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#### Anti-trust reform is based in free market logics of upholding competition which strengthens free enterprise and saves capitalism.

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Antitrust laws have historically been associated with countries that possess a free-market capitalist economy, which is understood as an economic system in which competition and the market forces of demand and supply determine economic outcomes. This historical association between capitalism and antitrust laws is evident from the fact that the countries that first adopted national antitrust laws, such as Canada, the United States, and the countries of Western Europe, are countries that have long embraced a market economy. On the contrary, the statist economies of the erstwhile Soviet bloc and many developing countries, for the most part, did not institute antitrust laws of the type associated with free market economies.

Notwithstanding these country examples, which indicate a positive association between a capitalist economic system and antitrust laws, there exist arguments that both support and oppose antitrust laws for a capitalist economy. Arguments in support of antitrust laws for a capitalist economy begin with the fundamental understanding that the most important ingredient of a capitalist system is market competition. The presence of a competitive market is vital to achieving the efficiency levels that a capitalist economy seeks. Therefore, competitive forces need to be protected to discipline the market players, especially the dominant ones. By preventing and punishing anticompetitive practices by market players, an antitrust law protects and promotes market competition. 1

In the United States, which is commonly understood to be the leading bastion of free-market capitalism and one of the first countries to enact an antitrust law, the role of antitrust legislation in preserving the capitalist character of its economic system is underscored by the near-constitutional status accorded to its antitrust statues by the U.S. Supreme Court. 2 The Court described these statutes as “the Magna Carta of free enterprise” and “as important to the preservation of economic freedom and our free enterprise system as the Bill of Rights is to the protection of our fundamental personal freedoms.”3 Such a sentiment is appropriate, given that the American antitrust law, the Sherman Act, was passed in 1890 to protect economic competition from rapidly-growing “trusts.”4

While the social and political zeitgeist has changed considerably since the passing of the Sherman Act, the fact remains that antitrust is perceived as key to “protecting consumers against anticompetitive conduct that raises prices, reduces output, and hinders innovation and economic growth.”5 Moreover, it is understood that “competition is a public good, and society cannot expect the victims of anticompetitive conduct to protect themselves.”6 The implication therefore is that government power, through the enforcement of antitrust statutes, is critical to reining in corporate power in order to protect economic competition and capitalism.

Taking a global perspective, the idea that antitrust laws serve as a legislative bulwark against anticompetitive practices is not exclusive to the regulatory environment of the United States. Many other countries have adopted antitrust laws for the same goal, among others. And for the many developing and transition countries that adopted antitrust laws in recent decades, these laws are viewed as tools to promote economic development as well.

The view that antitrust laws are required to protect and promote competition has, however, been seriously contested, especially since the publication in 1978 of The Antitrust Paradox: A Policy at War with Itself by law professor and federal appellate court judge Robert Bork. 7 The subtitle to Bork’s highly influential book sums up the critique commonly leveled against antitrust laws: “[C]ertain of its doctrines preserve competition, while others suppress it, resulting in a policy at war with itself.”8 The fundamental problem stems largely from the difficulty in deciding which values should be ultimately promoted through the application of antitrust laws—consumer welfare or business efficiency? If the answer is both, then how much emphasis should be placed on each? Even if the goals are unambiguously certain and universally agreed upon, the question still remains as to what body of knowledge the courts can use consistently to adjudicate antitrust cases. 9

#### **Attempts of battery innovation use the environment as a disposable resource causing mass environmental destruction**

Katwala 18 (Amit Katwala is a senior editor at WIRED UK. “The spiralling environmental cost of our lithium battery addiction” , <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/lithium-batteries-environment-impact> , 05.08.2018, date accessed 10/3/21)

But there’s a problem. As the world scrambles to replace fossil fuels with clean energy, the environmental impact of finding all the lithium required to enable that transformation could become a serious issue in its own right. “One of the biggest environmental problems caused by our endless hunger for the latest and smartest devices is a growing mineral crisis, particularly those needed to make our batteries,” says Christina Valimaki an analyst at Elsevier.

In South America, the biggest problem is water. The continent’s Lithium Triangle, which covers parts of Argentina, Bolivia and Chile, holds more than half the world’s supply of the metal beneath its otherworldly salt flats. It’s also one of the driest places on earth. That’s a real issue, because to extract lithium, miners start by drilling a hole in the salt flats and pumping salty, mineral-rich brine to the surface.

Then they leave it to evaporate for months at a time, first creating a mixture of manganese, potassium, borax and lithium salts which is then filtered and placed into another evaporation pool, and so on. After between 12 and 18 months, the mixture has been filtered enough that lithium carbonate – white gold – can be extracted.

It’s a relatively cheap and effective process, but it uses a lot of water – approximately 500,000 gallons per tonne of lithium. In Chile’s Salar de Atacama, mining activities consumed 65 per cent of the region’s water. That is having a big impact on local farmers – who grow quinoa and herd llamas – in an area where some communities already have to get water driven in from elsewhere.

There’s also the potential – as occurred in Tibet – for toxic chemicals to leak from the evaporation pools into the water supply. These include chemicals, including hydrochloric acid, which are used in the processing of lithium into a form that can be sold, as well as those waste products that are filtered out of the brine at each stage. In Australia and North America, lithium is mined from rock using more traditional methods, but still requires the use of chemicals in order to extract it in a useful form. Research in Nevada found impacts on fish as far as 150 miles downstream from a lithium processing operation.

According to a report by Friends of the Earth, lithium extraction inevitably harms the soil and causes air contamination. In Argentina’s Salar de Hombre Muerto, locals claim that lithium operations have contaminated streams used by humans and livestock, and for crop irrigation. In Chile, there have been clashes between mining companies and local communities, who say that lithium mining is leaving the landscape marred by mountains of discarded salt and canals filled with contaminated water with an unnatural blue hue.

“Like any mining process, it is invasive, it scars the landscape, it destroys the water table and it pollutes the earth and the local wells,” said Guillermo Gonzalez, a lithium battery expert from the University of Chile, in a 2009 interview. “This isn’t a green solution – it’s not a solution at all.”

But lithium may not be the most problematic ingredient of modern rechargeable batteries. It is relatively abundant, and could in theory be generated from seawater in future, albeit through a very energy-intensive process.

Two other key ingredients, cobalt and nickel, are more in danger of creating a bottleneck in the move towards electric vehicles, and at a potentially huge environmental cost. Cobalt is found in huge quantities right across the Democratic Republic of Congo and central Africa, and hardly anywhere else. The price has quadrupled in the last two years.

Unlike most metals, which are not toxic when they’re pulled from the ground as metal ores, cobalt is “uniquely terrible,” according to Gleb Yushin, chief technical officer and founder of battery materials company Sila Nanotechnologies.

“One of the biggest challenges with cobalt is that it’s located in one country,” he adds. You can literally just dig up the land and find cobalt, so there’s a very strong motivation to dig it up and sell it, and a a result there’s a lot of motivation for unsafe and unethical behaviour.” The Congo is home to ‘artisanal mines’, where cobalt is extracted from the ground by hand, often using child labour, without protective equipment.

#### Extraterritorial application of anti-trust law stem from a fundamental contradiction in American law that privileges private interests over global well-being.

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Last but not least, the Supreme Court rejected the Haitian refugees' attempt to enforce their rights against non-refoulement at federal and international law, mainly on the basis that the U.S. could not enforce this right extraterritorially (the refugees were not considered to be in the United States, as most were quarantined in the infamous U.S. naval base at Guantanamo, Cuba).181 Paradoxically, the Supreme Court within the same period "permitted extraterritorial application of the Sherman Act to foreign conduct that produces a substantial anticompetitive effect in the United States."182 The different outcomes in these cases indicate an underlying public/private split - the U.S. could unproblematically extend the territorial reach of its commercial legislation overseas, but it would be slow to extend domestic humanrights protection to migrants from a poor third-world country. I have already argued that a public/private scheme, such as the one that underlies the Supreme Court's decisions here, is fallacious. It presupposes that private law rules are neutral, while cases of collective nonrecognition of governments and interventions in civil society, such as applying U.S. law to a foreign country, are necessarily political and should be minimized. However, as my commentary on the Haitian intervention illustrates, the international economic programs imposed by the U.S.-dominated IMF should not be confused with the rhetoric of "a clash between a liberating foreign force and a corrupt local ruling class" since it really was "the sealing of a long-term pact between that foreign force and the Haitian elite."183 To construe these economic programs in the discourse of neutrality is to clothe alliances of domination and exploitation with a veil of legitimacy.

#### That culminates in extinction from climate change, nuclear war, extreme inequality, and perpetual exploitation of the Global South

Foster 19, Sociology Professor @ Oregon (John Bellamy, February 1st, “Capitalism Has Failed—What Next?” *The Monthly Review*, Volume 70, Issue 9, https://monthlyreview.org/2019/02/01/capitalism-has-failed-what-next/, Accessed 06-30-2021)

Less than two decades into the twenty-first century, it is evident that capitalism has failed as a social system. The world is mired in economic stagnation, financialization, and the most extreme inequality in human history, accompanied by mass unemployment and underemployment, precariousness, poverty, hunger, wasted output and lives, and what at this point can only be called a planetary ecological “death spiral.”1 The digital revolution, the greatest technological advance of our time, has rapidly mutated from a promise of free communication and liberated production into new means of surveillance, control, and displacement of the working population. The institutions of liberal democracy are at the point of collapse, while fascism, the rear guard of the capitalist system, is again on the march, along with patriarchy, racism, imperialism, and war.

To say that capitalism is a failed system is not, of course, to suggest that its breakdown and disintegration is imminent.2 It does, however, mean that it has passed from being a historically necessary and creative system at its inception to being a historically unnecessary and destructive one in the present century. Today, more than ever, the world is faced with the epochal choice between “the revolutionary reconstitution of society at large and the common ruin of the contending classes.”3

Indications of this failure of capitalism are everywhere. Stagnation of investment punctuated by bubbles of financial expansion, which then inevitably burst, now characterizes the so-called free market.4 Soaring inequality in income and wealth has its counterpart in the declining material circumstances of a majority of the population. Real wages for most workers in the United States have barely budged in forty years despite steadily rising productivity.5 Work intensity has increased, while work and safety protections on the job have been systematically jettisoned. Unemployment data has become more and more meaningless due to a new institutionalized underemployment in the form of contract labor in the gig economy.6 Unions have been reduced to mere shadows of their former glory as capitalism has asserted totalitarian control over workplaces. With the demise of Soviet-type societies, social democracy in Europe has perished in the new atmosphere of “liberated capitalism.”7

The capture of the surplus value produced by overexploited populations in the poorest regions of the world, via the global labor arbitrage instituted by multinational corporations, is leading to an unprecedented amassing of financial wealth at the center of the world economy and relative poverty in the periphery.8 Around $21 trillion of offshore funds are currently lodged in tax havens on islands mostly in the Caribbean, constituting “the fortified refuge of Big Finance.”9 Technologically driven monopolies resulting from the global-communications revolution, together with the rise to dominance of Wall Street-based financial capital geared to speculative asset creation, have further contributed to the riches of today’s “1 percent.” Forty-two billionaires now enjoy as much wealth as half the world’s population, while the three richest men in the United States—Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates, and Warren Buffett—have more wealth than half the U.S. population.10 In every region of the world, inequality has increased sharply in recent decades.11 The gap in per capita income and wealth between the richest and poorest nations, which has been the dominant trend for centuries, is rapidly widening once again.12 More than 60 percent of the world’s employed population, some two billion people, now work in the impoverished informal sector, forming a massive global proletariat. The global reserve army of labor is some 70 percent larger than the active labor army of formally employed workers.13

Adequate health care, housing, education, and clean water and air are increasingly out of reach for large sections of the population, even in wealthy countries in North America and Europe, while transportation is becoming more difficult in the United States and many other countries due to irrationally high levels of dependency on the automobile and disinvestment in public transportation. Urban structures are more and more characterized by gentrification and segregation, with cities becoming the playthings of the well-to-do while marginalized populations are shunted aside. About half a million people, most of them children, are homeless on any given night in the United States.14 New York City is experiencing a major rat infestation, attributed to warming temperatures, mirroring trends around the world.15

In the United States and other high-income countries, life expectancy is in decline, with a remarkable resurgence of Victorian illnesses related to poverty and exploitation. In Britain, gout, scarlet fever, whooping cough, and even scurvy are now resurgent, along with tuberculosis. With inadequate enforcement of work health and safety regulations, black lung disease has returned with a vengeance in U.S. coal country.16 Overuse of antibiotics, particularly by capitalist agribusiness, is leading to an antibiotic-resistance crisis, with the dangerous growth of superbugs generating increasing numbers of deaths, which by mid–century could surpass annual cancer deaths, prompting the World Health Organization to declare a “global health emergency.”17 These dire conditions, arising from the workings of the system, are consistent with what Frederick Engels, in the Condition of the Working Class in England, called “social murder.”18

At the instigation of giant corporations, philanthrocapitalist foundations, and neoliberal governments, public education has been restructured around corporate-designed testing based on the implementation of robotic common-core standards. This is generating massive databases on the student population, much of which are now being surreptitiously marketed and sold.19 The corporatization and privatization of education is feeding the progressive subordination of children’s needs to the cash nexus of the commodity market. We are thus seeing a dramatic return of Thomas Gradgrind’s and Mr. M’Choakumchild’s crass utilitarian philosophy dramatized in Charles Dickens’s Hard Times: “Facts are alone wanted in life” and “You are never to fancy.”20 Having been reduced to intellectual dungeons, many of the poorest, most racially segregated schools in the United States are mere pipelines for prisons or the military.21

More than two million people in the United States are behind bars, a higher rate of incarceration than any other country in the world, constituting a new Jim Crow. The total population in prison is nearly equal to the number of people in Houston, Texas, the fourth largest U.S. city. African Americans and Latinos make up 56 percent of those incarcerated, while constituting only about 32 percent of the U.S. population. Nearly 50 percent of American adults, and a much higher percentage among African Americans and Native Americans, have an immediate family member who has spent or is currently spending time behind bars. Both black men and Native American men in the United States are nearly three times, Hispanic men nearly two times, more likely to die of police shootings than white men.22 Racial divides are now widening across the entire planet.

Violence against women and the expropriation of their unpaid labor, as well as the higher level of exploitation of their paid labor, are integral to the way in which power is organized in capitalist society—and how it seeks to divide rather than unify the population. More than a third of women worldwide have experienced physical/sexual violence. Women’s bodies, in particular, are objectified, reified, and commodified as part of the normal workings of monopoly-capitalist marketing.23

The mass media-propaganda system, part of the larger corporate matrix, is now merging into a social media-based propaganda system that is more porous and seemingly anarchic, but more universal and more than ever favoring money and power. Utilizing modern marketing and surveillance techniques, which now dominate all digital interactions, vested interests are able to tailor their messages, largely unchecked, to individuals and their social networks, creating concerns about “fake news” on all sides.24 Numerous business entities promising technological manipulation of voters in countries across the world have now surfaced, auctioning off their services to the highest bidders.25 The elimination of net neutrality in the United States means further concentration, centralization, and control over the entire Internet by monopolistic service providers.

Elections are increasingly prey to unregulated “dark money” emanating from the coffers of corporations and the billionaire class. Although presenting itself as the world’s leading democracy, the United States, as Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy stated in Monopoly Capital in 1966, “is democratic in form and plutocratic in content.”26 In the Trump administration, following a long-established tradition, 72 percent of those appointed to the cabinet have come from the higher corporate echelons, while others have been drawn from the military.27

War, engineered by the United States and other major powers at the apex of the system, has become perpetual in strategic oil regions such as the Middle East, and threatens to escalate into a global thermonuclear exchange. During the Obama administration, the United States was engaged in wars/bombings in seven different countries—Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Somalia, and Pakistan.28 Torture and assassinations have been reinstituted by Washington as acceptable instruments of war against those now innumerable individuals, group networks, and whole societies that are branded as terrorist. A new Cold War and nuclear arms race is in the making between the United States and Russia, while Washington is seeking to place road blocks to the continued rise of China. The Trump administration has created a new space force as a separate branch of the military in an attempt to ensure U.S. dominance in the militarization of space. Sounding the alarm on the increasing dangers of a nuclear war and of climate destabilization, the distinguished Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved its doomsday clock in 2018 to two minutes to midnight, the closest since 1953, when it marked the advent of thermonuclear weapons.29

Increasingly severe economic sanctions are being imposed by the United States on countries like Venezuela and Nicaragua, despite their democratic elections—or because of them. Trade and currency wars are being actively promoted by core states, while racist barriers against immigration continue to be erected in Europe and the United States as some 60 million refugees and internally displaced peoples flee devastated environments. Migrant populations worldwide have risen to 250 million, with those residing in high-income countries constituting more than 14 percent of the populations of those countries, up from less than 10 percent in 2000. Meanwhile, ruling circles and wealthy countries seek to wall off islands of power and privilege from the mass of humanity, who are to be left to their fate.30

More than three-quarters of a billion people, over 10 percent of the world population, are chronically malnourished.31 Food stress in the United States keeps climbing, leading to the rapid growth of cheap dollar stores selling poor quality and toxic food. Around forty million Americans, representing one out of eight households, including nearly thirteen million children, are food insecure.32 Subsistence farmers are being pushed off their lands by agribusiness, private capital, and sovereign wealth funds in a global depeasantization process that constitutes the greatest movement of people in history.33 Urban overcrowding and poverty across much of the globe is so severe that one can now reasonably refer to a “planet of slums.”34 Meanwhile, the world housing market is estimated to be worth up to $163 trillion (as compared to the value of gold mined over all recorded history, estimated at $7.5 trillion).35

The Anthropocene epoch, first ushered in by the Great Acceleration of the world economy immediately after the Second World War, has generated enormous rifts in planetary boundaries, extending from climate change to ocean acidification, to the sixth extinction, to disruption of the global nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, to the loss of freshwater, to the disappearance of forests, to widespread toxic-chemical and radioactive pollution.36 It is now estimated that 60 percent of the world’s wildlife vertebrate population (including mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and fish) have been wiped out since 1970, while the worldwide abundance of invertebrates has declined by 45 percent in recent decades.37 What climatologist James Hansen calls the “species exterminations” resulting from accelerating climate change and rapidly shifting climate zones are only compounding this general process of biodiversity loss. Biologists expect that half of all species will be facing extinction by the end of the century.38

If present climate-change trends continue, the “global carbon budget” associated with a 2°C increase in average global temperature will be broken in sixteen years (while a 1.5°C increase in global average temperature—staying beneath which is the key to long-term stabilization of the climate—will be reached in a decade). Earth System scientists warn that the world is now perilously close to a Hothouse Earth, in which catastrophic climate change will be locked in and irreversible.39 The ecological, social, and economic costs to humanity of continuing to increase carbon emissions by 2.0 percent a year as in recent decades (rising in 2018 by 2.7 percent—3.4 percent in the United States), and failing to meet the minimal 3.0 percent annual reductions in emissions currently needed to avoid a catastrophic destabilization of the earth’s energy balance, are simply incalculable.40

Nevertheless, major energy corporations continue to lie about climate change, promoting and bankrolling climate denialism—while admitting the truth in their internal documents. These corporations are working to accelerate the extraction and production of fossil fuels, including the dirtiest, most greenhouse gas-generating varieties, reaping enormous profits in the process. The melting of the Arctic ice from global warming is seen by capital as a new El Dorado, opening up massive additional oil and gas reserves to be exploited without regard to the consequences for the earth’s climate. In response to scientific reports on climate change, Exxon Mobil declared that it intends to extract and sell all of the fossil-fuel reserves at its disposal.41 Energy corporations continue to intervene in climate negotiations to ensure that any agreements to limit carbon emissions are defanged. Capitalist countries across the board are putting the accumulation of wealth for a few above combatting climate destabilization, threatening the very future of humanity.

#### The alternative is a global socialist movement.

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The moment is ripe for an alternative. Labor unrest has grown around the world, encompassing industrial workers, teachers, health workers, janitors, and others across the Middle East and North Africa, in Latin America, and even in the US. Indeed, we may be nearing a classic Leninist “revolutionary situation,” which could be the culmination of “the world revolution of 20xx.”4 If so, the Global Left should be better prepared to meet the challenge.

The good news is that there is a “new Global Left” that enjoys a multitude of emerging movements, including climate justice groups led by young people.5 The rich array of activist groups and the dynamism and passion they display excite a sense of possibility. However, the very diversity of movements and their weak interconnection could constrain the Global Left’s ability to achieve meaningful change.6 Without consensus around a common agenda, how are we to make the great transition from an entrenched global system based on capitalist profit, top-down decisionmaking, war, and environmental degradation to a world where people and the planet take center stage in politics and policy? Surely we need not only resistance on a multiplicity of grounds, but also agreement on a clear, coherent, and feasible alternative to the unjust, undemocratic, and unsustainable status quo.

A Missing Global Actor The socialist and communist movements and parties of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries pinned their hopes on the capacity of a united working class, defined as a largely male industrial laboring class (“the proletariat”), to tame and challenge capitalism. In the latter part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the nature of that class changed, now encompassing a broader spectrum of working people, such as those in public and private services (including care workers) who labor under the supervision of highly paid managers and administrators, along with the precariat and gig economy workers. On the Left, however, many do not regard that more inclusive working class as a central actor, despite its composition spanning race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, and gender.7 Instead, today’s movements—certainly in the US—seem to define actors based on particular identities and interests. Rather than the singular actor of yore (the working class), today there is a multiplicity of actors across numerous movements. The question arises as to whether such a multiplicity of actors can generate the necessary coordination and craft a strategy to challenge the powers-that-be—economic and political elites situated in national governments; in the financial, corporate, and military sectors; and in institutions of global governance. If those elites are so well connected, why is it so difficult for our numerous movements to coalesce around a shared identity and agenda? In my estimation, the Left has lost sight of the proverbial forest for the proverbial trees. It has gotten far too caught up in culture wars and battles over identity, forgetting the centrality of political economy to the hidden injuries not only of class, but also of race and ethnicity, women’s subordination, the destruction of the commons, and inter- and intra-state rivalries, violence, and war. This strategic shift away from political economy has removed the Left’s traditional constituency—the working class in all its breadth and diversity—from a meaningful role. The shift also has confused the Left’s priorities. For instance, we cannot truly address the problems of racism and discrimination without giving urgent attention to the systemic problems of class: low-income communities devastated by precarious employment, the loss of public investment, dirty air and water, poor-quality schooling, and bad health. The politics of class cannot be divorced from those of race and of sex, because class is imbued with race and sex, and race and sex are themselves imbued with class. Under patriarchal and racist capitalism, there is no class exploitation without racial and sexual oppression. The separation of the three intersecting dimensions across unconnected movements—often lacking in understanding of and solidarity with each other—is among the unfortunate outcomes of our times, caused to some degree by partial, segmented internal politics, but largely by the relentless and effective political, cultural, and ideological campaigns of the ruling elites.

Catalytic Action Now

In the wake of the global financial crisis, it became clear that the world needed a new economic system. Change did not come about, however. To offer a viable alternative to financialization and runaway “shareholderism,” movements need to stand for workplace democracy and shared management, and for long-term rational and people-oriented planning over short-term profit. Although breaking up huge corporations should be the goal, taxing them adequately and using the revenue for societal needs and rights, not for continued militarism, can steer society in the right direction in the interim.

At the same time, we also need to think bigger. Contrary to the conventional wisdom that socialist and communist experiments all ended in failure, I believe that there is a lot we can learn from them. Indeed, this “failure literature” lacks balance and historical accuracy. The great socialist, communist, and liberation movements of the past may not have accomplished all that they could have or intended to, but they were very effective providing education and culture for the poor and imparting the legacy of equality, economic justice, and women’s advancement. The Communist movement had its shortcomings, but it promoted women’s equality and racial equality, supported numerous liberation movements, and checked capitalist and imperialist expansion.

In contrast, our recent movements have failed even in the short run. They may have changed the subject—certainly OWS highlighted the problem of income inequalities and helped reintroduce capitalism and its flaws into the national conversation in the US—but they could not compel change of the system itself, much less dislodge its major actors and beneficiaries. Unlike the progressive movements of the late nineteenth century and much of the twentieth century that gave us socialism and social democracy, an end to British colonialism, Third World development, and the demise of authoritarianism in southern Europe, the movements of the twenty-first century have not been able to make headway in structural or systemic terms. Instead, the collapse of world communism—celebrated across the globe—actually generated new crises and chaos.

One response to the crisis has been the new municipalism, which aims to implement localized democratic practices and people-oriented resource allocation. In one promising example, the administration of the Communist mayor of Santiago, Chile, has created a “people’s pharmacy,” offered cheap eye-care and glasses, increased public housing, and embraced leftist approaches to community safety, among other progressive people-oriented initiatives.8 But localism is not enough, as many of our problems are global in nature. The recklessness of the financial sector has had ripple effects across borders; the obsession with economic growth and capital accumulation has generated a massive, global environmental crisis. That brilliant experiment in radical democratic feminist municipalism—Rojava in northern Syria—was overturned in October 2019 by a brutal Turkish invasion facilitated by the Trump administration. Thus, we must heed Dr. King’s message to “take the nonviolent movement international” and to planetize it.

The Global Left and its infrastructure remain fragmented and disconnected, except for periodic mass rallies against the most egregious actions of global capitalism and imperial states. But it wasn’t always so. Once, vibrant Internationals were organized to guide and promote a worldwide movement. The influential First International, initially called the International Workingmen’s Association, was formed in 1864, but contention between the anarchist and socialist wings led to its demise in the late 1870s. Its successor, the Second International, had great success, but fractured in the run-up to World War I. The Third International formed after the Russian revolution to unite socialist and communist groups from across Europe and Asia, but later, under Stalin, became corrupted into the highly centralized Comintern.9

Both the successes and the failures of these Internationals offer vital lessons: a powerful worldwide movement could be premised on both a global political organization with a strategy for change and the strength of plural and diverse movements that call the status quo into question. To move forward, we need to look back at the old Internationals and, at the same time, not give up on the World Social Forum. The crises and injustices of our times call for both a coordinated “united front” and a loosely aligned “popular front.”

Some say the language of the past—socialism, communism, planning—is outmoded and unlikely to resonate. And yet, many young people embrace the term socialism; in the US, they rallied around Bernie Sanders’s call for “democratic socialism,” and in the UK, they coalesced around the Labour Party’s left-wing faction, Momentum, and its leader, Jeremy Corbyn. In Tunisia, where young people are losing hope in capitalist democracy because of high unemployment and other economic difficulties, the left-wing student union UGET and the many young supporters of the Front Populaire call for planning and a strong welfare state. Around the world, women have come together around a more inclusive, transformative vision of feminism, which some call “feminism for the 99%.”10 The “left nationalism” of Scotland, Northern Ireland, and the Kurds is also part of the new Global Left and could help constitute a global movement against capitalism, militarism, and oligarchic states.

The world’s injustices as well as new possibilities for alliance have inspired calls for coordinated forms of organizing. The late Egyptian Marxist economist Samir Amin, for instance, called for a Fifth International.11 But to balance the complementary needs of global coordination and plural autonomy, two Internationals may be needed, one that remains horizontally based—the movement of movements—and the other vertically organized, drawing inspiration and lessons from the old Internationals.

What might this mean in practical, strategic terms? To start, we should revitalize the World Social Forum.12 It encompasses diverse grievances, identities, and interests; it remains the site for dialogic discussion and the cultivation of solidarity across movements; and it has resisted the authoritarian impulses and practices of capital and the state. It can remain an open space for dialogue among place-based and identity-expressive movements. Building up the Global Left and helping advance a Great Transition, however, requires a global political organization to do the necessary crossmovement “translation” work and deliver a plan for structural change at national, regional, and global levels. Accomplishing this will be an arduous task, but we can’t afford to wait.

Whether it is called the Fifth International, the United Front, the Progressive International, or the World Party, such an organization would be vertically organized, along the lines of the earlier Internationals but with the involvement of anti-imperialist feminist groups such as Code Pink, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, Marche Mondiale des Femmes, and the new Feminist Foreign Policy Project. This planetized formation would encompass progressive parties, anti-neoliberal unions, and anti-war movements across the globe. It would practice democratic decision-making and offer a clear vision and mission of an alternative system of production, social reproduction, trade, and international relations. It would revive the 2011 Arab Spring call, “The people want the fall of the regime,” and create a powerful message demanding a re-enactment of what occurred in 1989/1990, but in reverse: “The people want the fall of the ruling capitalist elites.”

Such a plan calls for a renewed emphasis on the working class, expansively defined and represented. Unions could organize the unorganized, carry out the necessary political education work among their members, and create broad coalitions with progressive political parties and unions across borders.13 It is worth noting that unions of teachers and nurses have been taking to the streets and making demands in Morocco, Iran, Iraq, Tunisia, Chile, and France, as well as in the US. Such parallel developments are ripe for cross-fertilization and coordination.

We should take the best from the past—planning, coordinating, internationalism, and action— and move forward with a common agenda for systemic transformation. To move forward with an International, veterans of past, more centralized movements and organizations might take the lead in organizing an initial meeting, to convene in a country that has felt the devastating effects of neoliberalism, such as Argentina or Greece. Another venue could be Tunisia—now the only genuinely democratic country in the Middle East/North Africa region. Our movements need to coalesce to make the present moment of populism and hegemonic decline an advantageous one for a Great Transition—this time toward a global socialist-feminist democracy built through the synergy of a new International and a revitalized WSF.

### 1NC — DA

#### The FTC is focusing on health care and big tech. Health care is under the radar

Levine 8-25-2021, master’s degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism and a bachelor of arts in English from the University of Pennsylvania. She is also an alumna of the Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics, a program in Germany and Poland that explores the ethics of reporting on politics, war and genocide (Alexandra, “How Biden's tech trustbuster could change health care,” *Politico*, https://www.politico.com/newsletters/future-pulse/2021/08/25/how-bidens-tech-trustbuster-could-change-health-care-797333)

Lina Khan’s Federal Trade Commission has its eyes on health care. The agency known for efforts to rein in Big Tech companies like Facebook and Amazon is also enmeshed in high-stakes health care and health tech battles that extend well beyond Silicon Valley. Case in point: The FTC trial that kicked off yesterday examining monopoly concerns in the market for cancer screening technology. (More on that below.) That closely watched antitrust case — involving the giant Illumina and startup Grail — predates Khan’s confirmation as FTC chair. But it underscores how health issues are looming over the agenda, particularly heading into the pandemic's second year. The way health care companies and consumer health apps handle sensitive data “is an area that I'm sure [Khan’s] very, very interested in,” said Jessica Rich, former director of the FTC’s consumer protection bureau, adding that the Biden administration's FTC will also be closely scrutinizing hospital mergers. “I expect her and the commission to take a very bold approach to what constitutes harm for both,” Rich said. “I expect her to pay close attention to algorithms and potential discrimination in health care, both denials and pricing issues which the FTC's laws can address.” The FTC’s jurisdiction touches nearly the entire health economy. While its competition bureau looks at health care mergers like the Illumina-Grail deal, its consumer protection side is focused on health privacy and data security issues, as well as fighting bogus medical claims on everything from weight loss to Covid cures. When Congress passed the Covid-19 Consumer Protection Act last year, the agency was granted new authority to police Covid scams. Although Khan hasn't spoken publicly about her health care agenda, she's likely to take issue with health apps and companies whose business models maximize, incentivize and monetize data collection. Of particular concern is how firms disclose what they’re doing with consumers’ data — and whether it may still be deceptive or unfair.

#### The plan requires an unexpected, significant and drawn-out expenditure of finite law enforcement resources

Dafny 21, Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School and the John F. Kennedy School of Government, and former Deputy Director for Healthcare and Antitrust in the Bureau of Economics at the Federal Trade Commission. Professor Dafny’s research focuses on competition in health care markets, and the intersection of industry and public policy. (Leemore, “The Covid-19 Pandemic Should Not Delay Actions to Prevent Anticompetitive Consolidation in US Health Care Markets,” *Pro Market*, <https://promarket.org/2021/06/10/covid-pandemic-consolidation-pandemic-monopoly/>)

However, as Commissioner Rebecca Slaughter, the current acting FTC chair has noted, these efforts have “faced resistance, with two of these recent victories only coming after district court setbacks.” Blocking a horizontal merger, even when it appears to be an “open and shut” case to a layperson, requires extraordinary resources, including large investigation and litigation teams, as well as economic and other subject matter experts who must analyze the transaction, lay out the case for blocking the merger, and rebut arguments advanced by Defendants’ attorneys and experts. To pick a recent example, consider the proposed merger of two hospital systems in the Memphis area, which the FTC filed to block in November 2020. Based on the FTC’s complaint, the merger would have reduced the number of competing systems from four to three and created a system with over a 50 percent market share. In the face of litigation, the parties abandoned the deal—consistent with this being a straightforward case. Although the FTC prevailed without a trial, it took nearly a year from the merger announcement to the abandonment. Over that period, the FTC likely devoted thousands of staff hours to the investigation and lawsuit and expended substantial taxpayer resources on expert witnesses. The higher the payoff from the merger for the merging parties—and the payoff in the case of an increase in market power can be substantial—the greater the incentive for defendants to invest extraordinary resources to fight a merger challenge. Even if there is only a middling (and in some cases, small) chance of getting a merger through, it may well be in the parties’ interest to see if they can prevail, absorbing the agencies’ (i.e., DOJ and FTC’s) scarce resources in that attempt and preventing them from devoting those resources to investigate other transactions or anticompetitive practices. The substantial resources required to challenge transactions, paired with stagnating enforcement budgets, may explain why authorities have elected not to challenge some horizontal transactions they would likely have challenged in previous eras. Using data on a wide range of industries, antitrust scholar John Kwoka documents that enforcers rarely raise concerns about changes in market structure that used to draw scrutiny—that is, mergers that yield five or more market participants.

#### Resources are finite and are drawn from under-the-radar M and A priorities

McCabe 18, covers technology policy from The Times' Washington bureau, formerly of Axios (David, “Mergers are spiking, but antitrust cop funding isn't,” Axios, https://www.axios.com/antitrust-doj-ftc-funding-2f69ed8c-b486-4a08-ab57-d3535ae43b52.html)

The number of corporate mergers has jumped in recent years, but funding has stagnated for the federal agencies that are supposed to make sure the deals won’t harm consumers. Why it matters: A wave of mega-mergers touching many facets of daily life, from T-Mobile’s merger with Sprint to CVS’s purchase of Aetna, will test the Justice Department's and Federal Trade Commission’s ability to examine smaller or more novel cases, antitrust experts say. What they’re saying: “You have finite resources in terms of people power, so if you are spending all of your time litigating big mergers … there might be some investigations where decisions might have to be made about which investigations you can pursue,” said Caroline Holland, who was a senior staffer in DOJ’s Antitrust Division under President Obama and is now a Mozilla fellow. What's happening: More mergers are underway now than at any point since the recession. The total number of transactions reported to the federal government in fiscal year 2017, and not including cases given expedited approval or where the agencies couldn't legally pursue an investigation, is 82% higher than the number reported in 2010 and 55% higher than the number reported in 2012. Funding for antitrust officials who weigh the deals hasn’t kept pace. The funding for the Department of Justice’s antitrust division has fallen 10% since 2010, when adjusted for inflation. That's in line with the broader picture: not adjusting for inflation, the Department's overall budget increased just slightly in 2016 and 2017. Funding for the FTC has fallen 5% since 2010 (adjusted for inflation). An FTC spokesperson declined to comment on funding levels and Antitrust Division officials didn't provide a comment. Driving the news: Merger and acquisition activity is up 36% in the United States compared to the same time last year, according to Thomson Reuters data from April. Several deals under government review have gotten national attention, including Sinclair’s purchase of Tribune's TV stations or T-Mobile’s deal with Sprint, which stands to reduce the number of national wireless providers from four to three. Meanwhile, the Justice Department is awaiting the ruling on its lengthy legal effort to block AT&T’s proposed $85 billion purchase of Time Warner. Yes, but: It’s not the attention-grabbing mega-mergers that advocates worry will get less of a close look thanks to a shortage of funds. Instead, some say budget limitations are likely to matter when officials are deciding which smaller or "borderline" deals to investigate further. “Sometimes there’s nothing there,” said Holland of the agency's early investigations. “Other times, it might be, ‘This is kind of a close call, and we’ve got three or four close calls and we need to pick one of them.’" "It could mean settlements get accepted that otherwise wouldn’t, or deals that should be challenged aren’t," said Michael Kades of the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, an antitrust-enforcement-friendly think tank that has done extensive research on the topic, in an email.

#### Health consolidation collapses public health---specifically rural care

Numerof 20, PhD @ Bryn Mawr, internationally recognized consultant and author with over 25 years of experience in the field of strategy development and execution, business model design, and market analysis (Rita, “Covid-Induced Hospital Consolidation: What Are The Impacts On Consumers, And Potentially The President,” *Forbes*, https://www.forbes.com/sites/ritanumerof/2020/11/11/covid-induced-hospital-consolidation-what-are-the-impacts-on-consumers-and-potentially-the-president/?sh=692d6fc94da0)

Covid-19 has initiated yet another wave: A wave of hospital mergers and acquisitions that will have devastating consequences for public health if industry doesn’t soon execute an about-face. Whether because they’re on the brink of bankruptcy and have subscribed to the half-truth that size is protective, or because they think they can score some good deals and believe scale and success are synonymous, the financial fallout of Covid-19 has caused many hospital executives to make consolidation a core part of their future plans. With the intent of increasing care quality and decreasing consumer costs despite these challenging times, the merger between Shannon Medical Center and Community Hospital and partnership between Intermountain and Sanford Health are just two examples. There are multiple reasons why consumers absolutely cannot afford for industry to bulk up in an effort to weather this storm. The first is that the positive efforts executives claim consolidation will help them accomplish often prove to be futile. Research shows that wherever market concentration is high, there are also higher prices for both consumers and the employers who provide their healthcare coverage. In the absence of competition, costs increase and quality deteriorates. That’s the opposite of progress. Second, generally speaking, the union of two institutions with operational shortcomings only creates one larger institution with even more operational shortcomings! That’s not progress either. Third, Covid-induced consolidation will only make future progress many times more difficult. The larger an organization is, the more it will struggle to rapidly adapt to healthcare disruptions like we’re seeing today. Retail giants like Walmart, Walgreens, Amazon and CVS are pivoting to cater to healthcare consumer demands for affordability and accessibility. Right now, they’re still a blip on the radar relative to mainstream healthcare delivery, but they are looking to eventually corner the market and drive the industry forward. And as they continue down this path, consolidated healthcare systems will be left behind, potentially at the expense of the consumers in that area. The potential impact of continued consolidation on rural patients is especially concerning. Rural communities may have a limited number of the big-box retailers mentioned above. And the unfortunate fact of the matter is that when a larger hospital or health system purchases a smaller, rural hospital, it’s usually only a matter of time before the purchasing system realizes that unless they drastically pare down and reconfigure operations, the acquired hospital will never be profitable. Many eventually decide to close up shop, in some instances reducing or even eliminating rural patients’ options for care delivery. In the absolute worst-case scenario, this is exactly the reality all consumers could face if consolidation continues at its current pace. In theory and if left unchecked, all of the hospitals in the United States could be owned by only a handful of mammoth systems that then lack incentive to continually deliver quality services at lower total cost of care.

#### Rural care is key to US ag exports

Lichtenwald 16, CEO of Medsphere Systems Corporation (Irv, “Is CMS Efforts Enough to Transform Rural Healthcare?,” http://hitconsultant.net/2016/02/22/32016/)

The scenario is far from unrealistic. For the most part, non-urban healthcare organizations are not doing well. In fact, almost every rural hospital in the country is operating near the margin or in the red. According to iVantage Health Analytics Senior Vice President Michal Topchik, speaking to Health Data Management, 67 rural hospitals have closed since 2010, and 283 were vulnerable to closure last year. Already in 2016 iVantage has identified 673 vulnerable rural hospitals, with 210 at very high risk. While only about 15 percent of the American population, roughly 46 million people, live in rural areas, they do some of the nation’s most essential work. Mostly, they grow food, produce energy or provide services to the people that grow food and produce energy. Obviously, the rural healthcare situation matters in terms of food and energy security at home, but also in terms of economics—the United States is by far the largest global exporter of food, with roughly $40 billion separating America from number two, and is on the cusp of ending energy imports for the first time since 1950. In reality, rural healthcare is transitioning, not disappearing, mostly because doing nothing is just bad economics. People in rural areas need care. If they can’t get it locally, they have to be flown to the nearest facility, which ends up being more expensive over the long term than funding a local hospital. To their credit, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) are already aware of the situation in rural America and have been taking steps toward fixing it. Speaking recently to the National Rural Health Association, CMS Acting Administrator Andy Slavitt explained that the agency is “establishing a CMS Rural Health Council to work across the entire agency to oversee our work in three strategic priority areas– first, improving access to care to all Americans in rural settings; second, supporting the unique economics of providing health care in rural America; and third making sure the health care innovation agenda appropriately fits rural health care markets.” As Slavitt points out, rural Americans tend to be older, earn less money and they generally lack health insurance—more than 60 percent of citizens without health insurance live in rural areas in states that have not expanded Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act. Nearly 75 percent of government health insurance exchange users make less than 250 percent of the federal poverty level—currently a bit less than $12,000 a year for an individual and slightly more than $24,000 for a family of four. So, if the argument could be made that rural America is home to the greatest number of healthcare challenges, then it also represents the greatest opportunity. If we can make affordable healthcare work outside urban areas, we may have a template applicable to other scenarios. On Slavitt’s first two points—access and economics—CMS is working to sign rural Americans up for health insurance and adjusting requirements and payment models for rural care. Which brings us to the “innovation agenda,” Slavitt’s term for the digitization of healthcare and the all-in bet the federal government has made on the benefits of health IT. The goal here is to transform rural hospitals and clinics into efficient, wired, lean operations that can absorb the realities of rural care and still operate in the black. With 35 percent of rural hospitals losing money and almost two-thirds running a negative operating margin, there’s simply no way rural facilities can invest in health IT without help. From CMS, that help takes the form of several planned or in-process programs: – Medicaid State Innovation Model grants for technical support in smaller rural hospitals – Aggregation of services in rural communities creating benefits from population health – The Frontier Community Health Integration Project (summer 2016), developing and testing new models in isolated areas using telemedicine and integration approaches – The ACO investment model for hospitals that can’t invest in ACO infrastructure; the model now serves 350,000 rural beneficiaries through 1,100 rural providers – Incorporating telemedicine where appropriate; CMS is publishing a Medicaid final rule that for the first time allows for face-to-face encounters using telehealth It’s clear that CMS understands we can’t leave rural hospitals to fend for themselves. But it also seems clear that a lot of hospitals invested in electronic health records (EHRs) they could ill afford to qualify for Meaningful Use funds—dollars that seldom covered implementation costs for solutions that didn’t yield significant cost savings and required additional technical personnel. By and large, that MU money has been dispensed. The carrot has been eaten. What Medicare- and Medicaid-heavy hospitals can expect next is two sticks: more stringent reporting requirements necessitating EHR use and direct penalties (for now) related to Meaningful Use non-compliance. “The high capital and operating costs associated with health IT, specifically EHRs, have put some hospitals in a difficult position,” wrote Becker’s Hospital CFO in a prescient January 2014 article. “Do they absorb the financial hit now, even if they know they can’t afford it? Most organizations are doing so …” Yes, CMS is trying to help lessen the impact of that metaphorical beating, but these rural hospitals also have to make decisions to help themselves. Too many are paying for systems they can’t afford to maintain. Moreover, they are unable to invest in necessary security, leaving them increasingly open to data breaches. Many are also still handicapped by the costs of ICD-10 transition, for which there was no federal reimbursement. Rural hospitals need a comprehensive EHR platform that integrates with a revenue cycle system so they can properly capture charges and manage the billing process, and effectively collect on previously lost billing. These systems need to be available as a subscription service so that rural hospitals don’t have to come up with huge money down. And they can’t require the hiring of an additional 50 application specialists to make the new systems work. “The benefits of IT are still to come,” Standard and Poor’s Marin Arrick told Becker’s Hospital CFO more than two years ago. Still the economic crisis in rural care rages on, certainly lessening access to care for millions of Americans and arguably impacting the labor force that produces food, energy, etc.

#### US ag and food security stabilize the globe — collapse greenlights *great power wars*

Castellaw 17—Lieutenant General, former President of the non-profit Crockett Policy Institute (John, “Opinion: Food Security Strategy Is Essential to Our National Security,” https://www.agri-pulse.com/articles/9203-opinion-food-security-strategy-is-essential-to-our-national-security)

The United States faces many threats to our National Security. These threats include continuing wars with extremist elements such as ISIS and potential wars with rogue state North Korea or regional nuclear power Iran. The heated economic and diplomatic competition with Russia and a surging China could spiral out of control. Concurrently, we face threats to our future security posed by growing civil strife, famine, and refugee and migration challenges which create incubators for extremist and anti-American government factions. Our response cannot be one dimensional but instead must be a nuanced and comprehensive National Security Strategy combining all elements of National Power including a Food Security Strategy.

An American Food Security Strategy is an imperative factor in reducing the multiple threats impacting our National wellbeing. Recent history has shown that reliable food supplies and stable prices produce more stable and secure countries. Conversely, food insecurity, particularly in poorer countries, can lead to instability, unrest, and violence.

Food insecurity drives mass migration around the world from the Middle East, to Africa, to Southeast Asia, destabilizing neighboring populations, generating conflicts, and threatening our own security by disrupting our economic, military, and diplomatic relationships. Food system shocks from extreme food-price volatility can be correlated with protests and riots. Food price related protests toppled governments in Haiti and Madagascar in 2007 and 2008. In 2010 and in 2011, food prices and grievances related to food policy were one of the major drivers of the Arab Spring uprisings. Repeatedly, history has taught us that a strong agricultural sector is an unquestionable requirement for inclusive and sustainable growth, broad-based development progress, and long-term stability.

The impact can be remarkable and far reaching. Rising income, in addition to reducing the opportunities for an upsurge in extremism, leads to changes in diet, producing demand for more diverse and nutritious foods provided, in many cases, from American farmers and ranchers. Emerging markets currently purchase 20 percent of U.S. agriculture exports and that figure is expected to grow as populations boom.

Moving early to ensure stability in strategically significant regions requires long term planning and a disciplined, thoughtful strategy. To combat current threats and work to prevent future ones, our national leadership must employ the entire spectrum of our power including diplomatic, economic, and cultural elements. The best means to prevent future chaos and the resulting instability is positive engagement addressing the causes of instability before it occurs.

This is not rocket science. We know where the instability is most likely to occur. The world population will grow by 2.5 billion people by 2050. Unfortunately, this massive population boom is projected to occur primarily in the most fragile and food insecure countries. This alarming math is not just about total numbers. Projections show that the greatest increase is in the age groups most vulnerable to extremism. There are currently 200 million people in Africa between the ages of 15 and 24, with that number expected to double in the next 30 years. Already, 60% of the unemployed in Africa are young people.

Too often these situations deteriorate into shooting wars requiring the deployment of our military forces. We should be continually mindful that the price we pay for committing military forces is measured in our most precious national resource, the blood of those who serve. For those who live in rural America, this has a disproportionate impact. Fully 40% of those who serve in our military come from the farms, ranches, and non-urban communities that make up only 16% of our population.

Actions taken now to increase agricultural sector jobs can provide economic opportunity and stability for those unemployed youths while helping to feed people. A recent report by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs identifies agriculture development as the core essential for providing greater food security, economic growth, and population well-being.

Our active support for food security, including agriculture development, has helped stabilize key regions over the past 60 years. A robust food security strategy, as a part of our overall security strategy, can mitigate the growth of terrorism, build important relationships, and support continued American economic and agricultural prosperity while materially contributing to our Nation’s and the world’s security.

### 1NC — T

**Prohibition requires forbidding a practice—the plan is only a hindrance**

**Van Eaton** et al **17** (Joseph Van Eaton, Gail Karish Gerard Lavery Lederer, lawyers for BEST BEST & KRIEGER, LLP. Michael Watza, KITCH DRUTCHAS WAGNER VALITUTTI & SHERBROOK, “BEFORE THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION WASHINGTON, D.C”, COMMENTS OF SMART COMMUNITIES SITING COALITION, March 8, 2017 , https://tellusventure.com/downloads/policy/fcc\_row/smart\_communities\_siting\_coaltion\_comments\_mobilitie\_8mar2017.pdf)

2. What are at issue legally are prohibitions and effective prohibitions, and not hindrances, as the Commission seems to suggest in its Notice. The term “prohibit” is not defined in the Act, but it has an ordinary meaning: to formally forbid (something) by law, rule, or other authority; or to “prevent, stop, rule out, preclude, make impossible.” A mere “hindrance” “is simply not **in accord with** the ordinaryand fairmeaning” ofthe termprohibit,104 and can provide no basis for additional Commission intrusions on local authority over wireless facilities. Much of what Mobilitie complains about is a “hindrance” at most (and usually a hindrance magnified by its own actions).

**Only per se illegality prohibits a practice---rules of reason prohibit anticompetitive effects for individual acts, or instances of ‘practice.’**

Stevens 90 (John Paul Stevens- Justice, Supreme Court of the United States, “FTC v. Superior Court Trial Lawyers Ass'n,” 493 U.S. 411, Lexis

LEdHN[3C] [3C]LEdHN[14] [14]Equally important is the second error implicit in respondents' claim to immunity from the per se rules. In its opinion, the Court of Appeals **assumed** that the antitrust laws permit, but do not require, the condemnation of price fixing and boycotts without proof of market power. 15 The opinion further assumed that the **per se rule** **prohibiting** such activity "is only a rule of 'administrative convenience and efficiency,' **not** a **statutory command**." 272 U.S. App. D. C., at 295, 856 F. 2d, at 249.This statement contains two errors. HN10 [\*\*\*\*42] The per se [\*433] rules are, of course, the product of **judicial** interpretations of the Sherman Act, but the rules nevertheless have the same force and effect as **any other** **statutory** commands. Moreover, while the per se rule against price fixing and boycotts is indeed **justified** in part by "administrative convenience," the Court of Appeals erred in describing the prohibition as justified **only** by such concerns. The **per se rules** also reflect a **long-standing judgment** that the **prohibited practices** by their **nature** have "a substantial potential for impact on competition." Jefferson Parish Hospital District No. 2 v. Hyde, 466 U.S. 2, 16 (1984).

[\*\*\*\*43] LEdHN[15] [15]As we explained in Professional Engineers, HN11 the rule of reason in antitrust law generates

"two complementary categories of antitrust analysis. In the first category are **agreements** whose nature and necessary effect are **so plainly anticompetitive** that **no** elaborate **study** of the industry is needed to establish their illegality -- they are 'illegal **per se.'** In the second category are agreements whose competitive effect can only be evaluated by analyzing the facts peculiar to the business, the history of the restraint, and the reasons why it was imposed." 435 U.S., at 692.

[\*\*\*873] "Once experience with a particular kind of restraint enables the Court to predict with confidence that the rule of reason will condemn it, it has applied a conclusive presumption that the restraint is unreasonable." Arizona v. Maricopa County Medical Society, 457 U.S. 332, 344 (1982).

[\*\*781] LEdHN[16] [16] [\*\*\*\*44] The per se rules in **antitrust** law serve purposes analogous to per se restrictions upon, for example, **stunt flying** in congested areas or **speeding**. Laws prohibiting stunt flying or setting speed limits are justified by the State's interest in protecting human life and property. Perhaps **most** violations of such rules **actually** cause **no harm**. No doubt many **experienced** drivers and pilots can operate much more safely, even **at prohibited speeds**, than the average citizen.

[\*434] If the especially skilled drivers and pilots were to paint messages on their cars, or attach streamers to their planes, their conduct would have an expressive component. High speeds and unusual maneuvers would help to draw attention to their messages. Yet the laws may nonetheless be **enforced** against these skilled persons **without proof** that their conduct was **actually harmful or dangerous**.

In part, the justification for **t**hese per se rules is rooted in administrative convenience. They are also **supported**, however, by the observation that every speeder and every stunt pilot poses **some threat to the community**. An unpredictable event may overwhelm the skills of the best driver or pilot, even if the [\*\*\*\*45] proposed course of action was entirely prudent when initiated. A bad driver going slowly may be more dangerous that a good driver going quickly, but a good driver who obeys the law is safer still.

#### VOTE NEG:

#### FIRST---Ground---balancing tests devastate core links, because they allow the practice when it’s beneficial. AND, creates a moving target, because the disallowed behavior is context-dependent. And bidirectionality---rule of reason creates legally protected practices

#### SECOND---limits---they lead to a wave of legal standard affs that avoid generics

### 1NC — CP

#### The United States federal government should establish crisis communication channels between the United States and the People’s Republic of China, for use as a crisis de-escalation tool, and communicate peaceful intentions through all relevant diplomatic channels.

#### The United States Department of Defense and Military should massively increase military contracts to Lockheed Martin and Tesla, Inc., for the development of new lithium-ion battery development.

#### The United States federal government should focus on economic inequality by —

* retool customs requirements and encourage digital e-commerce platforms
* invest in infrastructure and affordable housing
* encourage career-orientated education pathways
* encourage usage of new energy technology.

#### The United States federal government should denounce President Trump, and corruption of his administration, as anti-democratic, while creating dialogue with Russia and China to prevent misinformation.

#### First plank miscalc and US-China escalation.

Campbell & Sullivan 19 – Kurt; Chair and CEO of the Asia Group, 2018-19 Kissinger Fellow at the McCain Institute, and former US Assistant Secretary of States for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. Jake; nonresident senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, former National Security Adviser to the US Vice President in 2013-2014, and former Director of Policy Planning at the US Department of State. (“How America Can Both Challenge and Coexist With China” Foreign Affairs. September/October 2019. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/competition-with-china-without-catastrophe>) //LFS—SR

To achieve such coexistence, Washington will need to enhance both U.S.-Chinese crisis management and its own capacity for deterrence. Even as Cold War adversaries, the United States and the Soviet Union worked concertedly to reduce the risk that an accidental collision would escalate to nuclear war; they set up military hot lines, established codes of conduct, and signed arms control agreements. The United States and China lack similar instruments to manage crises at a time when new domains of potential conflict, such as space and cyber­space, have increased the risk of escalation. In every military domain, the two countries need agreements that are at least as formal and detailed as the [U.S.-Soviet Incidents at Sea Agreement](https://2009-2017.state.gov/t/isn/4791.htm), a 1972 deal that established a set of specific rules aimed at avoiding maritime misunderstandings. The United States and China also need more communication channels and mechanisms to avoid conflict—especially in the South China Sea—to allow each side to quickly clarify the other’s intentions during an incident. The bilateral military relationship should no longer be held hostage to political disagreements, and senior military officials on both sides should engage in more frequent and substantive discussions to build personal ties as well as understandings of each side’s operations. Historically, progress on some of these efforts, especially crisis communication, has proved difficult: Chinese leaders fear that crisis communication could embolden the United States to act with impunity and would require devolving too much authority to senior military officers in the field. But these worries may be easing, given China’s growing power and military reforms.

#### The next plank solves batteries — that’s 1AC Daniels

#### Next set solves inequality

Pinkus et al 16 – Gary Pinkus is managing partner for McKinsey & Company in North America. James Manyika is a director of the McKinsey Global Institute, where Sree Ramaswamy is a senior fellow. (Gary Pinkus, James Manyika, and Sree Ramaswamy December 3, 2016, 11-11-2016, "Here’s How to Get the U.S. Economy to Grow 3.5% or More," Fortune, <http://fortune.com/2016/12/03/us-gdp-growth-donald-trump/>)

Our new research identifies five key priorities that can help shake off stagnation and create more widely shared prosperity. An ocean of ink has already been spilled about topics such as taxes, regulation, entitlements, and debt, but we believe it’s critical to shift the focus onto accelerating growth. We estimate that these five initiatives can collectively raise GDP growth to 3% or even 3.5%—levels not seen since the 1990s. Two of the biggest opportunities involve harnessing the forces of digital technology and globalization. This is somewhat ironic, since these two forces have deepened many of the disparities we see across the economy. Trade, in particular, has taken a beating of late. But the way to address those who have been left behind is to harness the growth opportunities digitization and globalization bring by getting more small businesses, more workers, and more parts of the country to participate and benefit. The United States has to reverse its persistent productivity slowdown, and improve the digital capabilities of lagging sectors and firms is an important piece of that puzzle. This effort can go hand-in-hand with encouraging more small firms to pursue opportunities in global markets. Today, fewer than 1% of US companies export, a far lower share than in any other advanced economy. Becoming an exporter was once daunting for small businesses, but the Internet has made borders less formidable. The United States can retool customs requirements and encourage small businesses to take advantage of digital e-commerce platforms to serve overseas customers. Globalization may have left some regions behind, but deeper engagement with global investors may help them catch up. Over the past decade, the top one-third of US cities captured 55% of all inward foreign direct investment, while the bottom third accounted for only 7%. Many of the regions that lost manufacturing jobs still have experienced workers, technical know-how, and industrial facilities. They are attractive destinations—and connecting them with foreign investors can help them script a second act. The three remaining priorities in our growth agenda involve putting America’s financial capital, human capital, and natural resources to work more effectively. First, we need to focus on the 80% of the population who live in the nation’s cities or surrounding metro areas. Investing in transportation infrastructure and affordable housing could make a huge difference to their productivity, their disposable income, and their quality of life. Second, the United States needs to build a more responsive labor market with more career paths outside the traditional degree track. Policy makers and the private sector need to work together to establish more apprenticeships and training programs and to leverage technology solutions to connect people with employment opportunities more efficiently. And finally, the United States can ride a wave of innovation to make the energy sector more productive, speeding the allocation of capital to the most promising opportunities. Making the entire economy more energy-efficient would spur capital investment and create household savings that could spur demand growth.

#### The last plank solves domestic and international misinformation and info wars through rebuking Trump

## 1NC — Uncertainty

### 1NC — China

#### The fear of a new “cold war” battle for tech supremacy with China is a race manufactured to cover up US digital colonialism — only movements against capitalism can reign in US imperialism and prevent the aff’s impact.

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A Chinese or US digital empire?

In the West, there is a lot of chatter about “a new Cold War,” with the US and China battling it out for global technological supremacy. Yet, a close look at the tech ecosystem shows that US corporations are overwhelmingly dominant in the global economy.

China, after decades of high growth, generates around 17 percent of global GDP and is predicted to overtake the US by 2028, feeding into claims that American empire is on the decline (a narrative that was previously popular with the rise of Japan). When measuring the Chinese economy by purchasing power parity, it is already larger than the US. However, as economist Sean Starrs points out, this wrongly treats states as self-contained units, “interacting as billiard balls on a table.” In reality, Starrs contends, American economic dominance “hasn’t declined, it globalized.” This is particularly true when looking at Big Tech.

In the post-WWII period, corporate production was spread across transnational production networks. For instance, in the 1990s, companies like Apple began outsourcing electronics manufacturing from the US to China and Taiwan, exploiting sweatshop workers employed by companies like Foxconn. US tech transnationals often design the IP for, say, high-performance router switches (e.g. Cisco) while outsourcing manufacturing capacity to hardware manufacturers in the South.

Starrs profiled the world’s top 2,000 publicly traded companies, as ranked by Forbes Global 2000, and organized them according to 25 sectors, showing the dominance of US transnationals. As of 2013, they dominated in terms of profit shares in 18 of the top 25 sectors. In his forthcoming book American Power Globalized: Rethinking National Power in the Age of Globalization, Starrs shows that the US remains dominant. For IT Software & Services, US profit share is 76 percent versus China’s 10 percent; for Technology Hardware & Equipment, it is 63 percent for the US versus 6 percent for China, and for Electronics, it is 43 and 10 percent, respectively. Other countries, such as South Korea, Japan and Taiwan, often fare better than China in these categories as well.

Portraying the US and China as equal contenders in the battle for global tech supremacy, as is often done, is therefore highly misleading. For example, a 2019 United Nations “Digital Economy” report states that: “Geography of the digital economy is highly concentrated in two countries” — the United States and China. But the report not only ignores factors identified by authors like Starrs it also fails to account for the fact that most of China’s tech industry is dominant inside China, save a handful of major products and services, such as 5G (Huawei), CCTV cameras (Hikvision, Dahua), and social media (TikTok), which also hold large market shares abroad. China also has substantial investments in some foreign tech firms, but this hardly suggests a genuine threat to the dominance of the US, which has a much larger share of foreign investments as well.

In reality, the US is the supreme tech empire. Outside of US and Chinese borders, the US leads in the categories of search engines (Google); web browsers (Google Chrome, Apple Safari); smartphone and tablet operating systems (Google Android, Apple iOS); desktop and laptop operating systems (Microsoft Windows, macOS); office software (Microsoft Office, Google G Suite, Apple iWork); cloud infrastructure and services (Amazon, Microsoft, Google, IBM); social networking platforms (Facebook, Twitter); transportation (Uber, Lyft); business networking (Microsoft LinkedIn); streaming entertainment (Google YouTube, Netflix, Hulu), and online advertising (Google, Facebook) — among others.

The upshot is, whether you are an individual or a business, if you are using a computer, American companies benefit the most. They own the digital ecosystem.

Political domination and the means of violence

The economic power of US tech giants goes hand-in-hand with their influence in the political and social spheres. As with other industries, there is a revolving door between tech executives and the US government, and tech corporations and business alliances spend a great deal lobbying regulators for policies favorable to their specific interests — and digital capitalism in general.

Governments and law enforcement agencies, in turn, form partnerships with tech giants to do their dirty work. In 2013, Edward Snowden famously revealed that Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PalTalk, YouTube, Skype, AOL, and Apple all shared information with the National Security Agency via the PRISM program. More revelations followed, and the world learned that data stored by corporations and transmitted over the internet is sucked into enormous government databases for exploitation by states. Countries in the South have been targets of NSA surveillance, from the Middle East to Africa and Latin America.

Police and the military also work with tech corporations, who are happy to cash fat checks as providers of surveillance products and services, including in countries across the South. For example, through its little-known Public Safety and Justice Division, Microsoft has built an extensive partnership ecosystem with “law enforcement” surveillance vendors, who run their tech on Microsoft cloud infrastructure. This includes a city-wide command-and-control surveillance platform called “Microsoft Aware” that was purchased by police in Brazil and Singapore and a police vehicle solution with facial recognition cameras that has been rolled out in Cape Town and Durban, South Africa.

Microsoft is also deeply involved with the prison industry. It offers a variety of prison software solutions that cover the entire correctional pipeline, from juvenile “offenders” to pretrial and probation, through jail and prison, as well as those released from prison and put on parole. In Africa, they partnered with a company called Netopia Solutions, which offers aPrison Management Software (PMS) platform that includes “escape management” and prisoner analytics.0

While it is not clear where exactly Netopia’s Prison Management Solution is deployed, Microsoft stated that “Netopia is [a Microsoft partner/vendor] in Morocco with a deep focus on transforming digitally, government services in North and Central Africa.” Morocco has a track record of brutalizing dissidents and torturing prisoners, and the US recently recognized its annexation of Western Sahara, in contravention of international law.

For centuries, imperial powers tested technologies to police and control their citizens on foreign populations first, from SirFrancis Galton’s pioneering work on fingerprinting applied in India and South Africa, to America’s combination of biometrics and innovations in managing statistics and data management that formed the first modern surveillance apparatus to pacify the Philippines. As historian Alfred McCoy has shown, the collection of surveillance technologies deployed in the Philippines offered a testing ground for a model which was eventually brought back to the United States for use against domestic dissidents. Microsoft and its partners’ high-tech surveillance projects suggest that Africans continue to serve as a laboratory for carceral experimentation.

Conclusion

Digital technology and information plays a central role in politics, economy, and social life everywhere. As part of the American empire project, US transnational corporations are reinventing colonialism in the South through their ownership and control of intellectual property, digital intelligence, and the means of computation. Most of the core infrastructure, industries, and functions performed by computers are the private property of American transnational corporations, who are overwhelmingly dominant outside US borders. The largest firms, such as Microsoft and Apple, dominate global supply chains as intellectual monopolies.

An unequal exchange and division of labor ensues, reinforcing dependency in the periphery while perpetuating mass immiseration and global poverty.

Instead of sharing knowledge, transferring technology, and providing the building blocks for shared global prosperity on equal terms, the rich countries and their corporations aim to protect their advantage and shake down the South for cheap labor and rent extraction. By monopolizing the core components of the digital ecosystem, pushing their tech in schools and skills training programs, and partnering with corporate and state elites in the South, Big Tech is capturing emerging markets. They will even profit from surveillance services provided to police departments and prisons, all to make a buck.

#### No US-China war

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In recent years, a radical overcorrection appears to have taken place among many American scholars and policymakers, exemplified by Allison [1], who have expressed increasingly confident beliefs that China’s intentions are hostile to the US [5, 15, 19, 39, 58]. These beliefs are especially pronounced within the Trump administration, but have now also been expressed many foreign policymakers from previous administrations and more traditional experts on US-China relations.

This confident pessimism has two sources, neither of which is well-founded. The first is categorical assumptions about the behavior of rising states or authoritarian states in general. Many realist scholars assume that China’s intentions are hostile to US interests because the anarchic nature of the international system engenders inexorable zero-sum competition for power [40, 46], a logically-untenable claim that has been roundly refuted.12 Others assume that divergences in American and Chinese political values and regime types necessarily imply incompatible preferences for the international order at the systemic level [1, 17, 48, 52]. Yet as has been widely recognized, these particular variables are themselves indeterminate, and interact with many other domestic-level factors to determine China’s aggregate national preferences for the international order ([12, 41]:521; [60]:44). Indeed, China may very well (though not necessarily) prefer to maintain the status quo order from which it has so overwhelmingly benefitted ([7, 8]:xix; [26, 55, 56]).

Secondly, other observers have extrapolated from China’s increased “assertiveness” on regional territorial issues since 2009 to conclude that China’s intentions are broadly revisionist across all issue areas [5, 63]. The apparent rationale is that because China had previously exhibited cooperative behavior regarding the SCS and restraint toward Taiwan that its cooperation with the international economic order must similarly be misrepresenting its true goals [18, 43, 50]. As such, an increasingly common conclusion is that China’s initiation of new regional institutions such as the AIIB and BRI and its state-led industrial policies, large current-account surplus, sovereign lending, and expanding FDI are evidence of its preference for a less liberalized international economic order.13

This conclusion is unwarranted, however. Although the scholarly consensus now holds that China was previously misrepresenting its true goals on narrow regional territorial issues, China has yet to exhibit clearly revisionist behavior regarding the rules and norms of the liberal international order more generally, even as it has become more powerful [8, 47, 55, 57, 60, 62]. As Alastair Iain Johnston has convincingly argued, China’s “assertive turn” is almost entirely limited to the South China Sea, and does not extend to the broader international order: “one should be cautious about generalizing from these maritime disputes to Chinese foreign policy writ large...it is possible for a state to be newly assertive on some limited range of issues while leaving other major policies unchanged” ([31]:46). Furthermore, Christensen points out that even when China’s actions are noncooperative – e.g., by gaining advantageous financing from Chinese state-owned banks for foreign energy deals, stealing intellectual property, computer hacking, or “dumping” exports to gain market share – this does not constitute rewriting the existing rules of the international order. “It simply constitutes free-riding on existing rules, an entirely different kettle of fish” ([8]:57).

In short, in some issue areas – human rights policy and specific regional territorial issues in East Asia – the US and China clearly have real conflicts of interests. Yet this does not give us insights into the compatibility of US and Chinese interests on other issues, e.g., the global economic order and governing structure. On the latter issues, the goals of two countries might very well be more compatible. The likelihood of this depends on the credibility of China’s cooperative signals in these issue areas, which, in turn, depends in part on the degree of US hedging toward China.

Particularly in the economic realm, China has sustained and even increased its support for the rules and institutions that define the status quo order, continuing to champion economic liberalization even as American leadership has wavered under President Donald Trump. China’s institutional initiatives, such as the AIIB and BRI, as well as its increased influence in existing institutions, have so far served to augment the existing rules and norms of the U.S.-led order rather than challenge them. Furthermore, China has continued to pursue domestic economic reforms that would increase its cooperation regarding trade imbalances, intellectual property and cybersecurity [10, 11, 24, 49]. Again, this cooperation certainly does not imply that China’s long-term intentions are unambiguously benign on these issues – strong incentives to misrepresent have still obtained, particularly in the absence of US hedging – but in contrast to the territorial issues that are the subject of China’s “assertive turn”, China’s intentions on economic and institutional issues remain significantly uncertain.

Disturbingly, the Trump administration has overtly drawn on the flawed assumptions characterized above and expressed confident beliefs that China’s intentions are hostile. According to the 2017 US National Security Strategy, China is a “revisionist power” that “want[s] to shape a world antithetical to U.S. values and interests...seeks to displace the United States in the Indo-Pacific region, expand the reaches of its state-driven economic model, and reorder the region in its favor” and is “attempting to erode American security and prosperity” [64].14 Several of Trump’s most prominent foreign policy and economic advisers have written extensively on China’s hostility, cast China as the primary threat to US national security and economic wellbeing, and characterized war with China as inevitable and perhaps even desirable [39, 48, 51]. Correspondingly, the administration has begun to implement policies of economic containment toward China, levelling over 200 billion dollars of tariffs on Chinese imports (and counting), blocking Chinese FDI in the United States, and demanding that China increase imports of US goods to reduce the bilateral trade imbalance to specific thresholds.

Ironically, the Trump administration’s hedging strategy now lends considerable (though incomplete) credibility to China’s sustained economic and institutional cooperation. Yet that very hedging strategy is likely driven by unjustified and inflexible pessimism about China’s intentions, making it unlikely that the current leadership will draw appropriate lessons from China’s subsequent behavioral signals. To the extent that China continues to defend and advocate a rules-based liberal economic order in the face of Trump’s economic hedging, this constitutes a more credible signal of China’s benign intentions than did its previous cooperation under unconditional US accommodation.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration’s apparent confidence about China’s hostility, based on seriously flawed assumptions, does not portend that the current leadership is likely to positively update its beliefs should China continue its general cooperation within the existing international order. Nor does Trump’s narcissistic psychological profile or the track record of his administration, which has consistently twisted evidence to support preconceived beliefs and suppressed contrary opinions [44]. Thus, current US foreign policy turns the logic of hedging on its head: rather than hedging due to uncertainty, policymakers have assumed China’s hostility and adopted policies of containment in response. This implies that if the Thucydides trap produces preventive war between the US and a hypothetically benign China, it will not be due to rational uncertainty, but rather because American leaders fail to rationally update their beliefs in response to China’s cooperative signals and instead falsely assume China’s intentions to be hostile.

## 1NC — Cartels

### 1NC — NoKo

#### No Korea war---mutual vulnerability.

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Do These Principles Apply to North Korea?

With these principles in mind, can deterrence continue to work vis-a-vis North Korea? In short, yes. Throughout the evolution of the U.S-North Korean deterrence relationship, vulnerability has played an important role in the nuclear strategies and policies of both sides. The vulnerability of U.S. allies and assets in the region to North Korea’s intermediate-range missile and artillery barrages has almost certainly been a check on a more aggressive U.S. strategy, whether geared toward nonproliferation or regime change. It is certainly plausible that in the absence of this vulnerability the chances of the U.S. preventively attacking North during the Trump administration would have been higher, especially considering the extremely hawkish views of his national security adviser in 2017. As a result of this vulnerability, the U.S. routinely demonstrates its dedication to security agreements with allies in word and deed. Strategic bomber flights and military exercises, for example, demonstrate to North Korea their own vulnerability to U.S. and allied power in the region. Conversely, although the Kim regime would like nothing more than to unify the Korean Peninsula under North Korean leadership (dubbed the “holy grail of North Korean statecraft” in a recent report), it has refrained from overt and aggressive military action in pursuit of this goal. There is no doubt that Kim, like his predecessors, is wary of such behavior in the face of U.S. and allied military capabilities. Today, North Korea remains vulnerable to U.S. nuclear attacks, while the United States and its regional partners remain vulnerable to nuclear attack or retaliation from North Korea. This mutual vulnerability necessitates caution on both sides.

Recent progress in North Korean missile technology have made portions of the U.S. mainland vulnerable, giving the U.S. further reason to avoid unnecessary provocation. In 2017, North Korea conducted several tests of intercontinental ballistic missiles, two of which demonstrated the capability to potentially reach the continental United States. More recently, North Korea has successfully tested a submarine-launched ballistic missile and has showcased a new and larger submarine-launched ballistic missile at a recent parade. As a result, the United States continues to invest significantly in homeland missile defense, as well as to deploy missile defenses to defend allies and assets in the region. Missile defenses likely contribute to increased feelings of vulnerability among Kim’s regime, which may see the build-up as a prelude to a military offensive. Though imperfect, these attempts to reduce vulnerability enhance deterrence by potentially denying North Korea the expected military gains from a limited missile attack, even as fully effective missile defenses might contribute to strategic instability. Regardless of their effectiveness, Kim will have to factor in these defensive capabilities when assessing the success of engaging in conflict and will question the ability to achieve even limited goals through limited means. For example, in order to ensure the success of a missile attack, Kim would have to increase the size of the salvo in order to compensate for missiles likely to be shot down by U.S. and allied defenses. But knowing that a larger initial attack would be perceived as particularly aggressive and would likely invite a larger counter-attack, he might be deterred from pursuing whatever limited gains a smaller attack might have achieved. From Kim’s perspective, U.S. military capabilities are more than sufficient to make military success for North Korea in any conflict appear difficult and costly. Vulnerability to severe retaliation and punishment from U.S. strategic forces is also currently unavoidable for Kim. In fact, this very vulnerability has driven the North Korean nuclear program toward a capability to directly threaten the U.S., thereby demonstrating its own acknowledgement of vulnerability. In sum, both sides are vulnerable to each other. Most importantly for U.S. decision-makers, there is no likely development in the near to medium term that might remove this sense of vulnerability from Kim’s mind.

### 1NC — Hypersonics

#### Hypersonics are impossible---physics.

Broad 21, Citing David Wright, a physicist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Cameron L. Tracy, a materials scientist at the Union of Concerned Scientists. (William J., 1-15-2021, "Hypersonic Superweapons Are a Mirage, New Analysis Says", *New York Times*, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/15/science/hypersonic-missile-weapons.html)

Military experts call hypersonic warheads the next big thing in intercontinental warfare. They see the emerging arms, which can deliver nuclear or conventional munitions, as zipping along at up to five miles a second while zigzagging through the atmosphere to outwit early-warning satellites and some interceptors. The superfast weapons, experts say, lend themselves to surprise attacks. President Trump has bragged about his “super-dupers,” even referring to the planned weapon as “hydrosonic,” a brand of electric toothbrush. Last year, his budget asked the Pentagon to spend $3.2 billion on hypersonic arms research, up $600 million from the previous year’s request. And as President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. takes command of the nation’s military, he will have to consider whether to sustain the defense work undertaken in the Trump years. Now, independent experts have studied the technical performance of the planned weapon and concluded that its advertised features are more illusory than real. Their analysis is to be published this week in Science & Global Security. In an interview, David Wright, a physicist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an author of the new analysis, called the superweapon a mirage. “There’re lots of claims and not many numbers,” he said. “If you put in the numbers, you find that the claims are nonsense.” Military officials called the paper insubstantial, saying it was based on outdated data. But they declined to disclose new findings. “Due to the classified nature of hypersonics technologies, we are not at liberty to publicly discuss current capabilities,” Jared Adams, chief spokesman for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or Darpa, said in an email. Richard L. Garwin, a physicist and longtime adviser to the federal government, called the paper “very good and important.” He added that he had provided his own similar criticisms of hypersonic warheads to defense officials. James M. Acton, a nuclear analyst at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, called the paper “a serious, credible and important piece of work.” Dr. Wright is affiliated with M.I.T.’s Laboratory for Nuclear Security and Policy and did the analysis with Cameron L. Tracy, a materials scientist at the Union of Concerned Scientists, a private group based in Cambridge, Mass., that often backs arms control. By definition, hypersonic vehicles fly at more than five times the speed of sound — or up to dozens of times faster than jetliners. The warheads rise into space atop a traditional long-range missile but then descend quickly into the atmosphere to bank, careen and otherwise maneuver. They’re basically stubby gliders. The curved upper surfaces of their wedge-shaped bodies give them some of the lifting power of an airplane wing. Dr. Wright and Dr. Tracy based their analysis on the Hypersonic Technology Vehicle 2 — an experimental warhead developed by the Air Force and Darpa. Their findings, they say, also apply to other American prototypes, as well as devices being developed by China, Russia and other countries. The computer simulations drew on the physics of moving bodies and public disclosures about the Hypersonic Technology Vehicle 2 in order to model its most plausible flight paths. The team zeroed in on signature phases of hypersonic flight — when the vehicle zooms through the atmosphere and then plunges to hit a target. The two experts say their computer modeling fills in public gaps on the weapon’s overall performance as well as its potential interactions with existing military systems for detecting and defeating weapons launched from distant sites. In their paper, they see the weapon as essentially failing to outwit early-warning satellites and interceptors. For instance, current generations of space-based sensors, they report, will be able to track the weapon’s fiery twists and turns during most of its flight through the atmosphere. And surprisingly, given the weapon’s speedy reputation, they say their analysis shows it will fly intercontinental distances more slowly than ballistic missiles and warheads fired on low flight paths known as depressed trajectories. In war, such tactics are seen as a good way for attackers to evade interceptors and lessen warning time. Dr. Wright and Dr. Tracy conclude that the envisioned new weapon is, at best, “evolutionary — not revolutionary.” In their paper, the authors contrast their findings with military claims. For instance, they quote the 2019 Senate testimony of Gen. John E. Hyten, the Air Force officer then in charge of U.S. Strategic Command, which controls the nation’s nuclear missiles. The time it would take a hypersonic warhead to complete an attack, General Hyten said, “could be half” that of a standard missile. “It could be even less,” he added. The clashes between public views of hypersonic warheads and their actual abilities, the two experts conclude, arise from overstated official claims meant “to justify the expenditure necessary” for their development and deployment. The American military is currently researching a half dozen hypersonic arms. Dr. Wright said the limited amount of public information on their workings and flight data made the better-known Hypersonic Technology Vehicle the best available window into the current status and future potential of the prototype arms. The team’s analysis, he noted, focuses on an underlying issue of physics that he said casts doubt on the new class of weapons in general. It’s what aeronautical engineers call the lift-to-drag ratio. The esoteric term is a measure of lifting power versus drag. Lift pushes a speeding aerodynamic body up and atmospheric drag tries to counteract the forward motion, at worst prompting a stall. Dr. Wright said the team’s analysis of the hypersonic vehicle used a lift-to-drag ratio of 2.6. In contrast, jetliners and some birds have a ratio approximately eight times higher. In other words, the warheads at best are unimpressive fliers. The limited power of the curved, blistering hot surfaces to generate a substantial lifting force without also producing lots of drag undermined claims that the weapon can fly long distances on complex trajectories, he said. “Unless they’ve found some magical way to keep these systems up,” Dr. Wright said, “they’re going to have problems.”

### 1NC — Energy

#### No shocks---the market is resilient and self-corrects

Blagden & Porter 21, \*David, Senior Lecturer in International Security at the University of Exeter, \*\*Patrick, Professor of International Security and Strategy at the University of Birmingham. (2-21-2021, “Desert Shield of the Republic? A Realist Case for Abandoning the Middle East”, *Security Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/09636412.2021.1885727, pg. 26-27)

The hydrocarbon market itself is changing and becoming more resilient, meanwhile.80 Western economic exposure to oil shocks is reducing, thanks to increases in efficiency. These increases come from several factors, including the development of North American shale, other stocks becoming increasingly accessible through improving extraction technologies, better-managed shipping routes/fleets, and the capacity to call on public/private inventories and the redistributing function of the International Energy Agency. Spare capacity and strategic petroleum reserves are also now better used to moderate supply shocks. The United States already has adaptive mechanisms, apart from security guarantees and bases, that it can use to mitigate disruptions. Indeed, in every oil shock since 1973, these mechanisms have been used, increasing production from other sources.81 And such market evolutions simultaneously diminish supply manipulation’s utility as a coercive lever, both for OPEC as a whole and for major vendors therein. Even the 1973 oil embargo crisis was created not primarily by the drop in production, which only fell by 2–4%, but by the Nixon administration’s imposition of price controls.82 Large-scale disruptions to oil markets—for instance, the Iran–Iraq War of the 1980s—historically led to rapid third-party adaptation, meanwhile.83 As Justin Logan observes, “a major disruption in one location, temporarily reducing global supply and raising prices, incentivizes producers elsewhere to increase oil production.”

### 1NC — Inequality

#### Income inequality doesn’t cause nationalism

Bosancianu 17 (Constantin Manuel Bosancianu, Doctoral School of Political Science, Central European University, Nador u. 9, H-1051 Budapest, Hungary “A Growing Rift in Values? Income and Educational Inequality and Their Impact on Mass Attitude Polarization”, Social Science Quarterly , Volume 98, Issue 5, November 2017, Pages 1587–1602, Accessed 3/3/18, N.G.)

The analyses presented so far have tended to refute the hypotheses I have outlined in the beginning: economic inequality is not associated with increased attitude polarization, regardless of whether I examine the dispersion, bimodality, or consolidation of Left-Right self-placement with respect to income groups in the population. Although for dispersion and bimodality the estimates for income inequality tend to be in the direction expected, they are not statistically significant once educational inequality is controlled for. A conservative interpretation, pending a larger sample, is that there is no significant association between inequality and attitude polarization. The evidence is in line with analyses from the context of the United States, finding little connection between inequality and income-based partisan sorting (Dettrey and Campbell, 2013) or polarization in preferences for redistribution between income groups (Luttig, 2013). The models presented in the previous section also offer a refutation of the RD framework, inasmuch as it applies to mass attitude polarization, as well as of the political economic models presented in the beginning. Rising income inequality neither increases nor decreases the level of attitude polarization in a country; rather, the two appear to be unconnected. The reasons for this have already been presented: it is unlikely for small-to-medium shifts in inequality over a period of 20–30 years to be properly assessed by individuals who most often than not have difficulties naming members of the government, or the parties that form the governing coalition. A recent set of studies confirms that individuals in the United States and Australia woefully underestimate the degree of economic inequality in their society (Norton and Ariely, 2011; Norton et al., 2014). If this insight holds for other nations as well, it is to be expected that variations in attitude polarization are not connected in any way to the level of income inequality in the country. An additional contribution of the analysis conducted here is the strong cross-national impact that educational inequality has on attitude polarization: when controlling for it, the effect of income inequality on either attitude dispersion or bimodality largely disappears. Although economic inequality has been included in a variety of models used to predict attitudes toward redistribution, turnout, political engagement, or social trust, my analysis reveals that treating inequality as a completely exogenous factor is likely to yield biased findings. The effect of educational inequality is likely felt on both income inequality and attitude polarization, but, unlike the former, it does not depend on unrealistic expectations concerning the ability of voters to recognize glacial trends in inequality over decade-long periods. Most likely, educational inequality exerts an impact by shaping the socioeconomic circumstances of individuals at different educational levels, which, in turn, influences their prevailing policy orientations and values, particularly with respect to redistributive issues. These attitudes are some of the more important questions over which political competition is carried out, and form the foundation of Left-Right identification: the extent to which income differences result in harder work and a boost in productivity, or constitute a social harm; the extent to which government intervention in the economy maintains equality in the provision of goods and services, or rather leads to inefficiency and financial waste. Larger educational inequality leads to a growing divergence in these attitudes, which could subsequently make way for increased social tensions and breakdown in civil debate if allowed to continue unabated. The findings offer an additional cautionary tale for studies that attempt to model in vacuo the impact of income inequality on any individual-level political behavior or attitude.8 A wide range of factors can be presumed to be causes of both income inequality and attitude shift: changes in the population structure or in the relative importance of economic sectors, or the policies that have brought about welfare state retrenchment (an externality of which is educational inequality). Lack of proper consideration for the sources of economic inequality, and for the potential influences of these sources on the phenomenon to be explained, cannot produce an adequate picture of the true effects of inequality on democratic dynamics. As I have shown here, controlling for what could be considered a causal determinant of income inequality, the impact of the Gini index on attitude polarization largely disappears.

## 1NC — Harmonization

### 1NC — Info

#### To win info warfare, they have to win that the plan overwhelms differences between Russia, China, and the US—that won’t happen—1AC author (KU READS BLUE)

Justin Lynch 19, Associate Editor at Fifth Domain, has written for the New Yorker, the Associated Press, Foreign Policy, the Atlantic, 1/24/19, “Why cyberwar is contributing to a potential doomsday,” <https://www.fifthdomain.com/thought-leadership/2019/01/25/why-cyberwar-is-contributing-to-a-potential-doomsday/>

[Their card ends…]

To stem the tide of cyber and information warfare, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists suggested a collaborative approach between countries.

“The international community should begin multilateral discussions that aim to discourage cyber-enabled information warfare,” the group said in its annual report.

However, rallying major powers around an agreed upon set of norms has so far been unsuccessful in cyberspace. The prospects for future cohesion appear to be slim.

Discussions between countries at the United Nations over cyber norms have stumbled because of differences between Russia, China and the United States regarding how international humanitarian law should be applied.

Although the United States and China agreed to halt the hacking and use of business secrets in 2015, experts say the measure did not work.

[Article Ends]

# 2NC

## K — Cap

#### Capitalism causes China war — promotes military competition and securitization.

He 19, Former Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs (Yafei, January 19th, “The Crisis of Capitalism and the Evolution of China-US Relations,” *China-US Focus*, https://www.chinausfocus.com/society-culture/the-crisis-of-capitalism-and-the-evolution-of-china-us-relations, Accessed 08-18-2021)

How will the crisis of capitalism, particularly the systemic decay of US capitalism, affect China-US relations? After all, China-US relations play such a pivotal role in the shaping of international relations in the 21st century.

First, China-US relations are in need of readjustment, which will make them even more uncertain. Since US capitalism has entered an extended period of turmoil and overhaul, the government is more inclined to play hardball in dealing with other countries. And since the US has already defined China as a “strategic competitor”, the two countries will also take an extended period to feel out each other strategically.

The telephone conversation by the two heads of state towards the end of 2018 was an important step in promoting progress in bilateral trade negotiations. Rhetoric from the two sides sounds more upbeat. But many still draw conclusions from Vice President Mike Pence’s October speech that the ongoing brawl in China-US relations meant more than just trade friction. Perhaps it is the beginning of a cold war. Still some likened China-US relations to the pre-WWI world, convinced that the “Thucydides Trap” is inevitable. Ancient Greek historian Thucydides blamed the Peloponnesian War on Athens’ “rise” and the “fear” it caused in the Spartans. In reality, history cannot repeat itself and such comparisons can only misguide. The evolution of China-US relations as we know them reflects nothing more than international changes since WWII, particularly the shifting dynamics of the global system.

Second, US capitalism has entered a new period characterized by a “combination of financial capital and technology monopoly”. It cannot resolve the inherent contradiction between capital and labor, resulting in convoluted problems that include the widening wealth gap, disintegration of the social fabric, and growing opposition between the elite and broad sections of people. China, on the other hand, has leapfrogged in development over the decades by acting within the existing international system and taking full advantage of globalization. The success of the Chinese path has increased the “strategic anxiety” of the US and dampened its self-confidence. It is quite logical for the US to go out looking for “foes” or “adversaries” to rally troops and restore morale. Therefore, future China-US relations will witness more ups and downs.

#### Capitalism turns solvency and no link turn – even the most successful anti-trust policy upholds a fundamentally unequal economy and perpetuates exploitation of the working class.

Bruenig 21, Founder of the People’s Policy Project (Matt, June 5th, “No, Small Isn’t Beautiful,” *Jacobin*, https://jacobinmag.com/2021/06/small-business-monopoly-socialism-collective-ownership/, Accessed 06-07-2021)

Once you understand that this is what motivates a lot of anti-monopoly types (some consciously, others unconsciously), a lot of the tensions and confusions circulating in that world get cleared up. Lynn’s “Open Markets” refers not to competition or tariff policy, but instead to the idea of making sure that the markets are open to small businesses. One of his frequent lines on this is that antitrust law has focused too much on the freedom of the consumer and not enough on the freedom of the producer, by which he means the freedom of small business owners to have and run a business. That freedom is dashed by competition from the big guys as that competition makes many inefficient small businesses non-viable.

I can understand the gut appeal of this perspective. It is the appeal of anarchism in many respects: the equality of socialism without the collectivist governing institutions — whether cooperative board, worker council, or parliament — that, in some minds, are themselves vehicles of unacceptable control and coercion.

But, for me, this gut appeal disappears when you move from abstraction to reality. Jefferson is the last guy whose ideas on this made some sense because Jefferson was talking about a yeoman farming freehold that was entirely or almost entirely insulated from capital markets, labor markets, and consumer markets. A subsistence farmer operating like that really does mostly live on an island not affected by the whims and desires of other economic actors.

But that is the only arrangement that works like that. After industrialization, everyone is producing for others, even self-employed small business owners who have no formal bosses but are ultimately jerked around by their clients and customers.

It is hard to imagine any economic arrangements based on our current level of technology that does not involve the vast majority of people working inside some kind of larger organization rather than being the owner-operator of a single-member firm. Even if anti-bigness advocates were extremely successful to the point where they managed to quadruple the number of firms in the country and spread production out across those firms, the vast majority of working people would be employees not owners.

Anti-bigness advocates sometimes acknowledge this and then try to claim that these workers would nonetheless be benefited by this new world in which they worked for a smaller firm, but this is pretty clearly not true, and also does not address the point that, by their own reasoning, those workers are experiencing unfreedom.

Finally, when you think about the governing mechanics that would be used to achieve anti-bigness, you see that it inevitably relies upon collective democratic institutions — namely, the state — to dig in and basically micromanage the economy in order to make sure everything stays small. The charm of decentralization and rule of none/self-rule is thus an artifice being built on top of an iron-fisted centralized state that must constantly quash things on behalf of the small proprietors.

This is not a problem in and of itself, but at the point at which you are relying upon a democratic central state to impose your system, you are relying upon the very collectivism — namely, the support of the electorate — that anti-bigness is supposed to provide refuge from, relative to socialism.

#### Capitalism drives cyber conflict and escalation BUT socialist organization solves

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ORGANIZATIONAL So far we have suggested how opposition to cyberwar could emerge as part of wider movements contesting a capitalism whose globally totalizing yet nationally competitive logic drives the militarization of networks. We now make a brief digression to consider issues of political organization that bear on the formation of countermovements against the new wartimes. In particular, we look at some implications of cyberwar for the controversy about parties and networks, verticalism and horizontalism. The “vanguard party,” the form of political organization most famously (or notoriously) associated with Marxism, has an obvious military reference. This martial derivation is implicit in the metaphors Marx and Engels ([1848] 1964) use in The Communist Manifesto to describe the party leading the “line of march” of proletarian movements. Such metaphors were grounded in the actuality of mid-­ nineteenth-­ century revolutionary uprisings, whose military aspects deeply interested Engels. It was, however, in the context of Russian Marxism that Lenin ([1902] 1969), an enthusiastic reader of Clausewitz, fully articulated the latent concept of the vanguard party (Kipp 1985; Boucher 2017). This party was forged in a context of revolutionary terrorism and Tsarist counterinsurgency. Then, in the midst of world war, it seized power by armed insurrection and held it through civil war and foreign invasion. The authoritarian aspects of militarized vanguardism were, from their inception, denounced not just by anarchists but also by the Marxist ultraleft, but Bolshevik victory gave it the sanction of success. Subsequently, in other times and regions, vanguardism would adapt to contexts very different from the European conflicts in which it originated, as, for example, in Maoist concepts of “people’s war” (Mao [1938] 1967). Yet, however remodulated, the concept of the party as quasi-­ military formation leading progressive advance, and, if necessary, fighting for it under actual war conditions, remained a defining element of twentieth-­ century Marxist imagination and practice. After the fall or retreat of state socialist regimes in 1989, vanguardism was widely discredited. In the aftermath of world-­ historical defeat, digital networks encouraged the concept of a multiplicitous and horizontal left whose self-­ organization would be achieved without special leadership cadres. Some proposing this path were entirely antipathetic to the armed struggle lineage of Leninism. For others, the issue was not so much a disavowal of military models (at least at the metaphoric level) as a resort to hopes for a different form of war, waged without centralized command. Such ideas figured largely among autonomists, including one of the authors of this book (Dyer-­ Witheford 1999), and other ultraleft Marxists associated with turn-­ of-­ the-­ century alter-­ globalism, with its independent media centers, hacktivism, and electronic civil disobedience. The subsequent adoption of network-­centric warfare by state powers, however, relays back to anticapitalist movements lessons more complex than any straightforward vindication of horizontalism over verticalism, network over party. For what today’s cyberwars demonstrate is that though networks complicate hierarchy, they are not antithetical to it. The Pentagon, Kremlin, and other state cyberwar practitioners now integrate hacker proxies, digital militias, and semiautonomous special operations units within top-­ down command strategies. Indeed, sometimes these networked collocations generate new vertical chains of command.

#### The affirmative’s constant push for competitiveness is simply a smokescreen and band-aid for capitalism’s constant and never-ending crisis

Bieler 18 — Andreas Bieler (Professor of Political Economy, University of Nottingham); “Agency and the Power Resources Approach: Asserting the Importance of the Structuring Conditions of the Capitalist Social Relations of Production;” Global Labour Journal, 2018, Vol. 9, No. 2, pg. 245-246 \*\*edited for gendered language, brackets denote change

The Agency of Resistance and the Structuring Conditions of Capitalism

We cannot conceptualise agency and its strategies of resistance without due regard to the structuring conditions of the social relations of production. As Karl Marx famously said,

~~Men~~ [People] [sic] make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living (Marx, 1852/1984: 10).

In his critical engagement with the PRA, and here especially the ambiguous role of institutional power resources, Alexander Gallas has already attempted to combine a focus on agency with an emphasis on the structural setting. In his reflections on a strategic-relational model of class power, he argues that power resources depend on the strategic environment and the strategies adopted. “What is needed”, he argues, “is a conjunctural analysis of strategies and relations for forces. ‘Conjuncture’ here refers to a concrete constellation of strategies and relation of forces at a given time in a given space…” (Gallas, 2016: 305). Nevertheless, while he does incorporate a focus on the “relations of forces” between trade unions and employers’ associations as well as on the wider institutional setting underpinning labour relations and particular forms of state including political parties and government composition, he still overlooks the more fundamental structuring conditions of the capitalist social relations of production, resulting from the way in which production is set up.

Because of the way capitalist production is organised around wage labour and the private ownership of the means of production, three structuring conditions can be identified. First, it is not only workers who compete with each other for employment, but equally companies are in constant competition with each other over market share. Hence, there is an emphasis on competitiveness and the related pressure for further technological innovation in a relentless struggle for ever higher profit levels. As Marx (1867/1990: 381) noted, “under free competition, the immanent laws of capitalist production confront the individual capitalist as a coercive force external to him”. Nevertheless, what is logical for the individual capitalist is problematic for capital as a whole. When every capitalist attempts to produce more goods with fewer workers through the application of new technology, there will be fewer and fewer people who can actually buy those goods. Thus, there is a situation of a surplus of both capital and labour, which can no longer be brought together in a productive way within the capitalist social relations of production – a “state of overaccumulation” (Harvey, 1985: 132). It is this crisis tendency of capitalism which can be identified as the second structuring condition of capitalism. Finally, in order to overcome crisis, there is a structuring condition of constant outward expansion by capitalism, either in order to capture new markets or cheaper labour abroad or to re-commodify areas which had been moved outside the capitalist market, such as health services in many industrialised countries (Bieler and Morton, 2018: 38–41).

#### Tech fails — doesn’t displace fossil fuels and increased consumption offsets efficiency gains.

Parrique et al. 19, Centre for Studies and Research in International Development (CERDI), University of Clermont Auvergne, France; Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC), Stockholm University, Sweden, Barth J., Briens F., C. Kerschner, Kraus-Polk A., Kuokkanen A., Spangenberg J.H. (Timothee, July, Decoupling Debunked: Evidence and arguments against green growth as a sole strategy for sustainability, *European Environmental Bureau*, https://mk0eeborgicuypctuf7e.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Decoupling-Debunked.pdf)

Not leading to relevant innovations

Innovation is not in and of itself a good thing for ecological sustainability. The desirable type of innovation is eco-innovation or one that results “in a reduction of environmental risk, pollution and other negative impacts of resources use compared to relevant alternatives” (Kemp and Pearson, 2008, p.5). But this is only one type among several. In general, firms have an incentive to innovate to economise on the most expensive factors of production to maximise profits. Because labour and capital are usually relatively more expensive than natural resources, more technological progress will likely continue to be directed towards labour- and capital-saving innovations, with limited benefits, if any, for resource productivity and a potential rise in absolute impacts due to more production. But decoupling will not occur if technological innovations contribute to saving labour and capital while leaving resource use and environmental degradation unchanged.

Another issue is that technologies do not only solve environmental problems but also tend to create new ones. Assuming that resource productivity becomes a priority over labour and capital productivity, there is still nothing preventing technological innovations from creating more damage. For example, research into processes of extractions can lead to better ways to locate resources (imaging technologies and data analytics), to extract them (horizontal drilling, hydraulic fracturing, and automated drilling operations), and to transport them (Arctic shipping routes). These innovations may target resource use but with a result opposite to the objective of decoupling, that is more extraction. And this is not even considering unintended side-effects, which often accompany the development of new technologies (Grunwald, 2018).

Not disruptive enough

Another problem has to do with the replacement of harmful technologies. Indeed, it is not enough for new technologies to emerge (innovation), they must also come to replace the old ones in a process of “exnovation” (Kimberly, 1981). What is required is a “push and pull strategy” (Rockström et al., 2017): pushing environmentally-friendly technologies into society and pulling harmful ones, like fossil-based infrastructure, out of it.

First, in reality, such a process is slow and difficult to trigger. Most polluting infrastructures (power plants, buildings and city structures, transport systems) require large investments, which then creates inertia and lock-in (Antal and van den Bergh, 2014, p. 3). Let us, for instance, consider the energy, buildings, and transport sectors, which account for the large majority of world energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Initial lifetime for a nuclear or a coal power plant is about 40 years. Buildings can last at least as much. The average lifetime for a car is 12-15 years, and this is about what it takes for an innovation to spread in the vehicle fleet. The wide availability of petrol refuelling stations gives an infrastructural advantage to petrol-based cars, whereas this is the opposite situation for electric, gas, or hydrogen vehicles that would require different and new supporting infrastructures. Building a highway or a nuclear plant is a commitment to emit for at least as long as these infrastructures will last – Davis and Socolow (2014) speak of “committed emissions.”

Energy is a good case in point: using more renewable energy is not the same as using less fossil fuels. The history of energy use is not one of substitutions but rather of successive additions of new sources of energy. As new energy sources are discovered, developed, and deployed, the old sources do not decline, instead, total energy use grows with additional layers on the energy mix cake. York (2012) finds that each unit of energy use from non-fossil fuel sources displaced less than one-quarter of a unit of its fossil-fuel counterpart, showing empirical support for the claim that expanding renewable energies is far from enough to curb fossil fuel consumption. The relative part of coal in the global energy mix has been reduced since the advent of petroleum but this occurred in spite of absolute growth in the use of coal (Krausmann et al., 2009).

#### War chest---causes aggression.

Lucas **Hahn 16**. Bryant University. April, 2016. Global Economic Expansion and the Prevalence of Militarized Interstate Disputes.

3. Neo-Marxist Views on Asymmetrical Trade One of the most supported arguments against the notion that economic expansion promotes peace is that trade, brought about by economic expansion, actually increases MIDs. Many authors have in fact argued that increased economic interdependence and increased trade may have, in some ways, “cheapened war”, and thus made it easier to wage war more frequently (Harrison and Nikolaus 2012). Neo-Marxists and Dependency Theorists argue that the notion that trade promotes peace often depends on the balance of trade between two nations with a trading relationship. If the two nations have a symmetrical trading relationship, then both nations benefit from trade equally and may thus, engage in less conflict just as proposed by many liberal theorists. However, more often than not, the trading relationship between two nations may be asymmetrical. In this case, one nation benefits more than the other. Furthermore, one nation is often more dependent on trade with its partner than the partner is with it. These circumstances can breed violent conflicts (Barbieri and Schneider 1999). Barbieri’s (1996, 40) regression analyses have supported these claims. She found that when dyads (pairs of nation-states) are highly interdependent, they are nearly 25 times more likely to engage in armed conflict than when the dyads are not interdependent. Ultimately, she came to the conclusion that there seems to be a “hurdle effect”. Up to a point trade does seem to promote peace. However, after that point, the balance of trade often becomes disproportionate between two nations and as a result trade promotes conflict. 4. Interdependence Versus Interconnectedness The previous subsection alludes to the fact that there is a fundamental difference between economic interconnectedness and economic interdependence. Basically, interconnectedness involves a mutual and equal benefit between two economically connected nations. Interdependence involves an unequal benefit between two economically connected nations where one nation more extensively relies on the other. Gasiorowski (2007) argues, that growing interconnectedness brought about by globalization decreases MIDs. However, growing interdependence, also largely brought about by globalization, increases MIDs. In this case, when one nation is intrinsically dependent on another, they will be more sensitive and vulnerable to any changes in the economic policy of their major trading partner. Thus, depending on the relationships between different nations violent conflicts may either be increased or decreased by economic expansion.

#### Socialism key to space

Phillips ’21 [Leigh Phillips is a science writer and EU affairs journalist, “We Don’t Need Elon Musk to Explore the Solar System,” Jacobin, May 2021, https://jacobinmag.com/2021/05/elon-musk-space-exploration-mars-colonization]

A reasonable critique of Musk’s SpaceX endeavors might begin by noting that, regardless of how noble an aim Musk may have for his centibillions, there simply should not be centibillionaires (or even regular millionaires and billionaires). One might also echo Neil Armstrong’s criticism of private space flight — a criticism that once made Elon cry when 60 Minutes asked him about his hero arguing against the privatization of space. We might note how space exploration during the Cold War, despite the militarist overtones of the Space Race, was explicitly intended to be for all mankind rather than in service of the jollies of ultrarich space tourists.

A democratic and public redirection of Elon Musk’s billions might be spent differently. One might further assert that, given the non-identity of the set of all things that are beneficial and the set of all things that are profitable, space colonization will be a public-sector endeavor, or it will not happen — as such a private space travel has no near-term, medium-term, or even long-term prospect of any return on financial investment beyond servicing low-earth, medium-earth, or geostationary orbit. And, finally, we might denounce the union-busting at Musk’s factories or even argue that his “accumulation of resources” is less the product of his own efforts than it is primarily an upward redistribution of value created by his workers.

That is to say that there are a raft of progressive critiques of Musk that could be made that nevertheless still value space exploration and, one day, human colonization of the cosmos.

Indeed, if one values space exploration and looks forward to the time, as astronomer Carl Sagan put it, “when most human cultures will be engaged in an activity you might describe as a dandelion going to seed,” then a socialist critique is all the more necessary, given the irrational limitations markets impose on human endeavor.

But instead, there are thousands of snark-drenched tweets sneering at how crackpot, masculinist, and even childish Elon’s dream is. They argue that space travel is a waste of resources that would be better spent solving problems here on Earth, and that space colonization is a repetition of the colonization of the New World.

Even Bernie Sanders responded to Musk by saying: “Space travel is an exciting idea, but right now we need to focus on Earth and create a progressive tax system so that children don’t go hungry, people are not homeless and all Americans have healthcare. The level of inequality in America is obscene and a threat to our democracy.” At the time of writing, the senator’s tweet had received some 95,000 likes.

Bernie is, in this case, wrong.

Space exploration, including space travel, is one of the grandest tasks humanity has ever set for itself. It is a false dichotomy — and an austerian one at that — to say that we do not have enough money for both a space program and social justice or environmental protection. We can more than afford to do both. NASA’s budget is but a fraction of the Pentagon’s. It should not be difficult to imagine a democratic socialist economy, or even just one a little less neoliberal, that permits much more space and much less war.

We can have public health care and science. We can end homelessness and explore the cosmos. We can have unionized, family-supporting jobs for all and, one day, almost certainly some considerable time from now, colonies on other worlds.

#### Capitalism does nothing for space exploration—there’s a massive delay and safety issues

Thompson 17 - Loren Thompson, writes about national security, especially its business dimensions, focuses on the strategic, economic and business implications of defense spending as the Chief Operating Officer of the non-profit Lexington Institute and Chief Executive Officer of Source Associates. Prior to holding present positions, he was Deputy Director of the Security Studies Program at Georgetown University and taught graduate-level courses in strategy, technology and media affairs at Georgetown. He has also taught at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. He holds doctoral and master’s degrees in government from Georgetown University and a bachelor of science degree in political science from Northeastern University, 17 ("Capitalism In Space: The Beguiling Myth Market Forces Can Fix Everything," Forbes, 3-16-2017, Available Online at https://www.forbes.com/sites/lorenthompson/2017/03/16/capitalism-in-space-the-beguiling-myth-market-forces-can-fix-everything/#2515fc171af3, Accessed on 7-9-2017 //JJ)

That is not the way Washington has historically preferred to run either its civil or its military space programs. NASA and the Air Force (which leads military space efforts) traditionally have been deeply engaged in all aspects of their suppliers' businesses -- partly because of the risks involved, and partly because they didn't trust private companies to always make the right choices. Zimmerman contends SpaceX and a bevy of other upstarts such as Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin are showing there is a better way to do business, if government will just get out of the way.

This viewpoint has been with us since the early days of the republic, and finds voice whenever Washington tries to do something big using taxpayer money. Most of the time, I share it. But because my own think tank gets money from the two biggest traditional launch providers, Boeing and Lockheed Martin -- Lockheed is also a consulting client -- I've had plenty of opportunity in recent years to compare the rhetoric of both sides with their actual performance.

Zimmerman offers a series of complex comparisons purporting to do just that, but he doesn't cite hardly any numbers to support his case. So let's fill in a few details about how SpaceX, the leading non-traditional supplier of launch-services, has actually performed. United Launch Alliance, the Boeing-Lockheed joint venture that is SpaceX's main competitor for government launches, has never lost a payload in 117 launches. SpaceX has lost two missions in just the last two years, in both cases due to design features in its launch vehicle.

No doubt about it, SpaceX prices are low -- but it isn't the model of market-driven responsiveness that Zimmerman would have you believe. On average, its launches are over two years late, and the unlaunched missions it is carrying in its backlog on average are nearly three years late. When 2016 began, the company was projecting over 20 launches during the year. It actually performed eight successful launches, not counting a mission destroyed on the launch pad, and a grand total of two of them were on time -- the rest were late.

MARKED

You can see where that might be a problem for the Air Force if the payload being launched was a high priority such as a missile-warning or spy satellite. But there's no danger of SpaceX causing a problem there, because it can't actually lift heavy payloads into high orbits. It says it will bolster its lift capacity by developing a "heavy" version of its Falcon rocket, but it has been promising to launch since 2012 and the first launch still hasn't happened. Author Zimmerman treats Falcon Heavy like it's a real thing, but I'll bet this is the sixth consecutive year it doesn't launch.

And then there's the matter of safety. Companies typically achieve low prices by taking out cost, but much of the overhead associated with space efforts goes into assuring the safety of missions. When you leave it to market forces to decide what stays in and what gets taken out of vehicle designs and launch procedures, risk can easily creep into the tradeoffs. A NASA advisory panel warned that it wasn't a good idea to let SpaceX boost its rocket performance by loading supercooled fuel while astronauts were already aboard. Last year a routine test of that procedure blew up a rocket on the launch pad.

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## DA — Tradeoff

#### Resources are sufficient for effective health enforcement now

Abbott 21, formerly served as general counsel of the Federal Trade Commission (Alden, “Lack of Resources and Lack of Authority Over Nonprofit Organizations Are the Biggest Hindrances to Antitrust Enforcement in Healthcare,” https://www.mercatus.org/publications/antitrust-and-competition/lack-resources-and-lack-authority-over-nonprofit)

During my years as an executive in the FTC’s Bureau of Competition and as FTC general counsel, I became quite familiar with FTC antitrust development and policy research applicable to healthcare. In my opinion, the FTC staff possesses the legal tools (with the exception of the nonprofit limitation, discussed earlier) to fully investigate and take action against anticompetitive behavior in this sector. What’s more, the FTC has had an excellent enforcement track record, including in hospital mergers. It currently is addressing a broad range of healthcare-related activity. Existing agency guidance, including the 2020 Vertical Merger Guidelines, provide ample support for appropriate, evidence-based, economically sound enforcement. New general legislation is not needed.

#### Enforcement high, resources key, sustained focus solves consolidation

King 21, John and Marylyn Mayo Chair in Health Law and Professor of Law at the University of Auckland (Jaime, “Stop Playing Health Care Antitrust Whack-A-Mole,” Harvard Bill of Health, <https://blog.petrieflom.law.harvard.edu/2021/05/17/health-care-consolidation-antitrust-enforcement/>)

The time has come to meaningfully address the most significant driver of health care costs in the United States — the consolidation of provider market power. Over the last 30 years, our health care markets have consolidated to the point that nearly 95% of metropolitan areas have highly concentrated hospital markets and nearly 80% have highly concentrated specialist physician markets. Market research has consistently found that increased consolidation leads to higher health care prices (sometimes as much as 40% more). Provider consolidation has also been associated with reductions in quality of care and wages for nurses. In consolidated provider markets, insurance companies often must choose between paying dominant providers supracompetitive rates or exiting the market. Unfortunately, insurers have little incentive to push back against provider rate demands because they have the ability to pass those rate increases directly to employers and individuals, in the form of higher premiums. In turn, employers take premium increases out of employee wages, contributing to the growing disparity between health care price growth and employee wages. As a result, rising health care premiums mean that every year, consumers pay more, but receive less. Dynamic health care antitrust enforcement is an idea whose time has finally come, but addressing the ills of consolidation in America’s health care system will require a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach. We have seen repeatedly how an entity with market power can respond quickly to negate the benefits of unilateral policy approaches, leading to an endless cycle of competition policy whack-a-mole. For instance, in the last decade, as health system merger and acquisition challenges became more successful, joint ventures and affiliations, especially with urgent care centers and private equity firms, became more frequent. Further, COVID-19 has exacerbated the threat of health care consolidation by leaving many independent hospitals and physician groups struggling financially and vulnerable to acquisition. Fortunately, the Biden/Harris administration appears uniquely poised to implement a comprehensive initiative to address health care consolidation. First and foremost, Biden has positioned key personnel with antitrust expertise, often with distinct knowledge of the health care industry, throughout his administration. For instance, the nomination of former California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, who championed health care antitrust efforts in the state, as Secretary of Health and Human Services was an inspired choice and presents a unique opportunity to enhance competition through Medicare policy. Biden’s appointment of Tim Wu to the National Economic Council and nomination of Lina Khan to one of five seats on the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) also signal a strong commitment to strengthening antitrust enforcement writ large. Second, the Biden administration should support recent efforts in Congress to address health care antitrust concerns. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) recently introduced a bill, the Competition and Antitrust Law Enforcement Reform Act, which introduces sweeping reforms that would expand funding to the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Trade Commission, strengthen prohibitions against anticompetitive mergers by forbidding mergers that “create an appreciable risk of materially lessening competition,” shift the burden of proof to require merging entities to demonstrate that the merger will not harm competition, and take steps to prevent dominant firms from engaging in anticompetitive conduct. Likewise, Senator Patty Murray’s (D-WA) Lower Health Care Costs Act of 2019 demonstrated a sophisticated understanding of how health care entities can use market power to obscure health care prices and negotiate anticompetitive contract terms, like all-or-nothing bargaining, gag clauses, and anti-steering provisions, and provided solid policy solutions to both issues. Providing support for bills like these will be essential to developing a comprehensive competition strategy. Third, on September 17, 2020, the Federal Trade Commission announced much needed plans to revamp the Merger Retrospective program. The Biden administration should provide substantial funding and resources to reinvigorate this program. Merger retrospectives, like Steven Tenn’s Sutter-Summit retrospective in 2008, have been pivotal and provided the FTC with much needed insight on how hospital mergers have leveraged the market power necessary to increase prices and harm consumer welfare. A newly revamped Merger Retrospective program holds great promise for antitrust enforcement in health care, especially if used to gain insight into whether and how vertical and cross-market health care mergers create anticompetitive harms. While a majority of consolidating transactions in health care include vertical or cross-market acquisitions, federal antitrust enforcement has been absent in this area. Fourth, Congress and the Trump Administration have moved mountains to expand price transparency in health care, which will greatly facilitate research into the effects of different types of health care consolidation and contracting practices on prices. The Biden Administration should stand firm on requiring hospitals, insurers, and self-insured employers to report negotiated health care prices, and dedicate resources to analyze that data to determine both the drivers of health care prices and the effectiveness of public policy initiatives designed to control prices. In addition, the Biden administration should promote transparency in health care consolidation by requiring all health care providers (hospitals, clinics, provider organizations, etc.) to report any material change in ownership to the Department of Health and Human Services and the FTC to allow the agencies to monitor consolidation patterns and look for stealth consolidation. All winds seem to blow in the direction of the Biden Administration taking significant action to address rampant consolidation in health care and its harms. Yet, doing so requires funding and willpower. Funding for the FTC and DOJ has decreased in relative dollars since 2010, despite a near doubling in merger filings. The FTC and DOJ need increased funding to expand their ability to review and challenge anticompetitive transactions and practices by dominant health care entities, revamp and expand the scope of their Merger Retrospective Review program, and provide technical assistance to state antitrust enforcers. Furthermore, the FTC should be granted the authority and requisite funding to challenge anticompetitive behavior by non-profit organizations, as they have developed a significant expertise in health care provider markets. Challenging the existing market dynamics in health care also demands the political will to take on some of the biggest industries in the nation (who make some of the largest lobbying contributions). As we have seen in recent challenges to the practices of dominant health care providers, the battle will be hard-fought. Yet, the alternative — allowing the health care industry to continue to siphon off ever-increasing portions of the economy and wages — is unacceptable and irresponsible. The Biden administration must make every attempt to improve the functioning of health care markets where possible, and implement price regulations in markets where competition has failed. Antitrust enforcement agencies must use the full force of their legal arsenal to restore competition in health care — and this may include breaking up large health systems that exploit their market power. For too long, the notion of “unscrambling the egg,” i.e., unwinding a previously consummated hospital merger, has been a non-starter in enforcement circles. To truly restore some form of competition in many health care markets, antitrust enforcers need to break up large systems, or at least have a credible threat of doing so. The Biden administration has an opportunity to reinvigorate our health care markets, but only if it is willing to adopt a bold, determined, and comprehensive competition strategy.

#### Health care enforcement is coming now---but it could be triaged in the case of overstretch

Galvin 9-10-2021 (Gaby, “Hospitals, Other Health Care Players Are Seeing ‘the Bar of Scrutiny’ Raised by Biden Regulators,” *Morning Consult*, <https://morningconsult.com/2021/09/10/health-care-antitrust-biden-administration/>)

When President Joe Biden tapped vocal critics of big tech companies for key antitrust roles, companies like Amazon.com Inc. went on high alert. But he’s pledged to crack down on anticompetitive behavior across sectors — including “unchecked mergers” in health care, and former officials and industry watchers say hospitals and other groups should tread carefully. Officials like Lina Khan, who was sworn in as chair of the Federal Trade Commission in June, and Tim Wu of the White House’s National Economic Council, haven’t gone public with how they plan to tackle health care consolidation. But early action from the administration points to hospital price transparency and heightened merger scrutiny as top priorities. “This administration is going to take a stronger approach to any antitrust enforcement than we’ve previously seen,” said Alexis Gilman, an antitrust lawyer at Crowell & Moring who worked in the FTC’s competition bureau, primarily during the Obama administration. “The bar of scrutiny does seem to have been raised.” Biden laid out his broad antitrust agenda in an executive order in July that singled out rural hospital closures and higher hospital prices in markets with little competition as reasons to support stronger FTC guidelines for health care mergers. Now, Gilman said the FTC appears to be taking more time to review details on proposed mergers that may have otherwise been cleared quickly or seen as “non-problematic.” The FTC’s public stances so far “reflect an agency that believes that prior enforcement has been a bit lax, and they’re going to tighten that up,” Gilman said. Health systems feeling the heat Industry watchers are taking cues from Sutter Health’s $575 million antitrust settlement, which received final approval from a federal judge in late August after a yearslong legal battle over allegations that the nonprofit health system in California engaged in price gouging. Notably, Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra sued Sutter Health in 2018 when he was California’s attorney general, and before joining the Biden administration, he said in March that he would continue to promote health care competition so patients “aren’t left holding the bag when big players dominate the market.” Given Becerra’s involvement, the case could offer a roadmap for health care competition policy in the Biden era at both the state and federal levels, said Elizabeth Mitchell, president and chief executive of the Purchaser Business Group on Health, which helped bring together employers and unions to file the lawsuit against Sutter Health. “I think it is very important that some of what we achieved in the Sutter case is applied more broadly,” Mitchell said. That includes efforts to promote hospital price transparency, a priority left over from the Trump administration. Meanwhile, Gilman points to the Sutter Health case and a federal settlement with North Carolina-based Atrium Health in 2018 as signs that health systems should “be a bit more cautious” when drawing up contracts that could be seen as anti-competitive, such as those that include measures that ban insurers from “steering” patients toward less expensive medical care or revealing pricing information. “I think there is — as a result of those two enforcement actions — increased risk, at the least for the largest systems that have meaningful shares in their local markets,” Gilman said. Provider groups are readying their defenses. In August, the American Hospital Association sent a letter to antitrust officials calling for more reviews of health insurance companies, saying payers have “largely escaped close scrutiny for conduct and practices that adversely impact both consumers and providers.” The group declined an interview request. David Maas, an antitrust lawyer at Davis Wright Tremaine LLP who works with health care providers, noted that ramped-up scrutiny on hospitals could hurt smaller physician groups or rural hospitals that are the only option for care in some communities. “We already have aggressive enforcement in that space, and it often is good and leads to more competitive marketplaces,” Maas said. “But just in the interest of being more aggressive, to push for even more enforcement in health care, I think could lead to some unfortunate outcomes, because a lot of health care providers are struggling.” Hospital mergers have slowed this year, with 27 deals completed in the first half of 2021 compared with 43 in the same time period last year, according to a Kaufman Hall analysis. While the number of deals has fallen, revenue is on par with previous years as health systems focus more on regional partnerships in new markets rather than acquiring smaller independent hospitals, the analysis said. Other health industries in regulatory crosshairs Hospitals aren’t the only health care groups getting a closer look in the Biden era. The FTC has also signaled interest in vertical mergers, when companies that don’t compete directly consolidate, and is looking to unwind life science company Illumina Inc.’s $7.1 billion acquisition of Grail Inc., which was finalized last month despite a lack of clearance from the FTC or European regulators. In Sept. 2 letters to GOP lawmakers who questioned the agency’s stance, Khan said the FTC is at a “crossroads” and has taken an “unduly permissive” approach in the past that’s allowed for massive companies to form across industries. Antitrust lawyers are closely watching the Illumina-Grail case, which will be “the first vertical merger case the FTC litigates in decades,” Gilman said. Another key deal to watch: Michigan-based Beaumont Health and Spectrum Health said last week they’re proceeding with a merger that would give the combined health system control of 22 hospitals, an outpatient business and a health plan covering 1 million people. If approved, the merger is expected to be finalized this fall. Collaborations between payers and providers — forming so-called “payviders” — have become increasingly common, with hospital systems launching their own health plans and health insurance giants such as UnitedHealth Group Inc. moving into health care delivery in recent years. “In the coming years, the for-profit insurers will start following United’s lead in acquiring, or effectively acquiring, more and more providers,” Maas said. Some analysts are skeptical of the Biden administration’s ability to meaningfully rein in such deals. “The idea that now Biden is going to direct the FTC to pay closer attention to health care mergers is a lot like closing the barn door after the horses have run out,” said Michael Abrams, co-founder and managing partner at health care consultancy Numerof & Associates. But “when you combine the payer and the provider, it’s the consumer who, more than ever, needs protection.” RELATED: Pharmacy Benefit Managers Are Feeling a Push From States to ‘Turn the Lights on’ to Their Business Practices Regulators picking their battles Going forward, Gilman said he expects agencies to “be less likely to either clear or settle vertical merger transactions” right away, which “could have some chilling effect.” But regulators will also have to “triage” top priority cases, given the FTC said it is being hit with a “tidal wave” of merger filings.

#### New enforcement priorities trigger a tradeoff from health care

Abbott 21, formerly served as general counsel of the Federal Trade Commission (Alden, “Lack of Resources and Lack of Authority Over Nonprofit Organizations Are the Biggest Hindrances to Antitrust Enforcement in Healthcare,” <https://www.mercatus.org/publications/antitrust-and-competition/lack-resources-and-lack-authority-over-nonprofit>)

Appropriate federal antitrust and consumer protection enforcement is good for the American economy. It promotes enhanced competition and consumer welfare. Regrettably, however, the effectiveness of federal enforcement in achieving these benefits is threatened by insufficient resources. As FTC Acting Chair Rebecca Kelly Slaughter explained in her April 20 testimony before the US Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, FTC employment has remained flat despite a growing workload, with merger filings doubling in recent years. Lauren Feiner reports on that testimony: “The absence of resources means that our enforcement decisions are harder,” [Slaughter] said. “If we think that we have a real case, a real law violation in front of us, but a settlement on the table that is maybe OK but doesn’t get the job done, we have to make difficult decisions about whether it’s worth spending a lot of taxpayer dollars to go sue the companies who are going to come in with many, many law firms worth of attorneys and expensive economic experts, versus taking that settlement.” I can attest to the accuracy of Slaughter’s observation, based on my experience as FTC general counsel in the Trump Administration. During my tenure, the FTC did indeed have to contend with resource limitations that adversely affected merger enforcement decision-making. The problem of resource constraints is particularly acute in the case of healthcare merger reviews, given the increasing consolidation of healthcare institutions. As one noted healthcare scholar stated in 2019, “The Affordable Care Act did not start the consolidation rapidly occurring with hospitals/health systems and medical groups, but it most definitely accelerated the movement to combine. In the last five years, the number and size of consolidations have been at an all-time high.”