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### 1

#### T-Congress

#### Expand requires a “change in the law”

Hatter 90 (HATTER, District Judge. Opinion in In re Eastport Associates, 114 BR 686 - Dist. Court, CD California 1990. Google scholar caselaw. Date accessed 7/12/21)

Second, Eastport asserts that the presumption against retroactivity does not apply because the amendment was intended only as a clarification of existing law. Where an amendment to a statute is remedial in nature and merely serves to clarify existing law, no question of retroactivity is involved and the law will be applied to pending cases. City of Redlands v. Sorensen, 176 Cal.App.3d 202, 211, 221 Cal.Rptr. 728, 732 (1985). The evidence in this case, however, does not support the conclusion that the amendment to section 66452.6(f) was simply a clarification of preexisting law. The Legislative Counsel's Digest specifically states that "[t]he bill would expand the definition of development moratorium." Senate Bill 186, Stats.1988, ch. 1330, at 3375 (emphasis added). Since the Legislative Counsel is a state official required by law to analyze pending legislation, it is reasonable to presume that the Legislature amended the statute with the intent and meaning expressed in the Counsel's digest. People v. Martinez, 194 Cal. App.3d 15, 22, 239 Cal.Rptr. 272, 276 (1987). By its ordinary meaning, the term "expand" indicates a change in the law, rather than a restatement of existing law. In light of the Counsel's comment, Eastport's argument is unpersuasive.

#### That’s change must be a material modification of the language of the statute

Iowa Supreme Court 4 (CADY, Justice. Opinion in State v. Truesdell, 679 NW 2d 611 - Iowa: Supreme Court 2004. Google scholar caselaw, date accessed 9/13/21)

Generally, a material modification of the language of a statute gives rise to "a presumption that a change in the law was intended." Midwest Auto. III, LLC v. Iowa Dep't of Transp., 646 N.W.2d 417, 425 (Iowa 2002); see 1A Norman J. Singer, Statutes and Statutory Construction § 22.1, at 240-41 (6th ed.2002). The existence of this presumption is enhanced "when the amendment follows a contrary... judicial interpretation of an unambiguous statute." Midwest Auto. III, LLC, 646 N.W.2d at 425.

#### Antitrust laws are statutes

Kalbfleisch 61(KALBFLEISCH, District Judge. Opinion in Paul M. Harrod Company v. AB Dick Company, 194 F. Supp. 502 - Dist. Court, ND Ohio 1961. Google scholar caselaw, date accessed 9/11/21)

Defendant asserts that the term "antitrust laws," as used in the above section and as defined in 15 U.S.C.A. § 12, does not include a judgment or decree entered in connection with an antitrust case filed by the Government. Plaintiff, on the other hand, asserts that "the violation of the earlier decree of this court in itself gives rise to an independent cause of action under Section 4 of the Clayton Act." 15 U.S.C.A. § 15. Plaintiff's Brief, p. 7. Plaintiff concedes that "as far as he has been able to ascertain, this contention raises issues which have never before been decided by any appellate court." Plaintiff's Brief, p. 5.

In Nashville Milk Co. v. Carnation Co., 1958, 355 U.S. 373, 78 S.Ct. 352, 2 L.Ed. 2d 340, the Supreme Court held that the Robinson-Patman Act, 15 U.S.C.A. §§ 13-13b, 21a, was not included among the "antitrust laws" defined in Section 1 of the Clayton Act (15 U.S.C.A. § 12) and that "the definition contained in § 1 of the Clayton Act is exclusive." Id., 355 U. S. at page 376, 78 S.Ct. at page 354.

The definition of "antitrust laws" in 15 U.S.C.A. § 12, clearly embraces only the statutes described therein. Even without such a definition the term "antitrust laws" could not be construed as pertaining to a judgment or decree entered by a court in connection with an antitrust case filed by the Government. Such decrees do not necessarily reflect the prohibitions of the antitrust laws but may, by their terms, seek to dissipate the effects of the past conduct of the parties and, to this end, frequently enjoin performance of acts lawful in themselves. To permit a private party to recover damages for violation of any provision of such a decree is so obviously beyond the scope of the term "antitrust laws," as used in the statute, as to require no further discussion.

#### Violation---the aff isn’t Congress.

#### VOTE NEG:

#### First---Ground---Congressional change guarantees core DAs like horse-trading and politics, and have link uniqueness because of decades of Congressional inertia.

#### Second---Functional Limits---forces aff to have a comparative solvency advocate, which constrains aff choice. It’s try-or-die for an agential constraint because the topic is bidirectional and unlimited.

### 2

#### Anti-trust is based in free-market logics of competition and consumerism that reify neoliberal exploitation. Monopolies are inevitable in a world of government collusion and empire-building, only the alt solves.

Tell 21, PhD, is author of the book “Charter School Report Card.” His main research interests include charter schools, neoliberal education policy, privatization and political economy (Shawgi, July 29th, “EMPTY RHETORIC THAT SEEKS TO MISINFORM AND APPEASE: ON BIDEN'S FARCICAL ANTI-MONOPOLY EXECUTIVE ORDER,” *Hampton Think*, <https://www.hamptonthink.org/read/on-bidens-farcical-anti-monopoly-executive-order?rq=antitrust>, Accessed 09-24-2021)

One of these is the inexorable tendency of competition to lead to monopoly under capitalism. Competition means winners and losers. By definition, not everyone can win when competing. Competition means rivalry for supremacy. Thousands compete in the Olympics, for example, but only a select few (“winners”) go home with a gold medal.[1] It is no accident that the economy, media, and politics are heavily monopolized by a handful of billionaires while billions of people who actually produce the wealth in society and run society remain marginalized and disempowered.

This brutal reality cannot be reversed or overcome with the utterance of a few platitudes, the passage of some policies, or the creation of some agencies that claim to be able to fix the outdated economic system, especially when all of the above come from billionaires themselves.

On July 9, 2021, President Joe Biden issued an Executive Order on Promoting Competition in the American Economy (https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/07/09/executive-order-on-promoting-competition-in-the-american-economy/).

The order is about 7,000 words long and full of anticonscious statements. Disinformation pervades the entire order.

The opening paragraph begins with the following disinformation:

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to promote the interests of American workers, businesses, and consumers, it is hereby ordered….

Here, “American workers, businesses, and consumers” are casually misequated and no mention is made of citizens or humans. The implication is that consumerism is normal, healthy, and desirable, and that workers and big business somehow have the same aims, world outlook, and interests. This conceals the fact that owners of capital and workers have antagonistic irreconcilable interests and that people exist as humans and citizens, not just utilitarian consumers and shoppers in a taken-for-granted system based on chaos, anarchy, and violence.

Disinformation is further escalated in the next paragraph:

A fair, open, and competitive marketplace has long been a cornerstone of the American economy, while excessive market concentration threatens basic economic liberties, democratic accountability, and the welfare of workers, farmers, small businesses, startups, and consumers.

“Market concentration” has been the norm for generations. Monopolies, cartels, and oligopolies have been around since the late 1800s. Mergers and acquisitions have been taking place non-stop for decades. The so-called “free market” largely disappeared long ago. Objectively, there can be no fairness in a system rooted in wage-slavery and empire-building. Wage-slavery is the precondition for the tendency of the rich to get richer and the poor poorer. It is not a recipe for prosperity and security for all. This is also why inequality, tyranny, violence, and surveillance have been growing over the years. Moreover, what “threatens basic economic liberties, democratic accountability, and the welfare of workers, farmers, small businesses, startups, and consumers” is the ongoing political and economic exclusion of people from control over the economy and their lives by the financial oligarchy. There can be no liberty, accountability, and welfare when most people are deprived of real decision-making power and major owners of capital make all the decisions. Problems would not constantly worsen if people had control over their lives. The “best allocation of resources” cannot be made when the economy is carved up, fractured, and controlled by competing owners of capital.

Although recurring economic crises for well over a century have repeatedly discredited “free market” ideology, the 7,000-word executive order is saturated with the language of “choice,” “competition,” and “consumers.” This is the same worn-out language used by privatizers of all hues at home and abroad.

Further, while the executive order gives many examples of “economic consolidation” in numerous sectors, the government is not interested in creating a self-reliant vibrant diverse economy that meets the needs of all. It is not committed to reversing “the harmful effects of monopoly and monopsony.” Numerous antitrust laws have not stopped either. Big mergers and acquisitions have been going on for years. Rather, the executive order is an attempt to restructure economic and political arrangements among different factions of the wealthy elite; it reflects a new stage or form of inter-capitalist rivalry for even greater domination of the economy by fewer owners of capital. In other words, moving forward, the economy will remain monopolized by a few monopolies. Wealth is only going to become more concentrated in fewer hands in the years ahead. Mountains of data from hundreds of sources document growing wealth and income inequality every year.

The bulk of the executive order is filled with endless directives, strategies, rules, and suggestions for how to curb “unfair practices” and promote “fairness” and “competition.” But these all ring hollow given concrete realities and past experience.

Today, governments at all levels have been taken over by global private monopoly interests and have become instruments of decisions made on a supranational basis. There is a fine-tuned revolving door between officials from government and the private sector; they have become synonymous for all essential purposes. The same people who run major corporations also serve in high-level government positions where they advance the narrow interests of the private sector and then they leave government and return to their high-level corporate positions. There is a reason why the majority of members of Congress are millionaires. The Executive Branch in the United States, especially the President’s Office, is a major tool for the expression of the will of the most powerful monopolies. This is why billions of dollars are spent every few years to select the President of the country.

A modern economy must be controlled and directed by workers themselves. Only such an economy can provide for the needs of all and avoid endless economic distortions. Uneven economic development, “unfair” arrangements, “market concentration,” monopolies, oligopolies, and recurring crises cannot be avoided so long as those who actually produce the social product have no control over the social product. Workers have first claim to the wealth they produce and have the right to decide how, where, and when that wealth is used. Major owners of capital are historically superfluous and a big block to progress. They are not needed for a healthy vibrant self-reliant economy that meets the needs of all.

#### The plan is neoliberal ag’s dream---their analytic presumes trickle-down economics and ignores the devastating labor conditions on small farms

Rosenberg 21, visiting scholar at the Harvard Food Law and Policy Clinic and an adjunct professor at the University of Iowa College of Law. Bryce Stucki is an independent journalist based in Washington, DC who writes about food and agriculture. (Nathan, “Don’t Trust the Antitrust Narrative: Farmers Benefit from Industrial Ag. Workers Do Not.,” Jacobin, https://www.jacobinmag.com/2021/06/antitrust-farmers-farmworkers-exploitation-agribusiness-low-pay-dangerous-working-conditions)

The antitrust critique of industrial agriculture dominates discussions of the farm economy in progressive media and policy circles. In a fiery attack on Joe Biden’s agricultural team during the 2020 campaign, David Dayen argued that cattle ranchers, hog farmers, and crop producers are all at the mercy of corporate middlemen like Cargill and Bayer, who exert excessive control over the industry and bend farmers to their will. In her 2020 book Break ’Em Up, Zephyr Teachout uses the metaphor of “chickenization” to compare the plight of chicken farmers forced to use the feed supplied by Tyson to rideshare drivers who must accept Uber’s rate cuts. “Some of the biggest Fortune 500 companies may be in agriculture and are making huge profits,” Teachout writes, “but farmers are poor and insecure.” The antitrust movement is not wrong to focus on the power of corporations: agribusiness has helped transform huge swathes of the globe into biological wastelands, depopulated the countryside, and created a class of hyper-exploited workers. But the standard antitrust analysis overlooks how much US farmers benefit from, and are invested in, the current system. Farmworkers’ low pay and dangerous work conditions, meanwhile, put them in direct conflict with farmers. They have long led fights for environmental and labor reforms — and the industry’s dependence on their labor gives them potentially enormous bargaining power. They — not farmers — will be at the forefront of any effort to democratize agriculture. Affluent Farmers Most farmers in the United States today enjoy high incomes and wealth. The median farm household has a total income 21 percent higher than the overall median household and 75 percent higher than the rural median. Ninety-seven percent of farm households boast a higher net worth than the median household, and the median farm household has a nonfarm net wealth 2.5 times higher than the median household and a total net wealth nine times higher (both of these figures account for debts). The general farm economy is also strong. Despite innumerable reports that use total farm income to argue US farmers are in crisis, per farm net income has rarely been better. Five of the ten best farm income years since the Great Depression have come in the last decade. How, then, do antitrust writers produce so much data to suggest that farmers are poor? Most often, they misinterpret numbers that require a great deal more context. One of the most common antitrust arguments is that the farmer’s share of the food dollar has fallen from 37 cents in 1980 to around 15 cents today. This is true — though the share hasn’t changed much since at least 1993 — but total spending on food is up and the number of farms is down. The upshot: farm revenues are at near record levels today. Antitrust writers also often use summary statistics skewed by the Department of Agriculture’s idiosyncratic definition of “farm.” David Dayen writes that “more than half of all farm households are losing money.” But the USDA’s Census of Agriculture, the source of many such figures, includes an enormous number of “farms” that do very little farming, if any at all. After the USDA’s constituency of farmers declined sharply after World War II — and along with it, the department’s influence — it began to liberalize its definition of “farm,” counting rural properties with no agricultural production at all as farm operations when they are deemed capable of producing $1,000 in sales. If you have a hundred acres of grass and woodland, a fifth of an acre of fruit-bearing trees, or a fifteenth of an acre of berries — as many wealthy rural residents do — you’re a “farmer” according to USDA. Almost a quarter of the operations in the 2017 census did not sell any farm products whatsoever. Though the census reports around two million agricultural operations, two-thirds of these, according to the best available data, are retiree or “lifestyle” farms. Unsurprisingly, they drag down aggregate measures of farm income. Farm organizations portray low- or zero-sales farms as low-income families struggling to get back into agriculture. In reality, most of these farms are owned by wealthy rural and exurban residents who have no interest in farming as a business. The median household with a “residence” farm — a category that makes up almost all small-scale farms and the majority of all farms — lost $1,600 in farm income in 2019. But these same households, at the median, take in more than $100,000 in total income and hold around $450,000 in net nonfarm wealth — about four times the median US household. As journalist Maggie Koerth put it in a 2016 investigative report, most small farmers in the agricultural census “aren’t the farms of the poor; they’re the yards of the upper-middle-class.” Farm houseolds have significantly higher net worth than non-farm households. With only non-farm assets and debts included, the median residence farm household, which families tend to own for lifestyle reasons, has about 2.5 times as much net wealth as the median white household and 22 times as much as the median black household. With farm wealth included, the median residence farm has almost 5 times as much wealth as the median household. Commercial farms, which are responsible for the vast majority of all farm production, have an astronomical net wealth of $2.7 million — about 130 times that of the median black household. Almost all farmers, meanwhile, are white. The few farms that do engage in market production tend to make boatloads of money. Only about 340,000 farms, 80 percent of them family-owned, accounted for 90 percent of sales in 2012. These are what USDA calls “farm businesses,” excluding so-called “low sales farms,” which churn out almost no agricultural products. Even farm businesses with “moderate sales” boast a median farm income of $46,000, a median household income of $95,000, and a median net wealth of $1.8 million. “Midsize” farms make a median of $102,000 off farming and have a total net wealth of $2.4 million. These figures shoot through the roof for larger operations. What About Debt? Many readers will be surprised to read that farmers have so much wealth, since antitrust analysts and journalists often point out that total farm debt is at an all-time high. What they don’t mention — in addition to not adjusting for inflation — is that farm assets have increased at even higher rates. Farms also often have substantial nonfarm wealth they can draw on when their incomes dip. The net wealth figures cited throughout this piece account for both debts and inflation, while the total wealth figures account for nonfarm wealth. Animal farmers, who figure prominently in the conventional antitrust narrative, are no exception to the general rule of farmer affluence. David Dayen, in Monopolized: Life in the Age of Corporate Power, writes that “a 2013 Pew report noted that 71 percent of all chicken farmers earn incomes below the poverty line.” Zephyr Teachout uses the same figure in Break ’Em Up, as does the Open Markets Institute in an oft-cited report. The source for this figure appears to be an unpublished 2001 report that found 71 percent of households whose only source of income is a chicken farm were in poverty. The comparable number for today is not readily available, but data from the USDA (obtained for this article) show that even the lowest-sales broiler farm businesses boast a median household income of $69,000 and a net wealth of over $1 million. The figures are similar for cattle and hog farmers. Source: Special tabulation from USDA. None of this is to say that there aren’t chicken farmers, dairy farmers, and some other farmers who struggle. But the numbers tell us that farmers are overwhelmingly wealthy and overwhelmingly conservative. Studies of campaign contributions have concluded that agriculture is among the most conservative industries, and a poll last year found 80 percent of farmers approved of Donald Trump. The story is quite different for farmworkers. Exploited Farmworkers Farmworkers perform most of the labor in US agriculture, yet they are relegated to a second-class status. A special tabulation we received from the USDA shows that farmworkers work 60 percent of the hours on the farms that account for 90 percent of all agricultural production, while earning a fraction of the money. Farmers may only earn 15 cents of each food dollar, but farmworkers receive only 1.2 cents — and split those cents among more people, since there are far more farmworkers than farmers. Data on farmworkers in animal production is patchy, but an expert who studies farm labor in California found they may earn about $30,000 per year. Crop workers, meanwhile, have a median annual income of $17,500 to $20,000 and a third have family incomes below the poverty line. A leading expert estimates two-thirds are undocumented. They often lack safe drinking water, toil under body-destroying labor conditions, and are exposed to dangerous levels of pesticides (at much higher levels than farmers). With no hope to purchase enough land to enter commercial farming, researcher Philip L. Martin writes, they labor in “an apartheid industry.” And when things go wrong, farmworkers are often offered up as scapegoats. In the rare instance that authorities prosecute animal abuse on agricultural operations, it is almost always farmworkers who are punished. A familiar pattern has emerged when animal rights organizations release videos of feedlot animal abuse: owners express their shock and dismay, workers are fired, and local prosecutors charge those workers with animal abuse. The owners are not held criminally liable despite creating the working conditions that lead to such abuse. Many large farms also do their hiring through subcontractors that use the threat of deportation to keep wages down and unions out. While some farmers feel pressure from companies like Bayer, farmworkers feel a much more acute pressure from farmers themselves. The farm lobby and other conservative interests work hard to keep farmworkers under their thumb. Recently, they pushed to expand the H-2A visa program — which President Trump agreed to — a program many farmworkers and organizers compare to slavery. Farmworkers with an H-2A visa must stay with their employers and risk deportation if they complain. A 2020 study found that 38 percent of Department of Labor investigations of agricultural operations uncovered H-2A violations, while a 2020 analysis of one hundred interviews with H-2A workers found that 94 percent had suffered three or more “serious legal violations,” which included “seriously substandard housing,” “verbal threats,” and significant wage theft.” And perhaps most perversely, many farmworkers come to the United States in the first place because American foreign policy — trade deals, coups, and other meddling — destabilized their homes and drove them out in search of decent wages. Class Conflict in the Fields The antitrust movement is aware of many of these problems of worker exploitation and will readily concede the need for greater labor protections. But their unmistakable focus is on farmers, which has led them to endorse a trickle-down theory in which farmers, post-trust-busting, will grant their workers a cut of the extra profits. According to antitrust advocates Sandeep Vaheesan and Claire Kelloway, “Reducing the oppressive buyer power of massive retailers like Walmart, and dominant meat processors, like Tyson, would help return a larger share of the food dollar to producers, and, by extension, their workers.” This sounds logical — if farmers had more money, they’d have more of it to give to their workers — but it quickly falls apart under scrutiny. Farmers have plenty of income to share with their workers already, yet, as private businesses are wont to do, they share as little of it as they can. When profits spiked in the mid-2000s, wages didn’t budge. When they jumped again in the early 2010s, wages rose only a modest amount, with the largest hikes actually coming after farm income dipped again. Philip L. Martin, the scholar of farm labor, attributes a recent uptick in wages to a decline in immigration and state-level increases in the minimum wage, rather than generosity among hiring managers. Agricultural workers don’t need wealthier bosses, they need more rights — to unionize, to be free of harassment and mistreatment, to decent food and housing, and to collectively own the land they work. The antitrust approach also does little to solve more fundamental problems in agriculture. In 1524, the German peasant leader and preacher Thomas Müntzer lambasted the nobility for taking living creatures as their private property. He wrote, outraged, “that all creatures have been turned into property, the fish in the water, the birds in the air, the plants on the earth — all living things must also become free.” Karl Marx approvingly cited Müntzer three hundred twenty years later, when he argued that capitalism not only degrades how we relate to each other, but also how we relate to nature. As long as we treat living things as commodities, neither they, nor we, will be free. A programmatic path to the liberation of all things is beyond the scope of this essay — instead, we offer a critique. Antitrust enforcement can be a useful and even necessary tool at times. With at least two-thirds of farmland in the hands of the same wealthy owners responsible for 90 percent of sales, the antitrust movement would be well-served to renew calls for land reform that were popular with earlier US agrarian and left-populist movements. But when antitrust proponents use concentration to explain all the ills of agriculture, they distort reality. The break ’em up response to industrial agriculture may distribute human and animal misery more evenly (at best), but it does not address the root of this misery: exploitation. The standard antitrust analysis posits that tending to the needs of a small, highly conservative, and well-off constituency will ultimately benefit their workers and society. This is a mistake. Not only are there far more farmworkers than farmers — at least 2.5 times as many as there are farm businesses — farmers are already at the forefront of movements against environmental abuses and labor violations by their employers: that is to say, farmers. In recent years, farmworkers and their families have won collective bargaining rights in New York State, a new union in Washington, and safer pesticide regulations throughout the country, despite massive institutional and legal disadvantages. Still, farmworkers lack basic labor protections in most of the country, much less the kind of extravagant public support that farmers receive. Farmworkers understand that the size of a farm tells us next to nothing about its labor or environmental practices. As Margaret Gray and others have documented, smaller-scale and local farms often have among the worst working conditions and wages. Instead of idealizing yeoman farmers, we must fight for a future where we collectively hold the land together, and farmworkers labor for no one but themselves. Only they have the ability, through withholding and redirecting their labor, to shut down and reshape food production in the United States. Antitrust writers argue that breaking up agribusiness will help farmers and farmworkers alike. They dream of a cross-class alliance, but deny the intense conflict already with us, playing out every day in fields and farmhouses across the country.

#### Capitalism causes existential climate change, nuclear war, democratic collapse, extreme inequality, and perpetual exploitation of the global south — try or die for a transition.

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 to reject the aff and critically interrogate the neoliberal discourse of the 1AC — resisting capitalist pedagogy in educational spaces is the first step towards a broader movement away from Capitalism; COVID provides a unique transition opportunity.

Giroux 20, McMaster University Professor for Scholarship in the Public Interest and The Paulo Freire Distinguished Scholar in Critical Pedagogy (Henry, June 9th, “Racist Violence Can’t Be Separated from the Violence of Neoliberal Capitalism,” *Truthout*, <https://truthout.org/articles/racist-violence-cant-be-separated-from-the-violence-of-neoliberal-capitalism/>, Accessed 08-24-2021)

As educators, it is crucial for us to examine how we talk, teach, and write about inequality as an object of critique in an age of precarity, uncertainty and the current pandemic crisis. This is especially true at a time when a growing number of authoritarian regimes around the globe substitute replace thoughtful dialogue and critical engagement with the suppression of dissent and a culture of forgetting r. How do we situate our analysis of education as part of a broader discourse and mode of analysis that interrogates the promises, ideals, and claims of a substantive democracy? How do we fight against iniquitous relations of power and wealth that empty power of its emancipatory possibilities, and as Hannah Arendt has argued, “makes most people superfluous as human beings”? How might we understand how neoliberal ideology, with its appropriation of market-based values, regressive notions of freedom and agency, uses language to infiltrate daily life? How does a pandemic pedagogy in the service of neoliberalism produce identities defined by market values, and normalize a notion of responsibility and individuality that convinces people that whatever problem they face they have no one to blame but themselves? Repeated endlessly on right-wing media platforms, the underlying conditions that disproportionately produce chronic illness among poor people of color disappear among a public distracted, if not persuaded, by a pandemic pedagogy that celebrates unchecked self-interest, disdains social responsibility, and turns away from the reality of a society with deep-seated institutional rot and unravelling of social connections and the social contract. Pandemic pedagogy thrives on inequality and becomes a militarized and heartless normalizing tool to convince the broader public that the lives of the elderly, sick, and vulnerable should be valued according to how much they contribute to the economy. And if they are willing to die in order not to be a drain on the economy, all well and good. Nothing escapes the cruel logic of neoliberalism with its arrogance and hubris on full display as it bathes in the glow of right-wing populism, ultra-nationalism, and neofascism. Its accoutrements of dictatorship are everywhere and can be seen in the swagger of militia that storm state capitals, in police who punch and pepper spray protesters and push elderly men to the ground, and in military forces on the streets without badges reinforcing a climate of fear, repression, and unaccountability. There is more at work here than a lack of humanity on the part of the Trump administration. As the Irish journalist Fintan O’Toole observes, there is also the deepening grip of a culture of cruelty and dehumanization. He writes: “As a society the American people are being habituated into accepting cruelty on a wide scale. Americans are being taught by Trump and his administration not to see other people as human beings whose lives are as important as their own. Once that line has been crossed – and it is not just Trump and the people around him, but many of Trump’s supporters as well – then we know where that all leads, what the ultimate destination is. There is no mystery about it. We know what happens when a government and its leaders dehumanize large numbers of people.” Depoliticization and the Authoritarian Turn Neoliberalism is not only an economic system, it is also an ideological apparatus that relentlessly attempts to structure consciousness, values, desires, and modes of identification in ways that align individuals with its governing structures. Central to this pedagogical project is the attempt to prevent individuals from translating private issues and troubles into broader systemic considerations. By doing this, it becomes difficult for individuals to grasp the historical, social, economic, and political forces at work in shaping a social order as a human activity deeply immersed in specific relations of power. Neoliberalism’s attempt to erase or rewrite historical and social forces makes it difficult for individuals to imagine alternative notions of society, with themselves as collective actors, or view their problems as more than the limitations of faulty character, moral failure, or a problem of personal responsibility. Reducing individuals to isolated, discrete, hermetically-sealed human beings whose lives are shaped only by notions of self-reliance and self-sufficiency is a pedagogical strategy that utterly depoliticizes people, leading them to believe that however a society is shaped, it is part of a natural order. President Trump echoed this “no alternative” narrative when asked about celebrities and rich people having special access to being tested for the coronavirus while few others had access. He replied, “Perhaps that’s been the story of life.” This individualization of the social with its mounting privatization, gated communities, and social atomization undermines collective action, any viable notion of solidarity, and weakens the notion of global connectivity. The philosopher Byung-Chul Han has rightly argued that contemporary neoliberal society is shaped by a dysfunctional notion of solitude and hermitically-sealed notions of agency, all of which undermine the values and social connections vital to a democracy. He writes: “Those subject to the neoliberal economy do not constitute a we that is capable of collective action. The mounting egoization and atomization of society is making the space for collective action shrink… The general collapse of the collective and the communal has engulfed it. Solidarity is vanishing. Privatization now reaches into the depths of the soul itself. The erosion of the communal is making all collective efforts more and more unlikely.” This panoptical nature of hyper-individualism is more aligned with shared fears than shared responsibilities. Under such circumstances, trust and the notion that all life is related become difficult to grasp as the myopic language of private self-interest inures individuals to wider social problems such as extreme inequality. There is no understanding in this discourse of the damage fanatical entrepreneurialism does to our embodied collectivity. Nor is there any value attributed to the important responsibilities, social values, and notion of the common good that exceeds who we are as individuals, or how we have been shaped by diverse social forces in particular ways. It should be clear that questions of economic and social justice cannot be addressed by a neoliberal pedagogy that enshrines self-interest and privatization while converting every social problem into individualized market solutions or regressive matters of personal responsibility. Under neoliberalism’s disimagination machine, individual responsibility is coupled with an ethos of greed, avarice, and personal gain. One consequence is the tearing up of social solidarities, public values, and an almost pathological disdain for democracy. This radical form of privatization is also a powerful force for the rise of fascist politics because it depoliticizes individuals, immerses them in the logic of social Darwinism, and makes them susceptible to the dehumanization of those considered a threat or disposable. Just as the spread of the pandemic virus in the United States was not an innocent act of nature, neither is the rise and pervasive grip of inequality. What is clear is that neoliberal support for unbridled individualism has weakened democratic pressures and eroded democracy and equality as governing principles. Moreover, as a mode of public pedagogy, it has undercut social provisions, the social contract, and support for public goods such as education, public health, essential infrastructure, public transportation, and the most basic elements of the welfare state. As a form of pedagogical practice, neoliberalism has morphed into a form of pandemic pedagogy that sacrifices social needs and human life in the name of an economic rationality that values reviving economic growth over human rights. As a lived system of meaning and values, self-reliance and rugged individualism are the only categories available for shaping how individuals view themselves, and their relationship to others and to the planet. The individualization of everyone and the reduction of social problems to private troubles is paralleled by sanctioning a world marked by borders, walls, racism, hate, and a rejection of government intervention in the interest of the common good. Most importantly, neoliberal individualization personalizes power, creating a depoliticized subject whose only obligation as a citizen is defined by consuming and living in a world free from ethical and social responsibilities. In many ways, it does not just empty politics of any substance, it destroys its emancipatory prospects. The neoliberal strategists use education not only to mask their abuses and the effects of their criminogenic policies, they also – in a time of crisis, when dissatisfaction of the masses might lead to chaos, revolts, and dangerous levels of resistance – move dangerously close to creating the conditions for a fascist politics. The noted theologian Frei Betto is right in stating that under such conditions, “…they cover up the causes of social ills and cover up their effects with ideologies that, by obscuring causes, fuel mood in the face of the effects. That’s why neoliberalism is now showing its authoritarian face – building walls that divide countries and ethnic groups, executive power over legislature and judiciary, disinformation about digital networks, the cult of the homeland, the brazen offensive against human rights.” Neoliberalism and its regressive notion of individualism and individual responsibility has undermined the belief that human beings both make the world and can change it. The pandemic has ushered in a crisis that undermines that belief and opens the door for rethinking what kind of society and notion of politics will be faithful to the creation of a socialist democracy that speaks to the core values of justice, equality and solidarity. Under such circumstances, private resistance must give way to collective resistance, and personal and political rights must include economic rights. If inequality is to be defeated, the social state must replace the corporate state and social rights must be guaranteed for all. There can be no adequate struggle for economic justice and social equality unless economic inequality on a global level is addressed along with a movement for climate justice, the elimination of systemic racism and a halt to the spiraling militarism that has resulted in endless wars. This can only take place if the anti-democratic ideology of neoliberalism, with its collapse of the public into the private and its institutional structures of domination, are fully addressed and discredited. Étienne Balibar is right in stating that the triumph of neoliberalism has resulted in the “death zones of humanity.” Following Balibar, what must be made clear is that neoliberal capitalism is itself a pandemic and a dangerous harbinger of an updated fascist politics. Overcoming Pandemic Pedagogy The kind of societies that will emerge after the pandemic is up for grabs. In some cases, the crisis will give way to authoritarian regimes such as Chile, Hungary and Turkey, all of which have used the urgency of COVID-19 as an excuse to impose more state control and surveillance, squelch dissent, eliminate civil liberties and concentrate power in the hands of an authoritarian political class. As is well documented, history in a time of crisis also has the potential to change dominant ideologies, rethink the meaning of governance, and enlarge the sphere of justice and equality through a vision that fights for a more generous and inclusive politics. It is crucial to rethink the project of politics in order to imagine forms of resistance that are collective, inclusive and global, capable of producing new democratic arrangements for social life, more radical values and a “global economy which will no longer be at the mercy of market mechanisms.” This is a politics that must move beyond siloed identities and fractured political factions in order to build transnational solidarities in the service of an alternative radically democratic society. Making the pedagogical more political means challenging those forms of pandemic pedagogy that turn politics into theater, a favorite tactic of Trump. In this case, the performance works to suspend disbelief, hold power accountable and unravel one’s sense of critical agency. Pandemic pedagogy does more than undermine critical thinking and informed judgments, it dissolves the line between the truth and lies, fantasy and reality, and in doing so, destroys the foundation for understanding, engaging and promoting that social and economic justice. The endgame under the rubric of a pandemic pedagogy is not simply the destruction of the truth, but the elimination of democracy itself. Central to developing an alternative democratic vision is development of a language that refuses to look away and be commodified. Such a language should be able to break through the continuity and consensus of common sense and appeals to the natural order of things. At stake here is the need to reclaim both critical and redemptive elements of a radical democracy in order to address the full spectrum of violence that structures institutions and everyday life in the United States. This is a language connected to the acquisition of civic literacy, and it demands a different regime of desires and identifications to enable us to move from “shock and stunned silence toward a coherent visceral speech, one as strong as the force that is charging at us.” Of course, there is more at stake here than a struggle over meaning; there is also the struggle over power, over the need to create a formative culture that will produce informed critical agents who will fight for and contribute to a broad social movement that will translate meaning into a fierce struggle for economic, political and social justice. Agency in this sense must be connected to a notion of possibility and education in the service of radical change. Reimagining the future only becomes meaningful when it is rooted in a fierce struggle against the horrors and totalitarian practices of a pandemic pedagogy that falsely claims that it exists outside of history. Václav Havel, the late Czech political dissident-turned-politician, once argued that politics follows culture, by which he meant that changing consciousness is the first step toward building mass movements of resistance. What is crucial here in the age of multiple crises is a thorough grasp of the notion that critical and engaged forms of agency are a product of emancipatory education. Moreover, at the heart of any viable notion of politics is the recognition that politics begins with attempts to change the way people think, act and feel with respect to both how they view themselves and their relations to others. There is more to agency than the neoliberal emphasis on the “empire of the self,” with its unchecked belief in the virtues of a form of self-interest that despises the bonds of sociality, solidarity and community. The U.S. is in the midst of a political and pedagogical crisis. This is a crisis defined not only by a brutalizing racism and massive inequality, but also a constitutional crisis produced by a growing authoritarianism that has been in the making for some time. The recent attacks by the police on journalists, peaceful protesters and even elderly people marching for racial justice echoes the violence of the Brownshirts in the 1930s. Let’s stop the futile debate about whether or not the U.S. is in the midst of a fascist state and shift the register to the more serious question of how to resist it and restore a semblance of real democracy. Under such circumstances, education should be viewed as central to politics, and it plays a crucial role in producing informed judgments, actions, morality and social responsibility at the forefront not only of agency, but politics itself. In this scenario, truth and politics mutually inform each other to erupt in a pedagogical awakening at the moment when the rules are broken. Taking risks becomes a necessity, self-reflection narrates its capacity for critically engaged agency and thinking the impossible is not an option, but a necessity. Without an informed and educated citizenry, democracy can lead to tyranny, even fascism. Trump represents the malignant presence of a fascism that never dies and is ready to remerge at different times in different context in sometimes not-so-recognizable forms. The COVID-19 crisis and the pandemic of inequality and racism have revealed elements of a fascist politics that are more than abstractions. The struggle against a fascist politics is now visible in the rebellions taking place across the United States. While there are no political guarantees for a victory, there is a new sense that the future can be changed in the image of a just and sustainable society. There is a new energy for reform taking place in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd. Massive protests for racial, economic and social justice are emerging all over the globe. As I have argued in The Terror of the Unforeseen, at stake here is the need for these protests to transition from a pedagogical moment and collective outburst of moral anger to a progressive international movement that is well organized and unified. Such a movement must build solidarity among different groups, imagine new forms of social life, make the impossible possible, and produce a revolutionary project in defense of equality, social justice and popular sovereignty. The racial, class, ecological and public health crisis facing the globe can only be understood as part of a comprehensive crisis of the totality. Immediate solutions such as defunding the police and improving community services are important, but they do not deal with the larger issue of eliminating a neoliberal system structured in massive racial and economic inequalities. David Harvey is right in arguing that the “immediate task is nothing more nor less than the self-conscious construction of a new political framework for approaching the question of inequality, through a deep and profound critique of our economic and social system.” This is a crisis in which different threads of oppression must be understood as part of the general crisis of capitalism. The various protests now evolving internationally at the popular level offer the promise of new global anti-fascist and anti-capitalist movements. In the current moment, democracy may be under a severe threat and appear frighteningly vulnerable, but with young people and others rising up across the globe — inspired, energized and marching in the streets — the future of a radical democracy is waiting to breathe again.

## adv – 1

### 1nc – turn

#### Profits give farmers an incentive to overproduce, waste food, and destroy the environment

**Holt-Gimenez 19** , served as executive director of Food First in Oakland, California, from 2006 until mid-2019. He is the editor of Food First’s Food Movements Unite! Strategies to Transform Our Food Systems; co-author of Food Rebellions! Crisis and the Hunger for Justice; author of Campesino a Campesino; author of A Foodie’s Guide to Capitalism; and most recently, Can We Feed the World Without Destroying It? Eric has a master’s in international agricultural development from the University of California, Davis, and a Ph.D. in Environmental Studies from UC, Santa Cruz. He has taught at UC, Berkeley, UC, Santa Cruz, Boston University, University of the Pacific, and Italy’s National Gastronomic University. He previously served as the Latin America program manager for the Bank Information Center in Washington, D.C. (Eric, 8/9/19, “Capitalism, food, and social movements: The political economy of food system transformation,” *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2019.091.043> Date Accessed: 7/19/21)

Farmers usually aim to produce a surplus. They borrow a lot of money up front and want to be sure they sell enough to cover their costs of pro-duction. But there’s a lot of uncertainty. Agricul-tural markets are volatile and very demanding. A large portion of farmers’ costs are fixed—they can’t just plant less when the market is bad, and they can’t move their farm to find a better market. This means that when prices drop (because of overproduction), farmers don’t cut back on pro-duction—they produce more to cover their fixed costs, “farming their way out of debt.” What if the price goes up in the market? Again farmers pro-duce more because they need more money to make up for the years they lost money. So farming especially lends itself to overproduction. With overproduction, goods pile up unsold, workers are laid off, and demand drops. As a capitalist, what can I do? I can break into some other market which is already established. With food production, one good way to do that is through food aid. The USDA started providing food aid because it had a huge surplus of grain and had to get rid of it. And so, through an arrange-ment with the governments in the developing world, they broke into those markets, basically selling the grain there at prices that were below the cost of production. This destroyed the markets for local farmers and made those governments dependent on foreign grain. Subsequently, they—well, we—had the markets to ourselves. So the contradiction between capital and labor has all kinds of consequences. And of course, we know about the second contradiction—the ecological contradiction in which production and consumption ruin the environment. But where does it really start? It starts with the metabolic rift. The metabolic rift results from physically separating the places where we produce most of our food from the place where we consume most of our food. Nutrients used to produce food are not returned to the farm to be recycled through the food chain. Instead, these nutrients are consumed in cities, and dumped into rivers and oceans as waste. The metabolic rift was first identified just as capitalism was emerging. Justus von Liebig, known as the father of fertilizer, isolated nitrogen, phos-phorus, and potassium in plants and noted that these could be added to the soil as fertilizers. He didn’t elaborate on the process, but he got the theory right. Von Liebig actually wrote to the mayor of London cautioning that industrialization was driving people into the cities, where nutrients are not getting back to the farm but polluting the waterways. The metabolic rift leads to all kinds of environ-mental challenges like overshoot, pollution, and, as we now know, global warming and resource deple-tion. It’s been said that “All progress in capitalist’s agriculture is progress not only in the art of rob-bing the worker but robbing the soil, the source of all wealth” (Marx, 1867/1976, pp. 637–638). We know now that these externalities are quite severe. To list a few examples: •Soil loss: About 75 billion tons/year, and it’s been estimated that global losses in soil-based ecosystem services cost between US$6.3 and US$10.6 trillion annually. (That’s about the same amount as the value of business the food system does every year.) •Water loss: Agriculture uses up 80% of the world’s fresh water. A large portion of industrial agriculture is reliant on aquifers with geologic recharge rates. Some of the largest of these ancient aquifers are located in the Punjab, India, where the Green Revolution was introduced, and in the American Midwest. •Biodiversity: We’ve lost 90 percent of the world’s agrobiodiversity because of mono-cultures and chemical use in agriculture. •Aquatic ecosystem health: Eutrophic dead zones are growing in our bodies of water around the world, mostly from agri-cultural runoff and exacerbated by rising ocean temperatures. For example, the Gulf of Mexico is experiencing unprece-dented plankton blooms and fish kills. •And the other thing which has more to do with the first contradiction is if you look around the world today, farms are get-ting bigger—much, much bigger. To stay in business they have to produce much, much more because the profit margins are very small. So the volumes have to be very large in order to cover costs. But farms are also getting very, very small and around the world. Most of the smallholder farmers in the world are women. They produce over half of the world’s food. Small farmers, by the way, produce about 70 percent of the world’s food on 25 percent of the agricultural land. Now, this has got nothing to do with Cargill, has nothing to do Monsanto, has nothing to do with “Big Ag.” These are peasant farmers. Although poor peasant farmers produce most of the world’s food, most of them are going hungry. Their parcels of land are too small. What they get paid for the products is too low. They sell it off right away as soon as they harvest because they’re poor and need money. Six months later, they’re buying back food at higher prices, but they don’t have enough money, and so they go hungry. The women and girls who feed most of the world make up 70 percent of the world’s hungry. And these small farms are getting smaller. The most rapidly growing sector in U.S. agri-culture is small farms, and most of these farmers are women. We can celebrate this. I think it’s a good thing. However, we are condemning most of these women farm-ers to poverty because their farms are too small. And so you can see the sexism in all this . . . You know, the big boys on the big farms and the women with their families on little farms. That’s the feminization of agriculture. But the way it’s being done is not good. •Food waste: Between 30 and 50 percent of our food is wasted somewhere between farm and fork. Food waste takes different shapes depending on where it’s being wasted (e.g., Global North vs. South), demographics, cultures, etc. It’s very par-ticular. What’s not particular is that a huge amount of our food is wasted. It’s often said that reducing food waste can elimi-nate hunger. While this is conceptually true, it overlooks the influence of our capitalist food system. Food waste is part of that system. Industrial agriculture, capitalist agriculture, has to overproduce in order to stay in the market, and food waste is a consequence. There are pro-grams that have invested millions of dollars in recovering food waste, such as the Rockefeller Foundation or the Ford Foundation. However, the moment you do this, food waste, which before was just throughput, now has value. Consequently, retailers, distributors, and other food supply chain actors will want to capture the value of food waste, and we’re quickly going to see the capitalization of food waste. If you really want to stop food waste, we have to stop overproduction.

#### Profit focused farming creates inevitable externalities which causes environmental harm

**Neshim et al. 15** , Committee on a Framework for Assessing the Health, Environmental, and Social Effects of the Food System; Food and Nutrition Board; Board on Agriculture and Natural Resources; Institute of Medicine; National Research Council. Malden C. Nesheim is a professor of Nutrition Emeritus at Cornell, Maria Oria is a Senior Program Officer at National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Peggy Tsai Yih is the Managing Director of the Center of Global Food and Agriculture. (Malden C., Maria Oria, Peggy Tsai Yih, 2015, “A Framework for Assessing Effects of the Food System,” *The National Academies*, Chapter 4, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305182/> Date Accessed: 6/4/2021)

Private Producer Perspective

Most food is produced by farmers who rely on agriculture for their livelihood. Although evidence abounds that farmers care about environmental stewardship, surveys repeatedly show that profitability is an overriding concern ([Ma et al., 2012](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305182/)). Farmers in the United States hold property rights that give broad latitude over how to manage their land so long as they do not cause harm in direct and measurable ways ([Norris et al., 2008](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305182/)). However, their actions may cause economic externalities through air, water, or biotic changes that are indirect and often hard to measure.

The profit-maximizing approach to nitrogen fertilizer application on corn illustrates a rational process where an economic externality can lead to environmental degradation. To begin, note that fertilizer, land, and corn are private goods that belong to the farmer. But the aquifer under the farm, the streams nearby, and the atmosphere have no owners—they are common property resources. Corn yield typically increases with increasing applications of nitrogen, but yield increases at a decreasing rate and ultimately reaches a plateau due to genetic yield potential or shortages of other inputs. For a corn producer who is deciding how much nitrogen fertilizer to apply to a corn crop, the standard rule for profit maximization is to apply more fertilizer up to the point where the pay-off from adding more fertilizer just equals the cost of acquiring and spreading that fertilizer. Up to that point, each added unit of fertilizer will fetch greater value of marketable corn. As fertilizer application rises and corn yield tails off, a rising share of fertilizer applied is not taken up by the corn plant. Instead, it converts to nitrate and is carried by water into streams that may contribute to marine hypoxia ([Alexander et al., 2008](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305182/)); it may also convert into nitrous oxide and move into the atmosphere as a GHG ([McSwiney and Robertson, 2005](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305182/); [Shcherbak et al., 2014](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305182/)). Because no one owns the waterways or the air, the costs to other people of using those environmental media as waste recipients are external to the farmer's decision. Similar external costs can accrue from other privately rational decisions by farmers. Examples include specializing in highly profitable crops at the expense of biodiverse natural areas that provide habitat for beneficial species, such as songbirds, pollinators, and the natural enemies of certain agricultural pests.

The common property dynamic contributes importantly to depletion of shared resources like the Ogallala (High Plains) Aquifer. In the century since farmers learned that the semiarid High Plains region was underlain by this vast aquifer, irrigation has dramatically expanded crop production. However, due to low rainfall in the current era, the aquifer's recharge rate is dwarfed by water withdrawals, resulting in a 30 percent depletion of the groundwater supply today in western Kansas, with continuing depletion expected despite rising private costs of withdrawing water from greater depths ([Steward et al., 2013](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK305182/)). Because no one owns the groundwater, there is no assurance that if one person conserves, that person will have more of the resource available later.

### 1nc – soil

#### No till solves and is rapidly spreading

Kassam 16

Amir, Amir Kassam is the moderator of the Global Conservation Agriculture Community of Practice (Global CA-CoP) communication platform hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Rome, 6/16/16 (“Reversing agricultural land degradation worldwide”, <http://drylandsystems.cgiar.org/content/reversing-agricultural-land-degradation-worldwide>, Accessed 3/13/19)//DG

No-till conservation agriculture systems are now spreading globally in all continents at the combined annual rate of 10 million hectares, and in 2013 they covered some 160 million hectares of annual rainfed and irrigated cropland, corresponding to about 11% of global annual cropland. Some 50% of land under conservation agriculture is in the developing countries, particularly in Latin America and Asia. More recently, the practice has begun to take hold and spread in Africa and the Near East, as farmers and their communities learn how to overcome constraints. Conservation agriculture is also being applied to perennial crops in orchard systems involving olives, vines and fruit trees; in plantation systems with oil palm, cocoa, tea, coffee, rubber and coconut; and in agroforestry systems.

No-till conservation agriculture is one of the best climate-smart solutions to combat land degradation and desertification. It is also the best practical approach to pursue the goals of sustainable agriculture to maximize productivity with resilience and harness a wide range of ecosystem services to improve rural livelihoods, and food and nutrition security almost everywhere.

What we have learned in recent years is that farmers are willing to take greater control of their futures by experimenting with and adopting radically new and innovative practices such as conservation agriculture in order to build sustainable agricultural livelihoods in the face of climate change and other critical challenges related to food and nutrition security. However, mass transformation to no-till conservation agriculture requires the engagement of the whole society, including the farmers themselves and the public, private and civil society actors.

### 1nc – fertilizer

#### Nitrogen fertilizer sustainable---becoming more efficient.

Bailey ’18 (Ronald; science correspondent for Reason magazine; February 16th; “Is Degrowth the Only Way to Save the World?”; <https://reason.com/blog/2018/02/16/is-degrowth-the-only-way-to-save-the-wor>; accessed 7/15/19; MSCOTT)

O'Neill and his colleagues are also concerned that farmers are using too much nitrogen fertilizer, which runs off fields into the natural environment and contributes to deoxygenated dead zones in the oceans, among other ill effects. This is a problem, but one that plant breeders are already working to solve. For example, researchers at Arcadia Biosciences have used biotechnology to create nitrogen-efficient varieties of staples like rice and wheat that enable farmers to increase yields while significantly reducing fertilizer use. Meanwhile, other researchers are moving on projects to engineer the nitrogen fixation trait from legumes into cereal crops. In other words, the crops would make their own fertilizer from air.

### 1NC---!D---Biodiversity

#### No extinction from biodiversity loss, and intervening actors solve.

Kareiva & Carranza 18, \*Director of the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability at UCLA, Pritzker Distinguished Professor in Environment & Sustainability and Chair, Doctorate, in the Environmental Science and Engineering program, \*\*PhD Student at University of California, Riverside. (Peter, Valerie, “Existential risk due to ecosystem collapse: Nature strikes back”, *Futures*, 102, pg. 39-50, doi: 10.1016/j.futures.2018.01.001)

While there are data that relate local reductions in species richness to altered ecosystem function, these results do not point to substantial existential risks. The data are small-scale experiments in which plant productivity, or nutrient retention is reduced as species number declines locally (Vellend, 2017), or are local observations of increased variability in fisheries yield when stock diversity is lost (Schindler et al., 2010). Those are not existential risks. To make the link even more tenuous, there is little evidence that biodiversity is even declining at local scales (Vellend et al 2017; Vellend et al., 2013). Total planetary biodiversity may be in decline, but local and regional biodiversity is often staying the same because species from elsewhere replace local losses, albeit homogenizing the world in the process. Although the majority of conservation scientists are likely to flinch at this conclusion, there is growing skepticism regarding the strength of evidence linking trends in biodiversity loss to an existential risk for humans (Maier, 2012; Vellend, 2014). Obviously if all biodiversity disappeared civilization would end—but no one is forecasting the loss of all species. It seems plausible that the loss of 90% of the world’s species could also be apocalyptic, but not one is predicting that degree of biodiversity loss either. Tragic, but plausible is the possibility our planet suffering a loss of as many as half of its species. If global biodiversity were halved, but at the same time locally the number of species stayed relatively stable, what would be the mechanism for an end-of-civilization or even end of human prosperity scenario? Extinctions and biodiversity loss are ethical and spiritual losses, but perhaps not an existential risk.

What about the remaining eight planetary boundaries? Stratospheric ozone depletion is one—but thanks to the Montreal Protocol ozone depletion is being reversed (Hand, 2016). Disruptions of the nitrogen cycle and of the phosphorous cycle have also been proposed as representing potential planetary boundaries (one boundary for nitrogen and one boundary for phosphorous). There are compelling data linking excesses in these nutrients to environmental damage. For example, over-application of fertilizer in Midwestern USA has led to dead zones in the Gulf of Mexico. Similarly, excessive nitrogen has polluted groundwater in California to such an extent that it is unsuitable for drinking and some rural communities are forced to drink bottled water. However, these impacts are local. At the same time that there is too much N loading in the US, there is a need for more N in Africa as a way of increasing agricultural yields (Mueller et al., 2012). While the disruption of nitrogen and phosphorous cycles clearly perturb local ecosystems, end-of-the-world scenarios seem a bit far-fetched.

Another hypothesized planetary boundary entails the conversion of natural habitats to agricultural land. The mechanism by which too much agricultural land could cause a crisis is unclear—unless it is because land conversion causes so much biodiversity loss that is species extinctions that are the proximate cause of an eco-catastrophe. Excessive chemical pollution and excessive atmospheric aerosol loading have each been suggested as planetary boundaries as well. In the case of these pollution boundaries, there are well-documented mechanisms by which surpassing some concentration of a pollutant inflicts severe human health hazards. There is abundant evidence linking chemical and aerosol pollution to higher mortality and lower reproductive success in humans, which in turn could cause a major die-off. It is perhaps appropriate then that when Hollywood envisions an unlivable world, it often invokes a story of humans poisoning themselves. That said, it is doubtful that we will poison ourselves towards extinction. Data show that as nations develop and increase their wealth, they tend to clean up their air and water and reduce environmental pollution (Flörke et al., 2013; Hao & Wang, 2005). In addition, as economies become more circular (see Mathews & Tan, 2016), environmental damage due to waste products is likely to decline. The key point is that the pollutants associated with the planetary boundaries are so widely recognized, and the consequences of local toxic events are so immediate, that it is reasonable to expect national governments to act before we suffer a planetary ecocatastrophe.

## adv – 2

### 1NC---US Not Key---Food Security

#### US supply isn’t key to global ag.

Charles 13, NPR’s food and agriculture correspondent. Citing Margaret Mellon, a scientist with the environmental advocacy group Union of Concerned Scientists. (Dan, 9/17/13, “American Farmers Say They Feed The World, But Do They?”, *NPR*, https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2013/09/17/221376803/american-farmers-say-they-feed-the-world-but-do-they)

And this is why the words “feed the world” grate on the nerves of people who believe that large-scale, technology-driven agriculture is bad for the environment and often bad for people. Margaret Mellon, a scientist with the environmental advocacy group Union of Concerned Scientists, recently wrote an essay in which she confessed to developing an allergy to that phrase. “If there’s a controversy, the show-stopper is supposed to be, ‘We have to use pesticides, or we won’t be able to feed the world!’ “ she says. Mellon says it’s time to set that idea aside. It doesn’t answer the concerns that people have about modern agriculture — and it’s not even true. American-style farming doesn’t really grow food for hungry people, she says. Forty percent of the biggest crop — corn — goes into fuel for cars. Most of the second-biggest crop — soybeans — is fed to animals. Growing more grain isn’t the solution to hunger anyway, she says. If you’re really trying to solve that problem, there’s a long list of other steps that are much more important. “We need to empower women; we need to raise incomes; we need infrastructure in the developing world; we need the ability to get food to market without spoiling.”

### 1NC---Food Prices Low

#### Prices are dropping across the board

**FAO News 8/5** , Specialized Agency of the UN focused on agriculture (8/5/2021, “Global food prices decline in July,” *Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations*, <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1418901/icode/> Date Accessed: 8/17/2021)

5 August 2021, Rome - Global food commodity prices fell in July for the second consecutive month, according to a benchmark United Nations report released today.

The [FAO Food Price Index](http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/) averaged 123.0 points in July 2021, 1.2 percent lower than the previous month although still 31.0 percent higher than its level in the same period of 2020. The index tracks changes in the international prices of the most globally traded food commodities. The July drop reflected declines in the quotations for most cereals and vegetable oils as well as dairy products.

The FAO Cereal Price Index was 3.0 percent lower in July than in June, pushed down by a 6.0 percent month-on-month drop in international maize prices associated with better-than-earlier projected yields in Argentina and improved production prospects in the United States of America, even as crop conditions in Brazil remained a concern. Prices of other coarse grains such as barley and sorghum also dropped significantly, reflecting weaker import demand. However, wheat quotations edged 1.8 percent higher in July - reaching their highest level since mid-2014 - in part due to concerns over dry weather and crop conditions in North America. At the same time, international rice prices hit two-year lows, impacted by currency movements and a slow pace of sales caused by high freight costs and logistical hurdles.

The FAO Dairy Price Index declined 2.8 percent from June, impacted by slower market activity in the Northern hemisphere due to ongoing summer holidays, with skim milk powder registering the largest drop, followed by butter, whole milk powder and cheese.

The FAO Vegetable Oil Price Index reached a five-month low, declining 1.4 percent from June, as lower prices for soy, rape and sunflower seed oils more than offset rising palm oil values. A lower biodiesel blending mandate in Argentina pressured soyoil prices lower, while those for rape and sunflower oils were influenced by prospective record supplies for the 2021/22 season.

In contrast, the FAO Sugar Price Index increased by 1.7 percent in July, its fourth monthly increase. The rise was mostly related to firmer crude oil prices as well as uncertainties over the impact of recent frosts on yields in Brazil, the worlds largest sugar exporter, while good production prospects in India prevented a larger jump.

The FAO Meat Price Index rose marginally from June, with quotations for poultry meat rising the most due to increased imports by East Asia and limited production expansions in some regions. Bovine meat prices also strengthened, buoyed by high imports from China and lower supplies from major producing regions. Meanwhile, pig meat prices fell, following a decline in imports by China.

### 1NC---COVID Thumper---Food Security

#### COVID thumps food security.

Rudolfsen 20, doctoral researcher at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University and PRIO. (Ida, 7/27/20, "COVID-19, Food Access, and Social Upheaval", *Climate & Conflict*, https://blogs.prio.org/ClimateAndConflict/2020/07/covid-19-food-access-and-social-upheaval/)

According to the World Food Program’s (WFP) latest report, the COVID-19 pandemic will lead to an 82 percent increase in global food insecurity, affecting around 270 million people by the end of the year. On June 29, the organization announced it is undertaking its largest humanitarian effort to assist an increasing number of food-insecure low- and middle-income countries. In a statement about the plan, WFP Executive Director David Beasley said that “until the day we have a medical vaccine, food is the best vaccine against chaos. Without it, we could see increased social unrest and protests, a rise in migration, deepening conflict, and widespread under-nutrition among populations that were previously immune from hunger.”

Why is the pandemic leading to more food insecurity? And why is David Beasley talking about social unrest and protest in connection with food?

As COVID-19 spreads around the world, fears are mounting of how the pandemic might impact and disrupt food distribution channels (e.g., transport disruptions) and disruption in the production of staple foods (e.g., labor shortages due to quarantine measures).

So far, food supply chains have been defined as essential by governments, exempting them from most lockdown measures. Thus, the impact on supply chains has been indirect, mainly caused by reduced income and remittances. A loss of income makes it harder for poor people to access affordable food but also impacts food systems by making it more difficult for producers to sell foodstuffs, since consumer’s ability to buy food declines. Governments, especially in low- and middle-income countries, will therefore have to implement policies that avoid supply chain disruptions and higher food prices.

But what do food insecurity and food prices have to do with protest and violence? The answer: it’s complicated.

The pandemic is spreading at a time when the number of severely food insecure people in the world had already increased—by more than 820 million people before the pandemic started—adding stress to areas already hardly hit by extreme weather events, armed conflict, and low economic development. However, most of these areas have not seen widespread unrest.

## Solvency

### 1nc – solvency

#### Capitalism makes monopolization inevitable.

Klitgaard 13 (Kent, Professor of Economics and Sustainability at Wells College, “Heterodox Political Economy and the Degrowth Perspective,” Sustainability 2013, 5, 276-297; doi:10.3390/su5010276, DOA: 8-30-2021) //Snowball

Marx also makes an important distinction between wealth and value that many contemporary economists do not consider. Wealth consisted of use values, and the source of much wealth was found in nature. Without the use values of inputs, such as resources and energy, no production could occur. But, value or price was derived from human labor capable of producing surplus value. The products of nature only transferred their value when capitalized. Most economists and social theorists (e.g., David Ricardo) treated nature’s contribution as “a free gift.” Value or price depended upon the amount of human labor embodied in the commodity [9]. The debate about how seriously Marx took issues of nature remains controversial to this day and forms one of the differences between the CNS approach and the Monthly Review School. For Marx, the primary contradiction was between social production (many interdependent workers, merchants and capitalists were responsible for production) and private appropriation. Surplus value was capitalized as private profit and reinvested in the expansion of the business. Growth or more properly, capital accumulation, was built into the dynamic of capitalism from the level of the individual enterprise. However, this reinvestment process was not smooth. Capitalists needed to expand the scope of their factories and markets. This entailed increasing the organic composition of capital (or the capital labor ratio) in order to increase labor productivity, as well as to create new products and processes. Recall that only living labor creates new value in the theoretical framework of classical political economy. When the rate of surplus value (a measure of labor productivity) rises faster than does the capital-labor ratio, profits will rise. However, eventually under conditions of price competition, the value of the capital-labor ratio rises faster than does the rate of surplus value. Profits then fall and an economic crisis commences. In the crisis, the conditions that created it, the rise of the organic composition and the fall in the rate of surplus value, are rectified. Excess capacity and bad debts are written off, and unemployed workers are willing to work harder for less. The organic composition falls and the rate of surplus value rises, issuing in a new era of capital accumulation and growth. In the process, however, capitals become concentrated or larger in scale and more centralized or owned by fewer capitalists. In short, the inevitable outcome of capitalist competition is a tendency towards monopoly.

In 1966, Paul Baran and Paul Sweezy published their “Essay on the American Economic and Social Order,” entitled Monopoly Capital [11]. They argued that the level of monopoly concentration that Marx had merely predicted had become the dominant business structure by the 20th century. Rather than competing on the basis of price, monopolists competed by expanding market share and reducing costs. Baran and Sweezy use the term monopoly broadly and to mean concentrated industry, rather than as the narrow “single seller” of neoclassical economic theory. Sweezy, after all, was responsible for the “kinked” oligopoly demand curve, a concept rarely transmitted to today’s students. Since, in their analysis, the mechanism that drove the tendency for the rate of profit to fall was price competition among capitalists, the very nature of value changed with the emergence of monopoly capital. Rather than a “decennial cycle” of prosperity and depression, the normal state of monopoly capital was longterm stagnation or slow economic growth. The source of the stagnation was a rising economic surplus that could not be fully absorbed by the spending outlets available: investment, consumption and waste. Baran and Sweezy chronicled why investment was insufficient, further developing an idea made famous by Evesy Domar. Investment creates additional capacity even as it serves as a spending outlet (or absorbs the economic surplus). Spending is short lived, while the investment is long lived, and the problem becomes both perpetual and unsolvable by further incremental investment. Moreover, the system is burdened by excess capacity, which is a chronic condition of monopolistic industrial organization [12], and one cannot rely on vibrant investment in a time when much capital remains unutilized. Consequently, the growth trajectory of a capitalist economy is unstable. Mainstream economic growth theory results from a critique of the work of Domar, along with that of Roy Harrod. In 1956, Robert Solow published “A Contribution to the Theory of Economic Growth.” In this article, he contended that Harrod and Domar postulated fixed technical conditions of production (although this assumption appears explicitly in neither the original books nor papers of Harrod or Domar.) Solow, claiming that resource substitutability is a “crucial” assumption, substituted a Cobb-Douglas production function for Harrod and Domar’s supposed fixed-production isoquants. Presto! The instability of the system disappears, and a fundamental social problem of economic instability is transformed into an easily-solvable technical problem. Yet, despite Solow’s prominence and the virtual disappearance of the original work of Harrod and Domar from the teaching of economic growth theory, the vast social problems of stagnation and unemployment persist even in today’s economy [13]. Even with the advent of a sales effort to expand conspicuous consumption, the level of spending by capitalists and workers is inadequate to the task of surplus absorption, and government spending was discouraged when it competed effectively with the private sector. This leaves waste, in the form of planned obsolescence and military spending, not to mention fuel inefficiency, as a primary mechanism of surplus absorption. This is a crucial point. If waste is built into the very structures of systemic maintenance in the era of monopoly capital, then sustainability cannot be achieved by increases in efficiency alone. Furthermore, conspicuous consumption is not simply bad behavior on the part of privileged consumers. Rather, it is a fundamental part of the system. In order to achieve sustainability, one must change the institutions that perpetuate waste as a condition of macroeconomic stability and growth.

# 2nc

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### 2NC---Overview

#### 3---“resolved” is legislative.

LHR No Date, Louisiana House of Representatives. (“Legislative Glossary” , <https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/Glossary.aspx#Reading%20of%20a%20bill>, Accessed: 9-12-2021)

Resolution

A legislative instrument that generally is used for making declarations, stating policies, and making decisions where some other form is not required. A bill includes the constitutionally required enacting clause; a resolution uses the term "resolved". Not subject to a time limit for introduction nor to governor's veto. (Const. Art. III, §17(B) and House Rules 8.11, 13.1, 6.8, and 7.4 and Senate Rules 10.9, 13.5 and 15.1)

### 2NC---Ground

#### Only Congress has link uniqueness

Morton 20, the Theodore Nierenberg Professor of Economics at the Yale University School of Management (Fiona, “Reforming U.S. antitrust enforcement and competition policy,” https://equitablegrowth.org/reforming-u-s-antitrust-enforcement-and-competition-policy/)

Despite the government’s success in some merger litigation, this success only occurs in transactions that most clearly violate the law.25 The fact that the two antitrust agencies must litigate cases that are clearly anticompetitive—rather than the parties not even considering the deal in the first place or abandoning it after the government makes its concerns known—speaks to the limitations of current antitrust legal doctrine.

It would likely take decades to reverse this body of accumulated legal doctrine, even if every future case that was litigated were decided with perfect accuracy. Fortunately, Congress is the final arbiter on competition law and can change it to reflect the desire of society for competitive markets. Congress has not substantively amended those laws in more than 60 years. A broad foundation of economic research supports retooling our antitrust laws for the 21st century and restoring the vigor that was originally intended. Although legislation can take many forms, successful antitrust reform legislation should accomplish four goals:

Overturn Supreme Court precedent that has inoculated exclusionary conduct from antitrust scrutiny even when it harms competition by eliminating or harming competitors

Prohibit courts from assuming that some aspect of a market is competitive or will become competitive rather than assessing the evidence in the case

Create simple rules (known as presumptions) that will lower the resource cost of enforcement for conduct and acquisitions that economic research shows are likely to raise competitive problems

Clarify that the antitrust laws are designed to protect competition that may manifest itself across a broad range of outcomes such as higher prices, reduced quality, harm to innovation, lower input prices, and elimination of potential competition

Lastly, Congress could consider two ways to raise the expertise level of judges. One is to require the court to hire its own economic expert in an antitrust case, paid by the parties. The neutral expert’s task would be to help the court understand the economics presented by each side. A second option is to create a specialized trial court to hear cases brought under the federal antitrust laws.26 Doing so would allow antitrust cases to be heard by judges with experience in evaluating complex economic evidence. A sophisticated judge would encourage litigants to rely on the best economic arguments and modern economic tools applied to the facts in the case, improving the accuracy of judicial decisions and discouraging judicial acceptance of the erroneous general economic assumptions that have supported relaxed antitrust enforcement.27 A term on such a specialized court should be of relatively short duration to limit the possibility of capture or entrenchment.

## K

### Antitrust Link---2NC

#### Link turns case---Biden’s DOJ is full of neoliberal shills who will systematically underenforce anti-trust law.

Alsbergas & Moran 21, Research assistants at the Revolving Door Project at the Center for Economic and Policy Research (Elias & Max, February 23rd, “It’s Looking Like the Department of Justice Under Biden Will Have Major Influence from Corporate Law,” *Jacobin Magazine*, <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2021/02/corporate-power-amazon-big-law-department-of-justice-biden>, Accessed 10-16-2021)

It’s kind of trite, but personnel is policy. That goes doubly for the people you keep around you who aren’t on the books. People like Gorelick thrive because their relationships and their work are not scrutinized. This is how Biden is able to get away with the fact that unions helped put him in the Oval Office but some of his highest-level appointees have deep long-standing relationships with people who are anathema to labor’s agenda.

Biden is clearly signaling — and in some cases, moving — in a more left-wing direction on issues including labor, the environment, and so on. He’s certainly moving to the left of where Obama was at this point in his presidency. But a great number of the people who are staffing his administration across the board are still part of the same neoliberal groups that came up under Bill Clinton. They got their start in Democratic Party politics during the Reagan years, and that is still the frame through which they view a lot of these issues.

You’re seeing some of that, maybe, a little bit, begin to change. But absent significant pressure, the path of least resistance, and the path which Biden and his people are going to take, is to bring back the same people who have been doing and failing at these jobs for the last forty years.

### AT: Cap Good---Warming

#### 1---Reject neoliberal optimism---all their green growth evidence is aspirational and disproven by status quo trends and empirics.

Brand and Wissen, 21

[Ulrich, PhD Poly Sci @ Goethe University, Prof. Int’l Politics @ U Vienna; and Markus, Prof. Social Sciences specialising on socio-ecological transformation @ Berlin School of Economies and Law: “False Alternatives: From the Green Economy to a Green Capitalism?” Chapter 7 in The Imperial Mode of Living: Everyday Life and the Ecological Crisis of Capitalism (2021) published by Verso Books. ISBN: 978-1-78873-936-8]//AD

Green capitalism is anything but inevitable. In many places, the creation of a green economy has encountered resistance from the fossil factions of capital and from people’s everyday practices. In the US especially, these forces have received an additional boost with the presidency of Donald Trump. There is a boom in the extraction of oil and gas through fracking, in tar sand oil extraction and in the exploration and exploitation of deep sea fossil energy sources. 42 In the EU, the transition to a renewable energy regime is slowed down by the Visegrád Group (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary). And even in places where green capital factions and practices are becoming socially relevant, they are in constant conflict with retrograde social forces. This description even applies to the ‘pioneer’ in renewable energies, Germany, where powerful social forces from industry, energy suppliers and trade unions are increasingly aggressive in articulating their resistance to the energy transition and find political advocates in state apparatus such as the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy.

#### 2---Decoupling is insufficient---efficient growth still overwhelms planetary boundaries.

Alexander & Rutherford 19, Co-director of the Simplicity Institute, is a lecturer at the Office for Environmental Programs, University of Melbourne, Australia, \*Coordinator of the New International Bookshop and a 'Simpler Way' activist (Samuel & Johnathan, A Critique of Techno-Optimism: Efficiency Without Sufficiency is Lost, *The Handbook of Global Governance*, http://samuelalexander.info/publications/)

The figures are confronting, to say the least. Let’s assume, as with the Ward et al (2016) scenario, that continuous economic growth at a modest 2.41% growth rate leads today’s developed nations (i.e. OECD) to expand their economies eight-fold by 2100. Let us also assume that by this time the world population will have reached 11 billion, in line with median U.N projections (UNDSEA, 2017). Let us finally assume that this population has by the end of the century, caught up to the per capita incomes of the OECD. If this scenario were ever to be achieved, the global economy would end up approximately 28 times larger than it is today!

Needless to say, ecosystems are already trembling under the pressure of one ‘developed world’ at the existing size. Who, then, could seriously think our planet could withstand the equivalent of a 28-fold increase in the size of the global economy? The very suggestion is absurd, and yet this very absurdity defines the vision of the global development agenda. It is the elephant in the room. If we remember that humanity is already in ecological overshoot by 70 per cent, then to achieve long-term sustainability humanity would need to achieve a factor 48 reduction in overall environmental impact (i.e. resource use, carbon emissions) per unit of GDP. Compare this 48-factor reduction with the 5-factor reductions that some techno-optimists think might be achievable via an efficiency revolution which has historically failed to fulfil its promise (Von Weizsacker, 2009; Lovins, 1998). Accordingly, even if these figures are overstated by an order of magnitude, the point would remain that efficiency gains could not possibly be expected to make the projected amount of GDP growth sustainable. The levels of decoupling required would simply be too much (Huesemann and Huesemann, 2011; Trainer, 2012). To think otherwise is not being optimistic but delusional.

#### 3---Renewables under capitalism heighten colonial exploitation and environmental destruction.

Hickel 19, PhD, Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Senior Lecturer at Goldsmiths, University of London. (Jason, 5-6-2019, "The Limits of Clean Energy", *Foreign Policy*, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/09/06/the-path-to-clean-energy-will-be-very-dirty-climate-change-renewables/>)

The phrase “clean energy” normally conjures up happy, innocent images of warm sunshine and fresh wind. But while sunshine and wind is obviously clean, the infrastructure we need to capture it is not. Far from it. The transition to renewables is going to require a dramatic increase in the extraction of metals and rare-earth minerals, with real ecological and social costs.

We need a rapid transition to renewables, yes—but scientists warn that we can’t keep growing energy use at existing rates. No energy is innocent. The only truly clean energy is less energy.

In 2017, the World Bank released a little-noticed report that offered the first comprehensive look at this question. It models the increase in material extraction that would be required to build enough solar and wind utilities to produce an annual output of about 7 terawatts of electricity by 2050. That’s enough to power roughly half of the global economy. By doubling the World Bank figures, we can estimate what it will take to get all the way to zero emissions—and the results are staggering: 34 million metric tons of copper, 40 million tons of lead, 50 million tons of zinc, 162 million tons of aluminum, and no less than 4.8 billion tons of iron.

In some cases, the transition to renewables will require a massive increase over existing levels of extraction. For neodymium—an essential element in wind turbines—extraction will need to rise by nearly 35 percent over current levels. Higher-end estimates reported by the World Bank suggest it could double.

The same is true of silver, which is critical to solar panels. Silver extraction will go up 38 percent and perhaps as much as 105 percent. Demand for indium, also essential to solar technology, will more than triple and could end up skyrocketing by 920 percent.

And then there are all the batteries we’re going to need for power storage. To keep energy flowing when the sun isn’t shining and the wind isn’t blowing will require enormous batteries at the grid level. This means 40 million tons of lithium—an eye-watering 2,700 percent increase over current levels of extraction.

That’s just for electricity. We also need to think about vehicles. This year, a group of leading British scientists submitted a letter to the U.K. Committee on Climate Change outlining their concerns about the ecological impact of electric cars. They agree, of course, that we need to end the sale and use of combustion engines. But they pointed out that unless consumption habits change, replacing the world’s projected fleet of 2 billion vehicles is going to require an explosive increase in mining: Global annual extraction of neodymium and dysprosium will go up by another 70 percent, annual extraction of copper will need to more than double, and cobalt will need to increase by a factor of almost four—all for the entire period from now to 2050.

The problem here is not that we’re going to run out of key minerals—although that may indeed become a concern. The real issue is that this will exacerbate an already existing crisis of overextraction. Mining has become one of the biggest single drivers of deforestation, ecosystem collapse, and biodiversity loss around the world. Ecologists estimate that even at present rates of global material use, we are overshooting sustainable levels by 82 percent.

Take silver, for instance. Mexico is home to the Peñasquito mine, one of the biggest silver mines in the world. Covering nearly 40 square miles, the operation is staggering in its scale: a sprawling open-pit complex ripped into the mountains, flanked by two waste dumps each a mile long, and a tailings dam full of toxic sludge held back by a wall that’s 7 miles around and as high as a 50-story skyscraper. This mine will produce 11,000 tons of silver in 10 years before its reserves, the biggest in the world, are gone.

To transition the global economy to renewables, we need to commission up to 130 more mines on the scale of Peñasquito. Just for silver.

Lithium is another ecological disaster. It takes 500,000 gallons of water to produce a single ton of lithium. Even at present levels of extraction this is causing problems. In the Andes, where most of the world’s lithium is located, mining companies are burning through the water tables and leaving farmers with nothing to irrigate their crops. Many have had no choice but to abandon their land altogether. Meanwhile, chemical leaks from lithium mines have poisoned rivers from Chile to Argentina, Nevada to Tibet, killing off whole freshwater ecosystems. The lithium boom has barely even started, and it’s already a crisis.

And all of this is just to power the existing global economy. Things become even more extreme when we start accounting for growth. As energy demand continues to rise, material extraction for renewables will become all the more aggressive—and the higher the growth rate, the worse it will get.

It’s important to keep in mind that most of the key materials for the energy transition are located in the global south. Parts of Latin America, Africa, and Asia will likely become the target of a new scramble for resources, and some countries may become victims of new forms of colonization. It happened in the 17th and 18th centuries with the hunt for gold and silver from South America. In the 19th century, it was land for cotton and sugar plantations in the Caribbean. In the 20th century, it was diamonds from South Africa, cobalt from Congo, and oil from the Middle East. It’s not difficult to imagine that the scramble for renewables might become similarly violent.

If we don’t take precautions, clean energy firms could become as destructive as fossil fuel companies—buying off politicians, trashing ecosystems, lobbying against environmental regulations, even assassinating community leaders who stand in their way.

### AT: Cap Good---Space Colonization

#### 1---Private sector won’t invest, and governments won’t fund colonization.

Konrad Szocik 19. University of Information Technology and Management in Rzeszow, Department of Philosophy and Cognitive Science. 01/2019. “Should and Could Humans Go to Mars? Yes, but Not Now and Not in the near Future.” Futures, vol. 105, pp. 54–66.

6. Public opinion Public opinion is, at least in the near future, the main sponsor of space research and space exploration. Bertrand, Pirtle, and Tomblin, (2017) show that the public is interested in human mission to Mars. The most preferred space mission is a crew in orbit and a robot mission on Mars surface. In other words, public criteria is low risk and low cost. The German space agency follows public opinion and social interest because is focused on duty for society and oriented to social purposes as “climate change, mobility, communication and security” (Zypries, 2017). Politicians are prone to reduce space budgets or to not invest in long-term human settlement missions due to public opinion. Consequently, progress in space technology is still retarded. State of art in space transport means did not change qualitatively since the Space Race between the US and the Soviet Union. Impact of public opinion may differ in various countries. Max Grimard (2012), p. 6) shows how important is space program for public opinion in the US. Public sympathy for American presence in space is counterbalanced by the unpredictability of politician authorities, the tensions between presidents and the Congress (Grimard, 2012, p. 12), and the important role played by competition with Russia and China (Grimard, 2012, p. 6). Grimard adds that Russia is similar case but it is currently entire focused on stability of space programs, including renovation of old infrastructure than on new space exploration programs. According to Grimard (2012), p. 13), this fact excludes Russia from being the leader of international collaboration in space policy despite its historical advantages. China, according to Grimard, repeats space policies of the US and Soviet Union. By contrast, in Japan and Europe, prestige does not play role. Japan and Europe are focused on scientific and technological contexts. Space program is not a part of national policy. Due to its costs, politicians may decide to not risk negative approach of public opinion. But public opinion does not threaten private investors which can consider space as object of their investment. 7. Commercial exploration of space is not a workable alternative Risk of funding the wall might be avoided by commercial exploration of space (Crawford, 2016). According to Crawford, some space projects such as next generation of large telescopes or crewed mission to Mars are non-profitable. While they are a governmental duty, they could be funded partially by profits from commercial exploration of space (for instance, space mining). Hope for private exploration sounds reasonable but is counterbalanced by commercial focus on profits. Because mission to Mars has only scientific profits, only public sponsors will be invested in this project. James S. J. Schwartz (2014) adds that two of the possible reasons for human space mission, such as improving human welfare and progress in scientific exploration, are well beyond interests of private companies. Newman and Williamson (2018) quite similarly expect that private space exploration will be focused on financial profits more than on environmental sustainability. Private investors are not obliged to act altruistically and to sacrifice their business for uncertain idea. W. Henry Lambright (2017) adds that private companies at least at first stages of Mars space program will not be able to fund it. For this reason, Mars space program requires multi-generational effort and political stabilization. The challenge of safety works against private investors in space program. Public space agencies have achieved high standards of safety. They behave in careful and conservative ways. Commercial, private projects do not have the same advanced technology, the large number of scientists and support staff, and the generous budgets. Catastrophe would likely break a private space program. The lack of experience of private companies in space exploration is partially responsible for higher risk of technological failures even in relatively easy tasks as crash of Momo-2 rocket launched by Japanese start-up on 30 June 2018 several seconds after launch. This does not mean that private investors are not able to explore space, but they are able to do that only when they receive profits. In scenario of commercial exploration of space, we should wait for some point in the future when a human space base appears as byproduct of commercial activity. A human base on Mars might be a by-product of hotels on LEO or space mining. Some investors who want to build space hotels may try to settle space regions beyond LEO and build hotels on the Moon and/or Mars. From touristic point of view, staying in the Moon or Mars hotel may be more attractive than on LEO. Investors working in asteroid mining may extend their business to the Moon and/or Mars. Both enterprises even if focused on purely commercial purposes, will not be easy (perhaps impossible) to achieve by private companies alone. Elvis (2012), p. 549) argues that asteroid mining will be challenging due to, among others, difficulties in detection of appropriate asteroids. He shows that among about 1200 analyzed meteorites only 13 of them contain high level of platinum profitable for their exploitation. Elvis suggests that NASA should reorient its strategy from focus on exploration to support for commercial utilization of space. Exploration will appear as a consequence of commercial profitable activity (Elvis, 2012, p. 549). Estimated profits of asteroid mining10 are counterbalanced by high costs of exploitation and possible decreasing of price of currently rare resources (Genta, 2014).11

#### 2---Any colony would be dependent on earth for resources---human society is too complex to survive without support.

Adam Morton 18. Visiting Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia. 10/15/2018. “Three: Problems with Colonies” Should We Colonize Other Planets?, John Wiley & Sons.

Worries about refuges To be refuges where humans can survive catastrophe on Earth, colonies on other planets must of course contain and sustain humans. That is the point. They must also be highly technological: surviving in an environment less hospitable than anywhere on Earth would need powerful resources. Mars does not have an atmosphere that we can breathe, does not support plants that we can eat, is very cold, has little usable water, and receives much less solar energy. It is hard to make an analogy with anywhere on Earth: combine the light levels of the deep ocean with the cold of the Antarctic, add radiation, and then exaggerate. (The pictures from the Martian Rovers are accurate as far as colour and illumination go, but we tend to project familiarity onto them, taking the atmosphere to be like air on Earth and reading the absence of snow and ice as warmth rather than the frozen desert that it really is. I know this is my own tendency until I catch myself.) The colony must from early on produce all its own food, water, and oxygen. This is not at all impossible, given sophisticated equipment, which has been tried out under desert and arctic conditions on Earth. But these conditions are not really that much like Mars, especially with respect to cold, dark, and radiation. The equipment must continue to function, indefinitely. So it must be possible to repair it without using supplies brought from Earth. So, until local manufacturing can take over, repair equipment and spare parts must be added to the list of things that must be sent with the colonists in the first place. And, easy to overlook, it adds to the number of people who must be sent. A modern technological society of a kind that can create and repair the kind of equipment we are talking about involves thousands of specialized skills. Some combinations of these can be compressed into a smaller number of people, but many are still needed. Robinson Crusoe would not last long on Mars. Questions about the number of people in a colony are crucial. Selfsufficiency requires a large number of people – say several hundred at the least. And long-term survival requires genetic diversity. If population sizes are too small, then inbreeding makes hereditary defects and infectious diseases more common. Moreover, with a small population size, random fluctuations can result in imbalanced numbers of males and females, leading to both a smaller number in the following generation and yet more reduced diversity. (A shortage of females is obviously more serious. A bias towards females would have obvious advantages. Perhaps in fact an ideal colony should be all female plus a genetically diverse sperm bank.) It has been estimated that in wild quadrupeds a population size of 500 to 1,000 is needed for long-term survival of a species, while the crews for the simulated Mars habitats on Earth have typically had six people! Humans already have a very low genetic diversity: pairs of chimpanzees in the same troops have on average more genetic diversity than pairs of humans on Earth. The crews would have to be carefully chosen. A very special psychological makeup is needed. Crew members must endure close quarters with a small number of others, a very basic life, the knowledge that one has left one's family and friends behind, and a high risk of death. They must also be chosen so that there is a range of technical knowledge, improvisational skills, and the emotional and cultural makeup needed for something like Earth civilization to continue. And this must reproduce itself for generations. It is unlikely that, even if an optimum mix of people were achieved in the initial crew, the same mix would be preserved in subsequent generations. This too argues for larger population sizes. But the more people there are, the greater the expense and resources needed to establish the colony in the first place. A disturbing fact about the production of food on Mars has recently emerged. The soil on Mars is rich in compounds called perchlorates. They react with ultraviolet light, to which the Martian atmosphere is largely transparent, in a way that is fatal to many cells. There is thus a lot of doubt whether plant crops, and the symbiotic bacteria that many of them need, can survive in Martian soil. This complicates ambitions for indoor farming considerably. Because of the effects on both living cells and human health, perchlorate contamination is regarded as pollution on Earth. Perchlorates also have a risk of explosion when they are heated, complicating plans to produce oxygen by heating the Martian soil. They are, however, a source of oxygen and of other basic chemicals; although dangerous they could have their uses. There are surely high-tech solutions to this problem, but equally surely they raise the stakes for transport and technology and increase the danger. The complexity of technological society There is a fundamental fact behind many of these problems: the large scale and interdependence of our society, with its complex web of manufacturing techniques and expertise held in the minds of many people. It is extremely hard to duplicate this in a small population with restricted resources, especially in a hostile and unfamiliar environment. So dependence on the mother culture is hard to avoid. (This was true in the past, also. The early European colonies in North America did not make their own muskets until they had grown quite large, and European agricultural styles took a lot of adapting. This may not seem advanced technology. But could you make a musket? For that matter, could you make a stone axe?) This means that the high-tech devices needed to survive in the Martian environment are not going to be designed there. The designs are going to come from home. And it is likely that at least a proportion of the devices themselves will also. 3D printing from transmitted designs may solve some problems, though, if the raw materials can be obtained and refined on Mars. (I would imagine that supplies of direct and indirect biological material, such as the petroleum and oil products that are used to make plastics, might pose a serious problem.) If imported equipment is unsuitable or does not work because of some unexpected quirk of the faraway environment, much of it will have to be redesigned and manufactured not where it is needed but where the techniques and expertise are to be found. The more advanced the apparatus (the higher the tech), the more will need to be transported to the colony, adding to the transport costs and creating a need for spares. For all these reasons I am extremely sceptical that a colony of the size that we could send to Mars in the next decades, perhaps in the next century, could sustain itself without frequent supplies and reinforcements from Earth. The obvious reply to this is to drop the requirement that the colony be able to survive without the supplies and reinforcements. But this would undercut one of the main purposes – that of providing a remnant of humanity on Mars with a reasonable chance of surviving an earthly catastrophe. The colony would then be a scientific expedition and the beginning of a preparatory project that might take centuries.

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## Adv – 1

### Food Insecurity

#### 1---empirics---data proves unrest is correlated more strongly with land ownership, weak states, corruption, and economic disputes than resource access. .

#### Food insecurity doesn’t cause war.

Vestby et al 18, \*Jonas, Doctoral Researcher at the Peace Research Institute Oslo, \*\*Ida Rudolfsen, doctoral researcher at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University and PRIO, and \*\*\*Halvard Buhaug, Research Professor at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO); Professor of Political Science at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU); and Associate Editor of the Journal of Peace Research and Political Geography. (5/18/18, “Does hunger cause conflict?”, *Climate & Conflict Blog*, <https://blogs.prio.org/ClimateAndConflict/2018/05/does-hunger-cause-conflict/>)

It is perhaps surprising, then, that there is little scholarly merit in the notion that a short-term reduction in access to food increases the probability that conflict will break out. This is because to start or participate in violent conflict requires people to have both the means and the will. Most people on the brink of starvation are not in the position to resort to violence, whether against the government or other social groups. In fact, the urban middle classes tend to be the most likely to protest against rises in food prices, since they often have the best opportunities, the most energy, and the best skills to coordinate and participate in protests.

Accordingly, there is a widespread misapprehension that social unrest in periods of high food prices relates primarily to food shortages. In reality, the sources of discontent are considerably more complex – linked to political structures, land ownership, corruption, the desire for democratic reforms and general economic problems – where the price of food is seen in the context of general increases in the cost of living. Research has shown that while the international media have a tendency to seek simple resource-related explanations – such as drought or famine – for conflicts in the Global South, debates in the local media are permeated by more complex political relationships.

### A2 Prices Thumper

#### Prices will continue to decrease over the next ten years

**Javed 7/6** , Journalist for the Independent. Master’s in Journalism from Goldsmith’s University of London (Saman, 7/6/2021, “FOOD PRICES LIKELY TO FALL OVER NEXT DECADE, UN REPORT FINDS,” *Independent*, <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/food-and-drink/un-global-food-cost-falls-b1879010.html> Date Accessed: 8/17/2021)

The price of major food commodities is expected to decline over the next 10 years, the [United Nations](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/united-nations) has predicted.

Global food costs have surged in the last year due to an increase in Chinese [imports](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/imports) and slowed [production](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/production) across the rest of the world, but the [prices](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/prices) of most agricultural [food groups](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/food-groups) should drop as demand and productivity level out.

A new report, published by the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, [examined](http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1414682/icode/) the changes in demand and prices for cereals, sugar, oils, meat, dairy and fish.

While prices of cereals had been relatively stable for the seven-year period before 2020, they rose significantly in the last year. The surge has been largely attributed to booming Chinese imports.

Last year, China began rebuilding its pig herds following the outbreak of the 2018 African swine fever, a disease that is not harmful to humans but causes deaths in pigs. This led to an increased demand for cereals and oilseed, such as soybeans, to feed its pigs.

The rise in price was further accentuated as global production of cereals slowed in the last year. For example, wheat production in the EU was the lowest it has been in 10 years.

“The surge in grain prices contributed to higher food price inflation in many countries, especially those where the negative economic impacts of the pandemic were already more pronounced,” the United Nations said in its report.

However, as Chinese imports begin to slow and production improves, prices should decrease again over the next decade.

“The fundamentals don’t say to us that we will be moving to a supercycle of commodity prices,” Maximo Torero, the FAO’s chief economist, told [Reuters](https://www.reuters.com/article/global-agriculture-outlook/food-commodity-prices-to-ease-this-decade-emissions-to-rise-says-report-idUSL5N2OH16G?edition-redirect=uk).

The UN also found that consumption of meat and fish has decreased slightly throughout the last two years, but prices have been falling more rapidly since 2019.

Some of the decline was attributed to the pandemic, which curtailed demand and led to reduced household spending on meat due to lower incomes, the report said.

The commodity most impacted by the pandemic was fish, as it is a food that is often consumed outside the home. Lower demand led to a seven per cent decrease in prices in 2020 compared to 2019, with high-value species being lowered the most.

## Adv – 2

### COVID THUMPER

#### COVID-caused remittance loss and migration restrictions collapse global markets.

UN 11/10, citing David Beasley, Executive Director of the UN World Food Programme. (UN News, 11/10/20, "COVID-19 worsening food insecurity, driving displacement, warn UN agencies", https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/11/1077272)

In Populations at risk: Implications of COVID-19 for hunger, migration and displacement, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) urged the global community to step up support for the immediate and rising humanitarian needs, as well as addressing the pandemic’s fallout, especially on the most vulnerable. David Beasley, Executive Director of WFP, said that the socio-economic impact of the pandemic is more devastating than the disease itself. “Many people in low- and middle-income countries, who a few months ago were poor but just about getting by, now find their livelihoods have been destroyed,” he said. “Remittances sent from workers abroad to their families at home have also dried up, causing immense hardship. As a result, hunger rates are sky-rocketing around the world.” The report – the first of its kind – assessed the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for people’s food security in major migration and hunger hotspots around the world. It revealed important linkages between the two, with food insecurity – especially when combined with conflict, being one of the main drivers for people to move. Unprecedented impact The impact the pandemic has had on the ways people move is “unprecedented”, according to the two UN agencies. Measures and restrictions put in place to contain the spread of the disease have limited human mobility, opportunities to work and earn an income, straining the ability of migrant and displaced people to afford food and other basic needs. António Vitorino, Director-General of IOM, highlighted COVID-19’s impact on health and human movement, warning that it not only threatens global commitment but also ongoing assistance. “The impact of the COVID-19 crisis on health and human mobility threatens to roll back global commitments, including for the Global Compact on Migration, and hinder ongoing efforts to support those in need of assistance,” he said. “It is our collective responsibility to safeguard the rights of people on the move and ensure their protection from further harm,” he added. Hunger, displacement ‘closely intertwined’ According to the report, food insecurity and displacement are closely linked: nine out of ten of the world’s worst food crises are in countries with the largest number of internally displaced persons, while the majority of displaced people are located in countries affected by acute food insecurity and malnutrition. Migrant workers, especially those working in the temporary or informal sector, are some of the worst hit by the pandemic and its fallout. Without sustained income, many will not only be pushed to return home but will also cause at least a temporary drop in remittances that provide an essential lifeline for around 800 million – or one in nine – people in the world, the report added. At the same time, disruptions to seasonal agricultural work could hit the production, processing and distribution of food, affecting food availability and affordability at local and regional levels.