfiles) ~~/competition\_in\_digital\_markets.pdf?utm\_campaign=4493-519, Retrieved 7/22/2021)~~

~~ii. Monetization The rise of market power online has severely affected the monetization of news, diminishing the ability of publishers to deliver valuable reporting.340 The digital advertising market is highly concentrated, with Google and Facebook controlling the majority of the online advertising market in the United States,341 capturing nearly all of its growth in recent years.342 Although Amazon has grown its digital advertising business to become the third largest competitor in the market,343 it still accounts for a relatively small percentage.344 News publishers have raised concerns that this significant level of concentration in the online advertising market—commonly referred to as the digital ad duopoly—has harmed the quality and availability of journalism.345 They note that as a result of this dominance, there has been a significant decline in advertising revenue to news publishers,346 undermining publishers’ ability to deliver valuable reporting, and “siphon[ing] revenue away from news organizations.”347 Jason Kint, the CEO of Digital Content Next, a trade association that represents both digital and traditional news publishers, notes that there is “a clear correlation between layoffs and buyouts with the growth in market share for the duopoly—Google and Facebook.”348 David Chavern, the President and CEO of the News Media Alliance, has likewise said that “[t]he problem is that today’s internet distribution systems distort the flow of economic value derived from good reporting.”349 The effects of this revenue decline are most severe at the local level, where the decimation of local news sources is giving rise to local news deserts.350 Other news publishers have expressed concerns about the dual role of platforms as both intermediaries and platforms for people’s attention.351 By keeping people inside a “walled garden,” platforms can monetize their attention through ads, creating a strong economic incentive to minimize outbound referrals that lead to a decline in users’ attention and engagement. In turn, this diminishes the incentives of publishers to invest in high-quality journalism.352 David Pitofsky, the General Counsel of NewsCorp, described this as a free-riding problem in his testimony before the Subcommittee, explaining that platforms: [D]eploy our highly engaging news content to target our audiences, then turn around and sell that audience engagement to the same advertisers news publishers are trying to serve. Dominant platforms take the overwhelming majority of advertising revenue without making any investment in the production of the news, all while foreswearing any responsibility for its quality and accuracy. As a result, one of the pillars of the news industry’s business model, advertising revenue, is crumbling.353~~

#### ~~\*Declining local news coverage undermines democracy.~~

~~Jerrold Nadler, et al, 2020 (Chair, Committee on the Judiciary, INVESTIGATION OF COMPETITION IN DIGITAL MARKETS,~~ [~~https://judiciary.house.gov/uploadedfiles~~](https://judiciary.house.gov/uploadedfiles) ~~/competition\_in\_digital\_markets.pdf?utm\_campaign=4493-519, Retrieved 7/22/2021)~~

~~This cycle has a profoundly negative effect on American democracy and civic life. Communities without quality local news coverage have lower rates of voter turnout.282 Government corruption may go unchecked, leaving communities vulnerable to serious mismanagement.283 Relatedly, these communities see local government spending increase.284 Towns without robust local news coverage also exhibit lower levels of social cohesion, undermining a sense of belonging in a community.285 As fewer publishers operate in local markets, local news is supplanted by aggregation of national coverage, reducing residents’ knowledge of local happenings and events, and generally leaving them less connected to their communities.286 Compounding this problem, the gap created by the loss of trustworthy and credible news sources has been increasingly filled by false and misleading information. Once communities lack a local newspaper source, people tend to get their local news from social media. As local news dies, it is filled by unchecked information, some of which can spread quickly and can have severe consequences.~~

#### Preserving democracy is the only way to avert existential catastrophe.

Noam Chomsky, 5/27/2019 (American linguist, philosopher, cognitive scientist, historian, social critic, and political activist. Sometimes called "the father of modern linguistics", Chomsky is also a major figure in analytic philosophy and one of the founders of the field of cognitive science, “Chomsky: Nuclear Weapons, Climate Change & the Undermining of Democracy Threaten Future of Planet,” [https://www.democracynow.org/2019/5/27/ chomsky\_nuclear\_weapons\_climate\_change\_the](https://www.democracynow.org/2019/5/27/%20chomsky_nuclear_weapons_climate_change_the), Retrieved 8/4/2021)

NOAM CHOMSKY: I want to make a couple of remarks below about the severe difficulty of maintaining and instituting democracy, the powerful forces that have always opposed it, the achievements of somehow salvaging and enhancing it, and the significance of that for the future. But first, a couple of words about the challenges that we face, which you heard enough about already and you all know about. I don’t have to go into them in detail. To describe these challenges as “extremely severe” would be an error. The phrase does not capture the enormity of the kinds of challenges that lie ahead. And any serious discussion of the future of humanity must begin by recognizing a critical fact, that the human species is now facing a question that has never before arisen in human history, question that has to be answered quickly: Will human society survive for long? Well, as you all know, for 70 years we’ve been living under the shadow of nuclear war. Those who have looked at the record can only be amazed that we’ve survived this far. Time after time it’s come extremely close to terminal disaster, even minutes away. It’s kind of a miracle that we’ve survived. Miracles don’t go on forever. This has to be terminated, and quickly. The recent Nuclear Posture Review of the Trump administration dramatically increases the threat of conflagration, which would in fact be terminal for the species. We may remember that this Nuclear Posture Review was sponsored by Jim Mattis, who was regarded as too civilized to be retained in the administration—gives you a sense of what can be tolerated in the Trump-Pompeo-Bolton world. Well, there were three major arms treaties: the ABM Treaty, Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty; the INF Treaty, Intermediate Nuclear Forces; the New START treaty. The U.S. pulled out of the ABM Treaty in 2002. And anyone who believes that anti-ballistic missiles are defensive weapons is deluded about the nature of these systems. The U.S. has just pulled out of the INF Treaty, established by Gorbachev and Reagan in 1987, which sharply reduced the threat of war in Europe, which would very quickly spread. The background of that signing of that treaty was the demonstrations that you just saw depicted on the film. Massive public demonstrations were the background for leading to a treaty that made a very significant difference. It’s worth remembering that and many other cases where significant popular activism has made a huge difference. The lessons are too obvious to enumerate. Well, the Trump administration has just withdrawn from the INF Treaty; the Russians withdrew right afterwards. If you take a close look, you find that each side has a kind of a credible case saying that the opponent has not lived up to the treaty. For those who want a picture of how the Russians might look at it, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, the major journal on arms control issues, had a lead article a couple weeks ago by Theodore Postol pointing out how dangerous the U.S. installations of anti-ballistic missiles on the Russian border—how dangerous they are and can be perceived to be by the Russians. Notice, on the Russian border. Tensions are mounting on the Russian border. Both sides are carrying out provocative actions. We should—in a rational world, what would happen would be negotiations between the two sides, with independent experts to evaluate the charges that each is making against the other, to lead to a resolution of these charges, restore the treaty. That’s a rational world. But it’s unfortunately not the world we’re living in. No efforts at all have been made in this direction. And they won’t be, unless there is significant pressure. Well, that leaves the New START treaty. The New START treaty has already been designated by the figure in charge, who has modestly described himself as the greatest president in American history—he gave it the usual designation of anything that was done by his predecessors: the worst treaty that ever happened in human history; we’ve got to get rid of it. If in fact—this comes up for renewal right after the next election, and a lot is at stake. A lot is at stake in whether that treaty will be renewed. It has succeeded in very significantly reducing the number of nuclear weapons, to a level way above what they ought to be but way below what they were before. And it could go on. Well, meanwhile, global warming proceeds on its inexorable course. During this millennium, every single year, with one exception, has been hotter than the last one. There are recent scientific papers, James Hansen and others, which indicate that the pace of global warming, which has been increasing since about 1980, may be sharply escalating and may be moving from linear growth to exponential growth, which means doubling every couple of decades. We’re already approaching the conditions of 125,000 years ago, when the sea level was about roughly 25 feet higher than it is today, with the melting, the rapid melting, of the Antarctic, huge ice fields. We might—that point might be reached. The consequences of that are almost unimaginable. I mean, I won’t even try to depict them, but you can figure out quickly what that means. Well, meanwhile, while this is going on, you regularly read in the press euphoric accounts of how the United States is advancing in fossil fuel production. It’s now surpassed Saudi Arabia. We’re in the lead of fossil fuel production. The big banks, JPMorgan Chase and others, are pouring money into new investments in fossil fuels, including the most dangerous, like Canadian tar sands. And this is all presented with great euphoria, excitement. We’re now reaching energy independence. We can control the world, determine the use of fossil fuels in the world. Barely a word on what the meaning of this is, which is quite obvious. It’s not that the reporters, commentators don’t know about it, that the CEO of the banks don’t know about it. Of course they do. But these are kind of institutional pressures that just are extremely hard to extricate themselves from. You can put yourself in the—try to put yourself in the position of, say, the CEO of JPMorgan Chase, the biggest bank, which is spending large sums in investment in fossil fuels. He certainly knows everything that you all know about global warming. It’s no secret. But what are the choices? Basically he has two choices. One choice is to do exactly what he’s doing. The other choice is to resign and be replaced by somebody else who will do exactly what he’s doing. It’s not an individual problem. It’s an institutional problem, which can be met, but only under tremendous public pressure. And we’ve recently seen, very dramatically, how it can—how the solution can be reached. A group of young people, Sunrise Movement, organized, got to the point of sitting in in congressional offices, aroused some interest from the new progressive figures who were able to make it to Congress. Under a lot of popular pressure, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, joined by Ed Markey, actually placed the Green New Deal on the agenda. That’s a remarkable achievement. Of course, it gets hostile attacks from everywhere: It doesn’t matter. A couple of years ago it was unimaginable that it would be discussed. As the result of the activism of this group of young people, it’s now right in the center of the agenda. It’s got to be implemented in one form or another. It’s essential for survival, maybe not in exactly that form, but some modification of it. Tremendous change achieved by the commitment of a small group of young people. That tells you the kind of thing that can be done. Meanwhile, the Doomsday Clock of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists last January was set at two minutes to midnight. That’s the closest it’s been to terminal disaster since 1947. The announcement of the settlement—of the setting mentioned the two major familiar threats: the threat of nuclear war, which is increasing, threat of global warming, which is increasing further. And it added a third for the first time: the undermining of democracy. That’s the third threat, along with global warming and nuclear war. And that was quite appropriate, because functioning democracy offers the only hope of overcoming these threats. They are not going to be dealt with by major institutions, state or private, acting without massive public pressure, which means that the means of democratic functioning have to be kept alive, used the way the Sunshine Movement did it, the way the great mass demonstration in the early ’80s did it, and the way we continue today.

#### The best and newest studies verify the link between democratization and peace:

Kosuke Imai 20, PhD in Political Science @ Harvard, Professor in the Department of Government and the Department of Statistics at Harvard University, “Robustness of Empirical Evidence for the Democratic Peace: A Nonparametric Sensitivity Analysis”, https://imai.fas.harvard.edu/research/files/dempeace.pdf

Abstract The democratic peace—the idea that democracies rarely fight one another— has been called “the closest thing we have to an empirical law in the study of international relations.” Yet, some contend that this relationship is spurious and suggest alternative explanations. Unfortunately, in the absence of randomized experiments, we can never rule out the possible existence of such confounding biases. Rather than commonly used regression-based approaches, we apply a nonparametric sensitivity analysis. We show that overturning the negative association between democracy and conflict would require a confounder that is forty-seven times more prevalent in democratic dyads than in other dyads. To put this number in context, the relationship between democracy and peace is at least five times as robust as that between smoking and lung cancer. To explain away the democratic peace, therefore, scholars would have to find far more powerful confounders than those already identified in the literature.

#### A US recommitment to democracy inspires and empowers opposition to authoritarianism around the globe.

Larry Diamond, 2019 (senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University), THE AMERICAN INTEREST, June 21, 2019. Retrieved Apr. 12, 2020 from <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2019/06/21/a-new-birth-of-freedom/>

The truth is, people want to be free, and international law gives them broad rights to civil and political freedom. No military coup, no authoritarian playbook, no election fraud, no party ideology, no system of surveillance can extinguish those realities. The great question now is whether we in the wealthy Western democracies will recommit to our own constitutional norms and founding ideals. Ronald Reagan understood, as did Jimmy Carter before him and every American President since—until Donald Trump—that our own freedom is bound up inextricably with the fate of freedom in the world, and that we have the power, through our own example and through our tools of assistance, diplomacy, and sanctions on dictators, to help inspire and empower other peoples to realize their rights under international law. The inspiring and indefatigable protests in Hong Kong and Khartoum, and in a host of other places from Kinshasa to Kazakhstan, remind us that oppressed people will take risks to press for freedom whenever the opportunity arises, and that tactics of non-violent civil resistance can work to challenge the mightiest bastions of tyranny. For all the current flaws of American democracy, we retain the power and imagination to help launch what Lincoln called a new birth of freedom, if we can rejuvenate our will.

#### Political leadership by the United States is critical to a democratic renewal around the globe.

Markos Kounalakis, 2019 (Visiting Fellow, Hoover Institution), Sept. 5, 2019. Retrieved Apr. 12, 2020 from <https://www.worldaffairs.org/events/event/1984#.XpNB9lNOnqs>

Last year Freedom House, an independent watchdog organization dedicated to the expansion of freedom and democracy around the world, reported that more countries became oppressive rather than free for the thirteenth year in a row. The widespread erosion of political rights and civil liberties along with global attacks on the rule of law and fact-based journalism are to blame for this retreat of democracy. "Democracies are not gifts or miracles; they are painstakingly built forms of government, and none of them are invincible," says Larry Diamond, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, who has spent 40 years promoting democracy in over 70 countries. Diamond argues in his new book ,"Ill Winds: Saving Democracy from Russian Rage, Chinese Ambition, and American Complacency," that we are at a pivotal point where either a new era of tyranny or democratic renewal could be ushered in around the globe. This next era will depend on political reforms and political leadership from the United States and other free republics.

### Plan

#### The United States Federal government should mandate data portability and interoperability for social media platforms.

### Solvency

#### Data portability and interoperability undermines Facebook’s anti-competitive advantage and starts solving immediately:

Alex Petros, 10/26/2020 (Alex is a Policy Counsel at Public Knowledge, where he focuses on digital platform competition issues. Prior to joining Public Knowledge, Alex worked for Senator Amy Klobuchar, Senator Richard Blumenthal, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, and Senator Joe Donnelly. Alex received his J.D., cum laude, from Georgetown University Law Center and his B.A. from Yale College in Economics and Political Science with distinction “Deep Dive Episode 141 – Interoperability and Data Sharing: An Antitrust Remedy in Search of a Market Problem?” <https://regproject.org/podcast/deep-dive-ep-141/>, Retrieved 8/4/2021)

Perhaps, the two biggest weapons in a competitive arsenal of a company like Facebook are its network effects and its use of data. Data portability and interoperability helps to weaken both. So, first up: network effects. What’s this? I’d like to think of the Little Mermaid who said she wanted to be where the people are. Think about how as more people join Facebook, it gets more competitively powerful. Users gain from other users being on the social network. Your aunt joining Facebook is good for you in that you can follow your aunt now. Well, maybe, it’s not great if you’re not a fan of your aunt. But it’s also good for all the other people who can now connect to your aunt in turn. Don’t take my word for it. According to the blockbuster House Judiciary Report, I’m sure we will find some ways to work in on this call. Mark Zuckerberg sees his market in the same way. Documents from his acquisition of Instagram are all about strengthening Facebook’s network effects. Second: data. To me, data is the currency and the lifeblood of these online platforms. The reason that so many of them are free, up front, are because they collect massive amounts of data on you, and that data can then in turn become targeted ads. Data portability means they have to give you your data when you ask for it. We know exactly what data a company like Facebook has on us. Maybe, they would think twice before exploiting our privacy. Now, imagine if a platform, like Facebook, had true data portability and interoperability—something beyond their weak and relatively hidden download-your-information tool. You know exactly what data Facebook has on you. And imagine if you could take your hard-won friends list with you. So I’m 26. So I grew up on Facebook. My many friends span different times in my life: middle school to high school, various summer camps, college, summer jobs. Many of the camps I attended growing up, we didn’t have access to phones or computers during the actual camp, so after the camp, it was almost a ritual of adding all your newfound friends on Facebook when you got home. I have friends from all over the state of Kentucky, where I’m from—the country, the world, even. And not losing that is what keeps me on Facebook. You’re not going to leave Facebook if it means losing those connections. But imagine if you could connect with your Facebook friends on a different platform. You’d be far more likely to change platforms. Now, interoperability and data portability, data sharing mandates, they won’t magically solve all the competition problems in digital platform markets. It’s not a silver bullet. There’s a reason why it’s just one of many potential reforms offered up by something like that House Judiciary Report. But it is needed to allow true competition to grow, and the good news is there’s bipartisan support for these things. If you look at the Ken Buck report, he talked up interoperability, data portability as “Hey, this is something I think Republicans can get onboard with.” And I agree with some of what Jay and Bruce have said and that data portability and the interoperability are not perfect by any means. But I think it is a step in the right direction. It’s something that’s feasible and most importantly could be pretty quick—something that could happen tomorrow. So I say let’s do it. That’s all for me, Ashley. Back to you.

#### Anti-trust regulation requiring interoperability will induce competition into social media marketplaces:

Dina Srinivasan, 2019 (The Antitrust Case Against Facebook: A Monopolist's Journey Towards Pervasive Surveillance in Spite of Consumers' Preference for Privacy, “Berkeley Business Law Journal,” <https://lawcat.berkeley.edu/record/1128876?ln=en>, Retrieved 8/2/2021)

The fact that this century’s new communications utility is free but necessitates widespread surveillance of consumers is a paradox in a democracy. Facebook watches, monitors, and remembers what over 2 billion people do and say online. Contrary to what those in the advertising industry would regulators to think, American consumers value a state of no surveillance and have attempted to protect this aspect of their privacy since the beginning. The fact that the free market today offers no real alternative to this exchange is a reflection only of the failure of competition. At least for this titan of tech, antitrust law provides a framework for appreciating and correcting for the foreclosure of consumer choice. Facebook is a monopoly that tipped the early market with promises of data privacy and then engaged in a long line of misleading conduct, which foreclosed competition. The historical record tells the story of Facebook’s monopoly power in the social media market. Facebook tried, but could not, degrade the quality of its product to impose commercial surveillance on users through Beacon in the competitive market of 2007. Thereafter, Facebook pivoted to licensing Like buttons, Logins, and other products to independent businesses, which Facebook could leverage for the same purpose. Yet competition between 2008 and 2014 continued to restrain Facebook’s ability to initiate tracking for the purpose of targeted advertising. Facebook had to retreat from alleged accidental tracking, assure consumers and other market participants that the underlying code for social plugins was not used for commercial surveillance, and then promise users an ability to vote on future privacy changes. Only after the exit of competitors, and the barrier to entry that comes with over a billion users on a closed communications protocol, was Facebook able to reverse course. The history of Facebook’s market entry and subsequent rise is the story of Facebook’s monopoly power. Facebook’s pervasive and intrusive commercial surveillance of citizens’ digital footprints is merely this titan’s form of monopoly rents. Consumers today turn from Facebook to other websites and apps and face an identical degradation of quality across millions of sites and competitors on the advertising side of the market. For publishers like The New York Times and others, Facebook extracts commercial surveillance of their customers through publishers’ licenses of Facebook’s business products (e.g., Like buttons etc.). Facebook has commoditized these publishers’ own user data, once a prized proprietary possession, for its own benefit either to sell Facebook advertising or the advertising of a publisher’s competitors. This market structure has deteriorated the pricing power of market actors across the horizontal market and resulted in the duopoly of Facebook and Google—which account for just about the entirety of the growth in the digital advertising market against a backdrop of publishers such as BuzzFeed or The Guardian soliciting reader donations. The historical record that elucidates Facebook’s monopoly power raises the question of whether Facebook’s decade-long course of conduct was anticompetitive—especially in the winner-take-all market of a closed communications platform. The record is replete with reliance-inducing future promises, false statements, disingenuous excuses, and convenient omissions which, collectively, likely deceived users. The adoption of a user referendum process for future privacy changes coupled with the failure to meaningfully notify users of an opportunity to vote further raises the specter of a pattern of anticompetitive conduct. Indeed, the wider record of misleading and deceptive conduct—whether that conduct was the subject of an FTC or congressional investigation or the complaints of advertisement buyers—may point to a more systemic problem which harms not only consumer welfare but also presents risk to market stability. Antitrust scholar Robert Steiner once warned that deception by a dominant firm could have a domino effect within an industry, leading smaller firms to engage in similar patterns of conduct and inefficiency in the industry.303 Indeed, today, the digital advertising industry is considered one of the most fraud-stricken in the world—the industry expects to absorb $19 billion of waste due to fraud in 2018.304 To correct for consumer harm and reduction of choice in the market, a remedy must induce competition and stop horizontal coordination. To induce viable opportunity for new entrants, consumers must be able to export their social graph,305 and Facebook should migrate from a closed to an open communications protocol. A user on Facebook should be able to send a message to, or receive a message from, a user of a competitive social network—in the same way that users of AT&T can call or text a user of Sprint, Verizon, or T-Mobile. The adoption of an open application programing interface for user messages, chats, posts, and other communications could aid this process. The social network LinkedIn permits communications to be distributed across users’ Twitter feeds for example. Additionally, it is paramount that a remedy put a stop to coordination amongst competitors. For this, we need to empower consumers with a singular Do Not Track switch that can counter the collusion in the horizontal market. Consumers must be able to just say no to commercial surveillance—a broad interconnected apparatus that uniquely serves the digital duopoly. While politicians and regulators grapple with how to make sense of current market structures in and consumer frustrations with Big Tech, the principles of antitrust provide clarity for this era’s dominant communications platform.

#### Interoperability requirements would bolster innovation in the social media market:

Jerrold Nadler, et al, 2020 (Chair, Committee on the Judiciary, INVESTIGATION OF COMPETITION IN DIGITAL MARKETS, <https://judiciary.house.gov/uploadedfiles> /competition\_in\_digital\_markets.pdf?utm\_campaign=4493-519, Retrieved 7/22/2021)

An interoperability requirement would allow competing social networking platforms to interconnect with dominant firms to ensure that users can communicate across services.2444 Foremost, interoperability “breaks the power of network effects” by allowing new entrants to take advantage of existing network effects “at the level of the market, not the level of the company.”2445 It would also lower switching costs for users by ensuring that they do not lose access to their network as a result of switching. The implementation cost of requiring interoperability by dominant firms would be relatively low. Unlike interconnecting in traditional communications markets, there is little direct cost associated with interoperating with dominant platforms.2446 Finally, interoperability is an important complement, not substitute, to vigorous antitrust enforcement. As discussed in this Report, Facebook has tipped the social network toward a monopoly, and due to its strong network effects, does not face competitive pressure. On its own, interoperability is unlikely to fully restore competition in the social networking market due to the lack of meaningful competition in the market today. On the other hand, in the absence of pro-competitive policies like interoperability, it is also possible that enforcement alone may provide incomplete relief due to future market tipping.2447

#### Mandating interoperability would bolster competition—resulting in greater privacy and better community moderation standards:

Gene Kimmleman, 9/29/2020 (Senior Advisor, Public Knowledge, <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/JU/JU05/20201001/111072/HHRG-116-JU05-20201001-SD004.pdf>, Retrieved 8/3/2021)

Whether or not cases launched against dominant technology platforms can ultimately yield structural reforms, legislation empowering regulators to expand competitive options for suppliers and consumers of the dominant platforms could immediately start addressing the imbalance of power that reinforces platform dominance.' For example, Congress should call for: Interoperability Major digital platform markets are currently dominated by one company with enormous opportunities to take advantage of network effects and scale economies. To combat these inherent advantages, Congress should empower regulators to mandate interoperability. If new services can easily plug in to the incumbent players, then they have a much better chance of getting off the ground and finding success. A novel email client unable to email existing services would be unlikely to gain traction with consumers. Telephone consumers greatly value being able to call others no matter what network they’re on—a feature possible only through the networks’ interoperability with one another. Digital platform markets should be viewed as similar to email or phone networks and thus interoperability, especially with the dominant company in a market, should be a priority for regulators. By enabling competitors to benefit from the network effects currently exploited exclusively by incumbent platforms, competition should flourish. This would result in lower prices in some markets and higher quality (more features, great privacy protections, variety in community and moderation standards) in others.3