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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.

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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.

#### Their concepts and scholarship over food security is only a neoliberal scheme for companies like Monsanto to increase share prices

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The Scarcity Narrative The “golden fact” is the idea that, because of pop-ulation growth, we’re going to have to double our food production within a generation in order to feed the population. Well, you’d be surprised who says this—people who know better. The FAO says this even though quietly they admit it’s not true. USDA says this. Monsanto loves this. Respected scientists, whom I admire very much, such as Thomas Foley, a global ecologist, says this in National Geographic when he also knows it’s not true. The scarcity narrative is such a powerful narrative because scarcity is an integral part of capitalism. Why? Because it brings up prices and generates more profit. Scarcity must be created even if it isn’t there. And if you create it in people’s minds, that’s even better. (And by the way, who is going to produce all this new food? Modern industry, industrial agriculture, new capitalist technologies. . .) We know the scarcity narrative is false because if you look back over the last 10, 20, 30 years—if you go even farther back than this graph (Slide 2), what you see is that we have been increasing production by 12 percent per capita every year consistently for decades. Per capita. This accounts for population growth; every single person in this room, and everywhere around the world every year should be getting 12 percent more food. And yet we have at least one fifth or a third of the world population going hungry or malnourished. Despite this, absolute poverty has not changed. So no matter how much food you produce, these people can’t buy it in a capitalist food system. Similarly, undernourish-ment—the little yellow dots—that hasn’t changed. Why is it that we keep producing more and more food without solving hunger or malnutrition, yet the solution is always—always—to produce more food? Food Crises in a Capitalist Food System The food price index (Slide 3) illustrates the decline in food prices since the turn of the century. Why would that be? Again, overproduction. We’re producing so much food that we have been driving down food prices for the past hun-dred years. We have never had a problem of underpro-duction. On the contrary, since the beginning of capi-talism, we’ve had a problem of overproduction. The downward trend in food prices changed suddenly in 2008, when prices shot up beyond anything we had ever recorded in the past. Why? Did food suddenly become scarce? No. Actually, 2008 was a time of record harvests. This was also the case in 2010, when there was another food price spike. In these years, we saw record harvests, record hunger, and record profits by the oligopolies that control our food system. This means that the Monsantos, the Cargills, and the large retail chains were all making record profits at a time when millions of people were being driven into the ranks of the hungry because they couldn’t afford to buy food. Slide 4 shows the two food price spikes in 2008 and in 2011. The vertical red lines represent the frequency of food riots around the world. The figure illustrates the threshold at which increasing food prices cause people so much pain that they start rioting. When food price decrease below that threshold, people stop rioting. You can see this threshold being crossed in both 2008 and 2011, where high food prices are accompanied by spikes in food riots. It’s important to note that these riots did not just occur in locations that have ongoing struggles with hunger, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Haiti, where people were subsisting off of mud biscuits at the time. Riots also occurred in Italy and Milwau-kee, rich, productive places. So what does this mean? What’s happening with our food? Slide 5a illustrates the global (red) and local (blue) food prices between 2007 and 2011. Again, we see the spikes in global prices in 2008 and 2011.The local price—the retail price—increases with the glo-bal price in 2008. This makes sense; as food gets more expensive globally, its price in the store increases as well. But then the global price of food drops precipitously while the retail price stays the same. This is called gouging. There’s no other word for it. Consumers are getting gouged; poor people are getting gouged while food companies make incredible profits. For example, Wal-Mart, one of the biggest grocers in the world (soon to be outseated by Amazon) made so much money that they had a crisis of over-accu-mulation. They had made huge profits that needed to be reinvested as capital, but there was nowhere to go because we were in a recession. The share prices of Monsanto’s stock (Slide 5b) reflects the profits seen by large food oligopo-lies during these food crises. Monsanto’s share prices increase as people go hungry. As people’s hunger is alleviated, Monsanto’s share price goes down. So what does Monsanto need? They need food crises. There’s a lot of talk about the causes of global food price spikes, including increased droughts globally, changing climates, rising meat consump-tion in India, Brazil, and China, low grain reserves, etc. I call these proximate causes. But really, while we have all of those contributing factors, what raised food prices beyond anything we’d ever seen was speculation with our food, as reflected in the explosion of trading in commodity index funds. Financial houses were speculating with our food and pushing prices up.

#### All capitalism is racial capitalism---the system of competition the aff perpetuates cannot sustain itself without theft of indigenous land, super-exploitation of black labor, imperial extraction, and racist devaluation of ‘disposable populations.’

\*2 point font and paragraph merging for readability.

\*\*Footnote 14 is inserted below the paragraph it’s cited in, other footnotes excluded for readability.

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Drawing on the intellectual production of twentieth-century Black anticapitalists, I theorize modern U.S. racial capitalism as a racially hierarchical political economy constituting war and militarism, imperialist accumulation, expropriation by domination, and labor superexploitation.14 The racial here specifically refers to Blackness, defined as African descendants’ relationship to the capitalist mode of production—their structural location—and the condition, status, and material realities emanating therefrom.15 It is out of this structural location that the irresolvable contradiction of value minus worth arises. Stated differently, Blackness is a capacious category of surplus value extraction essential to an array of political-economic functions, including accumulation, disaccumulation, debt, planned obsolescence, and absorption of the burdens of economic crises.16 At the same time, Blackness is the quintessential condition of disposability, expendability, and devalorization.

[Footnote 14]: Another feature of modern U.S. racial capitalism is property by dispossession. In Theft Is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory, Robert Nichols draws on the experience of Indigenous peoples in the United States, Canada, and New Zealand to theorize how the “system of landed property” was fundamentally predicated on violent dispossession. While the Anglo-derived legal-political regimes differed in these localities, the “intertwined and co-constitutive” material effects converged in the legalized theft of indigenous territory amounting in “approximately 6 percent of the total land on the surface of Earth.” Such dispossession, Nichols notes, is recursive: “In a standard formulation one would assume that ‘property’ is logically, chronologically, and normatively prior to ‘theft.’ However, in this (colonial) context, theft is the mechanism and means by which property is generated: hence its recursivity. Recursive dispossession is effectively a form of property-generating theft.” As such, theft and dispossession, through property regimes, are an ongoing feature of the Indigenous reality of modern U.S. racial capitalism. Robert Nichols, Theft Is Property! Dispossession and Critical Theory (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020), 50–51.

My operationalization of capitalism follows Oliver Cromwell Cox’s explication in Capitalism and American Leadership.17 Modern U.S. racial capitalism arose in the context of the First World War, when, as Cox explains, the United States took advantage of the conflict to capture the markets of South America, Asia, and Africa for its “over-expanded capacity.”18 Cox further expounds upon this auspicious moment of ascendant modern U.S. racial capitalism thus: By 1914, the United States had brought its superb natural resources within reach of intensive exploitation. Under the stimulus of its foreign-trade outlets, the financial assistance of the older capitalist nations, and a flexible system of protective tariffs, the nation developed a magnificent work of transportation and communication so that its mines, factories, and farms became integrated into an effectively producing organism having easy access to its seaports.… [Likewise,] further internal expansion depended upon far greater emphasis on an ever widening foreign commerce.… Major entrepreneurs of the United States proceeded to step up their campaign for expansion abroad. The war accentuated this movement. It accelerated the growth of [modern] American [racial] capitalism and impressed upon its leaders as nothing had before the need for external markets.19 Relatedly, Peter James Hudson argues that the First World War fundamentally changed the terms of order of international finance, allowing New York to compete with London, Paris, and Berlin for the first time in the realm of global banking. This was not least because the Great War “drastically reordered global credit flows,” with the United States transforming from a debtor into a creditor nation.20 In addition to Latin American and Caribbean nations and businesses turning to the United States for financing and credit, domestic saving and investment patterns were altered to the benefit of imperial financial institutions like the City Bank.21 Although the United States is, to use Cox’s terminology, more a “lusty child of an already highly developed capitalism” than an exceptional capitalist power, the nation perfected its techniques of accumulation through its vast natural wealth, large domestic market, imbalance of Northern and Southern economies, and, importantly, through its lack of concern for the political and economic welfare of the overwhelming masses of its population, least of all the descendants of the enslaved.22 Modern U.S. racial capitalism is thus sustained by military expenditure, the maintenance of an extremely low standard of living in “dependent” countries, and the domestic superexploitation of Black toilers and laborers. Cox notes that Black labor has been the “chief human factor” in wealth production; as such, “the dominant economic class has always been at the motivating center of the spreads of racial antagonism. This is to be expected since the economic content of the antagonism, especially at its proliferating source in the South, has been precisely that of labor-capital relations.”23 In a general sense, racial capitalism in the United States constitutes “a peculiar variant of capitalist production” in which Blackness expresses a structural location at the bottom of the labor hierarchy characterized by depressed wages, working conditions, job opportunities, and widespread exclusion from labor unions.24 Furthermore, modern U.S. racial capitalism is rooted in the imbrication of anti-Blackness and antiradicalism. Anti-Blackness describes the reduction of Blackness to a category of abjection and subjection through narrations of absolute biological or cultural difference; ruling-class monopolization of political power; negative and derogatory mass media propaganda; the ascent of discriminatory legislation that maintains and reinscribes inequality, not least various modes of segregation; and social relations in which distrust and antipathy toward those racialized as Black is normalized and in which “interracial mass behavior involving violence assumes a continuously potential danger.”25 Anti-Blackness thus conceals the inherent contradiction of Blackness—value minus worth—obscuring and distorting its structural location by, as Ralph and Singhal remark, contorting it into only a “debilitated condition.”26 Antiradicalism can be understood as the physical and discursive repression and condemnation of anticapitalist and/or left-leaning ideas, politics, practices, and modes of organizing that are construed as subversive, seditious, and otherwise threatening to capitalist society. These include, but are not limited to, internationalism, anti-imperialism, anticolonialism, peace activism, and antisexism. Anti-Blackness and antiradicalism function as the legitimating architecture of modern U.S. racial capitalism, which includes rationalizing discourses, cultural narratives, technologies of repression, legal structures, and social practices that inform and are informed by racial capitalism’s political economy.27 Throughout the twentieth century, anti-Blackness propelled the “Black Scare,” defined as the specter of racial, social, and economic domination of superior whites by inferior Black populations. Antiradicalism, in turn, was enunciated through the “Red Scare,” understood as the threat of communist takeover, infiltration, and disruption of the American way of life.28 For example, in the 1919 Justice Department Report, Radicalism and Sedition Among the Negroes, As Reflected in Their Publications, it was asserted that the radical antigovernment stance of a certain class of Negroes was manifested in their “ill-governed reaction toward race rioting,” “threat of retaliatory measures in connection with lynching,” open demand for social equality, identification with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and “outspoken advocacy of the Bolshevik or Soviet doctrine.”29 Here, anti-Blackness, articulated through the fear of the “assertion of race consciousness,” was attached to the IWW and Bolshevism—in other words, to anticapitalism—to make it appear even more subversive and dangerous. Likewise, antiradicalism, expressed through the denigration of the IWW and Soviet Doctrine, was made to seem all the more threatening and antithetical to the social order in its linkage with Black insistence on equality and self-defense against racial terrorism. In this way, “defiance and insolently race-centered condemnation of the white race” and “the Negro seeing red” came to be understood as seditious in the context of modern U.S. racial capitalism. The link between my theory of modern U.S. racial capitalism and Robinson’s catholic theory of racial capitalism, beyond his “suggest[ion] that it was there,” is vivified through the prison abolitionist and scholar Ruth Wilson Gilmore, who writes: “Capitalism…[is] never not racial.… Racial capitalism: a mode of production developed in agriculture, improved by enclosure in the Old World, and captive land and labor in the Americas, perfected in slavery’s time-motion, field factory choreography, its imperative forged on the anvils of imperial war-making monarchs.”30 Racial capitalism, she continues, “requires all kinds of scheming, including hard work by elites and their compradors in the overlapping and interlocking space-economies of the planet’s surface. They build and dismantle and reconfigure states, moving capacity into and out of the public realm. And they think very hard about money on the move.”31 Perhaps more than Gilmore, though, my approach aligns with that of Neville Alexander as described by Hudson.32 Like Alexander, who focused on South Africa, I offer a particularistic understanding of racial capitalism, mine being rooted in the political economy of Blackness and the legitimating architectures of anti-Blackness and antiradicalism in the United States. Gilmore qua Robinson offers a more universalist and transhistorical conception. Like Alexander, my theory of modern U.S. racial capitalism is primarily rooted in (Black) Marxist-Leninists and fellow travelers. This is an important epistemological distinction: whereas Robinson finds Marxism-Leninism to be, at best, inattentive to race, my theory of modern U.S. racial capitalism is rooted in the work of Black freedom fighters who, as Marxist-Leninists, were able to offer potent and enduring analyses and critiques of the conjunctural entanglements of racialism, white supremacy, and anti-Blackness, on the one hand, and capitalist exploitation and class antagonism on the other hand.33 Although Robinson draws on scholars like Fernand Braudel, Henri Pirenne, David Brion Davis, and Eli Heckscher to understand European history, socialist theory, and the European working class, the work of Black Marxists like James Ford, Walter Rodney, Amílcar Cabral, and Paul Robeson offer me those same intellectual, historical, and theoretical resources. Finally, I agree with Alexander that the resolution to racial capitalism is antiracist socialism, not a cultural-metaphysical Black radical tradition. In what remains of this essay, I will draw on the work of Black Marxist-Leninists and anticapitalists to explicate the defining features of modern U.S. racial capitalism—war and militarism, imperialist accumulation, expropriation by domination, labor superexploitation, and property by dispossession. In this, I demonstrate that their critiques and analyses offer a blueprint for theorizing modern U.S. racial capitalism. War and militarism facilitate the endless drive for profit. Military conflicts between imperial powers result in the reapportioning of boundaries, possessions, and spheres of influence that often exacerbate racial and spatial economic subjection. War and militarism also perpetuate the endless construction of “threats,” primarily in racialized and socialist states, against which to defend progress, prosperity, freedom, and security. The manufacturing of conflict legitimates the mobilization of extraordinary violence to expropriate untold resources that produce relations of underdevelopment, dependency, extraversion, and disarticulation in the Global South. Moreover, the ruling elite and labor aristocracy in imperialist countries, not least the United States, wage perpetual war to defend their way of life and standard of living against the racialized majority who, because they would benefit most from the redistribution of the world’s wealth and resources, represent a perpetual threat. Here, Du Bois’s 1915 essay, “The African Roots of War,” is instructive.34 Though he does not directly analyze the United States, he nonetheless demonstrates how racism, white supremacy, and the plunder of Africa underpinned the capitalist imperialist war that engulfed the world from July 1914 to November 1918—a war that catapulted the United States into the center of the capitalist world system. Using Du Bois’s own words, Hubert Harrison, the father of Harlem radicalism, makes the direct link: But since every industrial nation is seeking the same outlet for its products, clashes are inevitable and in these clashes beaks and claws—armies and navies—must come into play. Hence beaks and claws must be provided beforehand against the day of conflict, and hence the exploitation of white men in Europe and America becomes the reason for the exploitation of black and brown and yellow men in African and Asia. And, therefore, it is hypocritical and absurd to pretend that the capitalist nations can ever intend to abolish wars.… For white folk to insist upon the right to manage their own ancestral lands, free from the domination of tyrants, domestic and foreign, is variously described as “democracy” and “self-determination.” For Negroes, Egyptians and Hindus to seek the same thing is impudence.… Truly has it been said that “the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the ‘Color Line.'” And wars are not likely to end; in fact, they are likely to be wider and more terrible—so long as this theory of white domination seeks to hold down the majority of the world’s people under the iron heel of racial oppression.35 For Du Bois, the imperialist rivalry for the booty on offer in Africa drove Berlin’s efforts to consolidate its place in the sun by displacing London in particular. While Vladimir Lenin understood that “the war [was] a product of half a century of development of world capitalism and of billions of threads and connections,” Du Bois expanded this analysis by providing a critique of the racial foundations of capitalist expansion.36 He held that the struggle to the death during the Great War for African resources and labor had begun to “pay dividends” centuries earlier through the enslavement of African peoples, the subsequent conflation of color and inferiority, and the reduction of what was routinely referred to as the “Dark Continent” to a space of backwardness ideally suited for dispossession. He further noted that “with the waning possibility of Big Fortune…at home, arose more magnificently the dream of exploitation abroad,” especially in Africa—a dream shared by white labor and the ruling class.37 In other words, this “democratic despotism” allowed for the white working class to “share the spoil of exploiting ‘chinks and niggers,'” and facilitated the creation of “a new democratic nation composed of united capital and labor” that perpetuated racial capitalism across class lines.38 Moreover, this national unity was strengthened through the disrespect and dehumanization of the racialized toilers and peasants in the plundered colonies that mitigated the exploitation and impoverishment of the white working class in imperial countries. This superexploitation allowed white workers to get a share, however pitiful, of “wealth, power, and luxury…on a scale the world never saw before” and to benefit from the “new wealth” accumulated from the “darker nations of the world” through cross-class consent “for governance by white folk and economic subjection to them”—a consensus solidified through the doctrine of “the natural inferiority of most men to the few.”39 Given the entanglement of racialization and capitalist exploitation, Du Bois averred, “Racial slander must go. Racial prejudice will follow…the domination of one people by another without the other’s consent, be the subject people black or white, must stop. The doctrine of forcible economic expansion over subject people must go.” Insofar as this admonishment applied as much to the United States as to European imperialists, beyond the international proletariat, it was the darker peoples and nations of the world who would challenge racial capitalism, not least “the twenty-five million grandchildren of the European slave trade…and first of all the ten million black folk in the United States.”40

Imperialist accumulation denotes the rapacious conscription of resources and labor for the purpose of superprofits through violent means that are generally reserved for populations deemed racially inferior. On the precipice of the Great Depression, the prominent Black communist James Ford beautifully explicated imperialist accumulation. In his 1929 report on the Second World Congress of the League Against Imperialism, he explained that the extant political economy constituted the consolidation of Africa’s partition and the “complete enslavement of its people”; the arresting of its industrialization, which hindered the development of the “toiling masses”; and the relegation of the continent to a source of raw material, a market for European goods, and a dumping ground for accumulated surplus capital. In the U.S. South, the Black poor were dehumanized by Wall Street, “white big business,” and the “rising Negro bourgeoisie” whose condition of possibility was the subjection of the Black working class. This oppression was exacerbated by rigid racial barriers, disenfranchisement, and lynching. Ford further argued that the West Indies, subjected to U.S. militarism and occupation on behalf of Wall Street, were largely transformed into a marketplace for U.S. goods. Moreover, throughout Africa, the U.S. South, and the Caribbean, Black workers were impressed into forced labor, laying railroads, building roads and bridges, and working in mines; were entrapped on plantations through peonage; and were subjected to convict leasing. In addition, they suffered intolerable working conditions and routinized violence.41

Expropriation by domination designates the seizure and confiscation of land, assets, property, bodies, and other sources of material wealth set to work by relations of economic dependence. This relationship exists both between nations and between groups. A quintessential enunciation of expropriation by domination between groups is We Charge Genocide: The Historic Petition to the United Nations for Relief from a Crime of the United States Government Against the Negro People, edited by the Black Communist William Patterson (with significant help from his wife and comrade Louise Thompson Patterson) and submitted to the United Nations by the Civil Rights Congress in 1951.42 The petition meticulously documented the past and present expropriation of Black people by the ruling class of modern U.S. racial capitalism through consistent and persistent discrimination in employment, unfair wages, forced ghettoization, inequitable and inferior accommodation and services, and the denial of justice in the courts. It further argued that this process was sustained by genocidal terror, white supremacist law, and the drive of monopoly capitalists for superprofits. Importantly, We Charge Genocide noted that, for primarily economic reasons, the historical and geographical locus of anti-Black genocide was the “Black Belt” of the Southern United States, a region expropriated by the Northern industrial capitalists and by Southern landowners alike. This was due in large part to plantation systems of sharecropping and peonage—legacies of slavery—in which Black political and economic rights were virtually nonexistent, Black laborers were inexorably tied to the land through debt, and the threat of violence and death precluded demands for justice. For Patterson, such expropriation by domination was the basis of “racist contamination that has spread throughout the United States.”43 We Charge Genocide further conveyed that expropriation by domination, a central element of modern U.S. racial capitalism, was more than a domestic concern because such practices “at home must inevitably create racist commodities for export abroad—must inevitably tend toward war.”44

Labor superexploitation can be understood as an economic relationship in which the intensity, form, and racial basis of exploitation differs little from slavery. Its effects are so extreme that it pushes racialized, particularly Black, labor effectively below the level of sheer physical subsistence. As Harrison explained, in the context of modern U.S. racial capitalism, Black workers “form a group that is more essentially proletarian than any other American group” because enslaved Africans were brought to the “new world” to be ruthlessly exploited. This reality fixed their social status as the most despised group, which in turn intensified their subjection.45 Likewise, organizations like the American Negro Labor Congress and the Anti-Imperialist League analyzed that the racial capitalist superexploitation of Black nations like Haiti in the first quarter of the twentieth century for the purposes of consolidating Wall Street control over land, commercial relations, and production was accompanied by the brutalization of Black labor, the export of Jim Crow practices, military occupation, and political repression.46 In effect, superexploitation results from the conjuncture of white supremacy, racialization, and the “badge of slavery,” which exacerbates the conditions of exploitation to which white working classes are subjected. As the Black Marxist Harry Haywood argued in 1948, “the stifling effects of the race factor are most strikingly illustrated by the drastic differences in the economic and cultural status of Negroes and whites.… Beyond all doubt, the oppression of the Negro, which is the basis of the degradation of the ‘poor whites,’ is of separate character demanding a special approach.”47 Superexploitation, he explained further, constitutes a combination of direct exploitation, outright robbery, physical violence, legal coercion, and perpetual indebtedness. It stifles “the free economic and cultural development” of the Black masses “through racist persecution as a basic condition for maintaining” virtual enslavement.48

The entrapment of Black women in domestic labor throughout the twentieth century—a function of their “triple oppression”—is perhaps the most glaring example of labor superexploitation under modern U.S. racial capitalism. In 1936, the lifelong Black radical Louise Thompson explained that Black women’s superexploitation in the capitalist mode of production was based on their race, sex, and subordination in the labor market.49 That same year, Black militants Marvel Cooke and Ella Baker published an article titled “The Bronx Slave Market” in which they studied triple oppression as it related to Black domestic workers. Cooke and Baker explained that the entanglements of racism, sex-based labor subordination, and structural poverty were deeply intensified by the Great Depression and forced Black domestic workers to pauperize their labor for the abysmal wage of less than thirty cents an hour. This form of labor exploitation was unique to the female sex because domestic work was conventional “women’s work,” and it was racialized insofar as the denigration of Black people fitted this group of women for low-wage, unprotected, and contingent labor.50

#### Capitalism causes extinction---the only alternative is an international workers organization led by the Global South.

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Any serious treatment of the renewal of socialism today must begin with capitalism’s creative destruction of the bases of all social existence. Since the late 1980s, the world has been engulfed in an epoch of catastrophe capitalism, defined as the accumulation of imminent catastrophe on every side due to the unintended consequences of “the juggernaut of capital.”1 Catastrophe capitalism in this sense is manifested today in the convergence of (1) the planetary ecological crisis, (2) the global epidemiological crisis, and (3) the unending world economic crisis.2 Added to this are the main features of today’s “empire of chaos,” including the extreme system of imperialist exploitation unleashed by global commodity chains; the demise of the relatively stable liberal-democratic state with the rise of neoliberalism and neofascism; and the emergence of a new age of global hegemonic instability accompanied by increased dangers of unlimited war.3

The climate crisis represents what the world scientific consensus refers to as a “no analogue” situation, such that if net carbon emissions from fossil fuel combustion do not reach zero in the next few decades, it will threaten the very existence of industrial civilization and ultimately human survival.4 Nevertheless, the existential crisis is not limited to climate change, but extends to the crossing of other planetary boundaries that together define the global ecological rift in the Earth System as a safe place for humanity. These include: (1) ocean acidification; (2) species extinction (and loss of genetic diversity); (3) destruction of forest ecosystems; (4) loss of fresh water; (5) disruption of the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles; (6) the rapid spread of toxic agents (including radionuclides); and (7) the uncontrolled proliferation of genetically modified organisms.5

This rupturing of planetary boundaries is intrinsic to the system of capital accumulation that recognizes no insurmountable barriers to its unlimited, exponential quantitative advance. Hence, there is no exit from the current capitalist destruction of the overall social and natural conditions of existence that does not require exiting capitalism itself. What is essential is the creation of what István Mészáros in Beyond Capital called a new system of “social metabolic reproduction.”6 This points to socialism as the heir apparent to capitalism in the twenty-first century, but conceived in ways that critically challenge the theory and practice of socialism as it existed in the twentieth century.

The Polarization of the Class System

In the United States, key sectors of monopoly-finance capital have now succeeded in mobilizing elements of the primarily white lower-middle class in the form of a nationalist, racist, misogynist ideology. The result is a nascent neofascist political-class formation, capitalizing on the long history of structural racism arising out of the legacies of slavery, settler colonialism, and global militarism/imperialism. This burgeoning neofascism’s relation to the already existing neoliberal political formation is that of “enemy brothers” characterized by a fierce jockeying for power coupled with a common repression of the working class.7 It is these conditions that have formed the basis of the rise of the New York real-estate mogul and billionaire Donald Trump as the leader of the so-called radical right, leading to the imposition of right-wing policies and a new authoritarian capitalist regime.8 Even if the neoliberal faction of the ruling class wins out in the coming presidential election, ousting Trump and replacing him with Joe Biden, a neoliberal-neofascist alliance, reflecting the internal necessity of the capitalist class, will likely continue to form the basis of state power under monopoly-finance capital.

Appearing simultaneously with this new reactionary political formation in the United States is a resurgent movement for socialism, based in the working-class majority and dissident intellectuals. The demise of U.S. hegemony within the world economy, accelerated by the globalization of production, has undermined the former, imperial-based labor aristocracy among certain privileged sections of the working class, leading to a resurgence of socialism.9 Confronted with what Michael D. Yates has called “the Great Inequality,” the mass of the population in the United States, particularly youth, are faced with rapidly diminishing prospects, finding themselves in a state of uncertainty and often despair, marked by a dramatic increase in “deaths of despair.”10 They are increasingly alienated from a capitalist system that offers them no hope and are attracted to socialism as the only genuine alternative.11 Although the U.S. situation is unique, similar objective forces propelling a resurgence of socialist movements are occurring elsewhere in the system, primarily in the Global South, in an era of continuing economic stagnation, financialization, and universal ecological decline.

But if socialism is seemingly on the rise again in the context of the structural crisis of capital and increased class polarization, the question is: What kind of socialism? In what ways does socialism for the twenty-first century differ from socialism of the twentieth century? Much of what is being referred to as socialism in the United States and elsewhere is of the social-democratic variety, seeking an alliance with left-liberals and thus the existing order, in a vain attempt to make capitalism work better through the promotion of social regulation and social welfare in direct opposition to neoliberalism, but at a time when neoliberalism is itself giving way to neofascism.12 Such movements are bound to fail at the outset in the present historical context, inevitably betraying the hopes that they unleashed, since focused on mere electoral democracy. Fortunately, we are also seeing the growth today of a genuine socialism, evident in extra-electoral struggle, heightened mass action, and the call to go beyond the parameters of the present system so as to reconstitute society as whole.

The general unrest latent at the base of U.S. society was manifested in the uprisings in late May and June of this year, which took the form, practically unheard of in U.S. history since the U.S. Civil War, of massive solidarity protests with millions of people in the streets, and with the white working class, and white youth in particular, crossing the color line *en masse* in response to the police lynching of George Floyd for no other crime than being a Black man.13 This event, coming in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the related economic depression, led to the June days of rage in the United States.

But while the movement toward socialism, now taking hold even in the United States at the “barbaric heart” of the system, is gaining ground as a result of objective forces, it lacks an adequate subjective basis.14 A major obstacle in formulating strategic goals of socialism in the world today has to do with twentieth-century socialism’s abandonment of its own ideals as originally articulated in Karl Marx’s vision of communism. To understand this problem, it is necessary to go beyond recent left attempts to address the meaning of communism on a philosophical basis, a question that has led in the last decade to abstract treatments of The Communist Idea, The Communist Hypothesis, and The Communist Horizon by Alain Badiou and others.15 Rather, a more concrete historically based starting point is necessary, focusing directly on the two-phase theory of socialist/communist development that emerged out of Marx’s Critique of the Gotha Programme and V. I. Lenin’s The State and Revolution. Paul M. Sweezy’s article “Communism as an Ideal,” published more than half a century ago in Monthly Review in October 1963, is now a classic text in this regard.16

Marx’s Communism as the Socialist Ideal

In The Critique of the Gotha Programme—written in opposition to the economistic and laborist notions of the branch of German Social Democracy influenced by Ferdinand Lassalle—Marx designated two historical “phases” in the struggle to create a society of associated producers. The first phase was initiated by the “revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat,” reflecting the class-war experience of the Paris Commune and representing a period of workers’ democracy, but one that still carried the “defects” of capitalist class society. In this initial phase, not only would a break with capitalist private property take place, but also a break with the capitalist state as the political command structure of capitalism.17 As a measure of the limited nature of socialist transition in this stage, production and distribution would inevitably take the form of to each according to one’s labor, perpetuating conditions of inequality even while creating the conditions for their transcendence. In contrast, in the later phase, the principle governing society would shift to from each according to one’s ability, to each according to one’s need and the elimination of the wage system.18 Likewise, while the initial phase of socialism/communism would require the formation of a new political command structure in the revolutionary period, the goal in the higher phase was the withering away of the state as a separate apparatus standing above and in antagonistic relation to society, to be replaced with a form of political organization that Frederick Engels referred to as “community,” associated with a communally based form of production.19

In the later, higher phase of the transition of socialism/communism, not only would property be collectively owned and controlled, but the constitutive cells of society would be reconstituted on a communal basis and production would be in the hands of the associated producers. In these conditions, Marx stated, “labor” will have become not a mere “means of life” but “itself…the prime necessity of life.”20 Production would be directed at use values rather than exchange values, in line with a society in which “the free development of each” would be “the condition for the free development of all.” The abolition of capitalist class society and the creation of a society of associated producers would lead to the end of class exploitation, along with the elimination of the divisions between mental and manual labor and between town and country. The monogamous, patriarchal family based on the domestic enslavement of women would also be surmounted.21 Fundamental to Marx’s picture of the higher phase of the society of associated producers was a new social metabolism of humanity and the earth. In his most general statement on the material conditions governing the new society, he wrote: “Freedom, in this sphere [the realm of natural necessity], can consist only in this, that socialized man, the associated producers, govern the human metabolism of nature in a rational way…accomplishing it with the least expenditure of energy” in the process of promoting conditions of sustainable human development.22

Writing in The State and Revolution and elsewhere, Lenin deftly captured Marx’s arguments on the lower and higher phases, depicting these as the first and second phases of communism. Lenin went on to emphasize what he called “the scientific distinction between socialism and communism,” whereby “what is usually called socialism was termed by Marx the ‘first,’ or lower phase of communist society,” whereas the term communism, meaning “complete communism,” was most appropriately used for the higher phase.23 Although Lenin closely aligned this distinction with Marx’s analysis, in later official Marxism this came to be rigidified in terms of two entirely separate stages, with the so-called communist stage so removed from the stage of socialism that it became utopianized, no longer seen as part of a continuous or ongoing struggle. Based on a wooden conception of the socialist stage and the intermediary principle of distribution to each according to one’s labor, Joseph Stalin carried out an ideological war against the ideal of real equality, which he characterized as a “reactionary, petty-bourgeois absurdity worthy of a primitive sect of ascetics but not of a socialist society organized on Marxist lines.” This same stance was to persist in the Soviet Union in one way or another all the way to Mikhail Gorbachev.24

Hence, as explained by Michael Lebowitz in The Socialist Imperative, “rather than a continuous struggle to go beyond what Marx called the ‘defects’ inherited from capitalist society, the standard interpretation” of Marxism in the half-century from the late 1930s to the late ’80s “introduced a division of post-capitalist society into two distinct ‘stages,’” determined economistically by the level of development of the productive forces. Fundamental changes in social relations emphasized by Marx as the very essence of the socialist path were abandoned in the process of living with and adapting to the defects carried over from capitalist society. Instead, Marx had insisted on a project aimed at building the community of associated producers “from the outset” as part of an ongoing, if necessarily uneven, process of socialist construction.25

This abandonment of the socialist ideal associated with Marx’s higher phase of communism was wrapped up in a complex way with changing material (and class) conditions and eventually the demise of Soviet-type societies, which tended to stagnate once they ceased to be revolutionary and even resurrected class forms, heralding their eventual collapse as the new class or nomenklatura abandoned the system. As Sweezy argued in 1971, “state ownership and planning are not enough to define a viable socialism, one immune to the threat of retrogression and capable of moving forward on the second leg of the movement to communism.” Something more was needed: the continuous struggle to create a society of equals.26

For Marx, the movement toward a society of associated producers was the very essence of the socialist path embedded in “communist consciousness.”27 Yet, once socialism came to be defined in more restrictive, economistic terms, particularly in the Soviet Union from the late 1930s onward, in which substantial inequality was defended, post-revolutionary society lost the vital connection to the dual struggle for freedom and necessity, and hence became disconnected from the long-term goals of socialism from which it had formerly derived its meaning and coherence.

Based on this experience, it is evident that the only way to build socialism in the twenty-first century is to embrace precisely those aspects of the socialist/communist ideal that allow a theory and practice radical enough to address the urgent needs of the present, while also not losing sight of the needs of the future. If the planetary ecological crisis has taught us anything, it is that what is required is a new social metabolism with the earth, a society of ecological sustainability and substantive equality. This can be seen in the extraordinary achievements of Cuban ecology, as recently shown by Mauricio Betancourt in “The Effect of Cuban Agroecology in Mitigating the Metabolic Rift” in Global Environmental Change.28 This conforms to what Georg Lukács called the necessary “double transformation” of human social relations and the human relations to nature.29 Such an emancipatory project must necessarily pass through various revolutionary phases, which cannot be predicted in advance. Yet, to be successful, a revolution must seek to make itself irreversible through the promotion of an organic system directed at genuine human needs, rooted in substantive equality and the rational regulation of the human social metabolism with nature.30

Freedom as Necessity

Building on G. W. F. Hegel’s philosophy, Engels famously argued in Anti-Dühring that real freedom was grounded in the recognition of necessity. Revolutionary change was the point at which freedom and necessity met in concrete praxis. Although there was such a thing as blind necessity beyond human knowledge, once objective forces were grasped, necessity was no longer blind, but rather offered new paths for human action and freedom. Necessity and freedom fed on each other, requiring new periods of social change and historical transcendence.31 In illustrating this materialist dialectical principle, Lenin acutely observed, “we do not know the necessity of nature in the phenomena of the weather. But while we do not know this necessity, we do know that it exists.”32 We know the human relation to the weather and nature in general inevitably varies with the changing productive relations governing our actions.

Today, the knowledge of anthropogenic climate crisis and of extreme weather events is removing human beings from the realm of blind necessity and demanding that the world’s population engage in the ultimate struggle for freedom and survival against catastrophe capitalism. As Marx stated in the context of the severe metabolic rift imposed on Ireland as a result of British colonialism in the nineteenth century, the ecological crisis presents itself as a case of “ruin or revolution.”33 In the Anthropocene, the ecological rift resulting from the expansion of the capitalist economy now exists on a scale rivaling the biogeochemical cycles of the planet. However, knowledge of these objective developments also allows us to conceive the necessary revolution in the social metabolic reproduction of humanity and the earth. Viewed in this context, Marx’s crucial conception of a “community of associated producers” is not to be viewed as simply a far-off utopian conception or abstract ideal but as the very essence of the necessary human defense in the present and future, representing the insistent demand for a sustainable relation to the earth.34

But where is the agent of revolutionary change? The answer is that we are seeing the emergence of the material preconditions of what can be called a global environmental proletariat. Engels’s Condition of the Working Class in England, published in 1845, was a description and analysis of working-class conditions in Manchester, shortly after the so-called Plug Plot Riots and at the height of radical Chartism. Engels depicted the working-class environment not simply in terms of factory conditions, but much more in terms of urban developments, housing, water supply, sanitation, food and nutrition, and child development. The focus was on the general epidemiological environment enforced by capitalism (what Engels called “social murder” and what Norman Bethune later called “the second sickness”) associated with widespread morbidity and mortality, particularly due to contagious disease.35 Marx, under the direct influence of Engels and as a result of his own social epidemiological studies twenty years later while writing Capital, was to see the metabolic rift as arising not only in relation to the degradation of the soil, but equally, as he put it, in terms of “periodical epidemics” induced by society itself.36

What this tells us—and we could find many other illustrations, from the Russian and Chinese Revolutions to struggles in the Global South today—is that class struggle and revolutionary moments are the product of a coalescence of objective necessity and a demand for freedom emanating from material conditions that are not simply economic but also environmental in the broadest sense. Revolutionary situations are thus most likely to come about when a combination of economic and ecological conditions make social transformations necessary, and where social forces and relations are developed enough to make such changes possible. In this respect, looked at from a global standpoint today, the issue of the environmental proletariat overlaps with and is indistinguishable from the question of the ecological peasantry and the struggles of the Indigenous. Likewise, the struggle for environmental justice that now animates the environmental movement globally is in essence a working-class and peoples’ struggle.37

The environmental proletariat in this sense can be seen as emerging as a force all over the world, as evident in the present period of ecological-epidemiological struggle in relation to COVID-19. Yet, the main locus of revolutionary ecological action in the immediate future remains the Global South, faced with the harsh reality of “imperialism in the Anthropocene.”38 As Samir Amin observed in Modern Imperialism, Monopoly Finance Capital, and Marx’s Law of Value, the triad of the United States, Europe, and Japan is already using the planet’s bio-capacity at four times the world average, pointing toward ecological oblivion. This unsustainable level of consumption of resources in the Global North is only possible because

a good proportion of the bio-capacity of society in the South is taken up by and to the advantage of these centers [in the triad]. In other words, the current expansion of capitalism is destroying the planet and humanity. The expansion’s logical conclusion is either the actual genocide of the peoples of the South—as “overpopulation”—or, at the least, their confinement to ever-increasing poverty. An eco-fascist strand of thought is being developed which gives legitimacy to this kind of “final solution” to the problem.39

A New System of Social Metabolic Reproduction

A revolutionary process of socialist construction aimed at building a new system of social reproduction in conformity with the demands of necessity and freedom cannot occur without an overall “orienting principle” and “measure of achievement” as part of a long-term strategy. It is here, following Mészáros, that the notion of substantive equality or a society of equals, also entailing substantive democracy, comes into play in today’s struggles.40 Such an approach not only stands opposed to capital at its barbaric heart but also opposes any ultimately futile endeavor to stop halfway in the transition to socialism. Immanuel Kant spelled out the dominant liberal view shortly after the French Revolution when he stated that “the general equality of men as subjects in a state coexists quite readily with the greatest inequality in degrees of the possessions men have.… Hence, the general equality of men coexists with great inequality of specific rights of which there may be many.”41 In this way, equality came to be merely formal, existing merely “on paper” as Engels pointed out, not only with respect to the labor contract between capitalist and worker but also in relation to the marriage contract between men and women.42 Such a society establishes, as Marx demonstrated, a “right of inequality, in its content, like every right.”43 The idea of substantive equality, consistent with Marx’s notion of communism, challenges all of this. It demands a change in the constitutive cells of society, which can no longer consist of possessive individualists, or individual capitals, reinforced by a hierarchical state, but must be based on the associated producers and a communal state. Genuine planning and genuine democracy can only start through the constitution of power from the bottom of society. It is only in this way that revolutions become irreversible.

It was the explicit recognition of the challenge and burden of twenty-first-century socialism in these terms that represented the extraordinary threat to the prevailing order constituted by the Venezuelan Revolution led by Hugo Chávez. The Bolivarian Republic challenged capitalism from within through the creation of communal power and popular protagonism, generating a notion of revolution as the creation of an organic society, or a new social metabolic order. Chávez, building on the analyses of Marx and Mészáros, mediated by Lebowitz, introduced the notion of “the elementary triangle of socialism,” or (1) social ownership, (2) social production organized by workers, and (3) satisfaction of communal needs.44 Underlying this was a struggle for substantive equality, abolishing the inequalities of the color line and the gender line, the imperial line, and other lines of oppression, as the essential basis for eliminating the society of unequals.

In “Communism as an Ideal,” Sweezy emphasized the new forms of labor that would necessarily come into being in a society that used abundant human productivity more rationally. Many categories of work, he indicated, would “be eliminated altogether (e.g. coalmining and domestic service), and insofar as possible all jobs must become interesting and creative as only a few are today.” The reduction of the enormous waste and destruction inherent in capitalist production and consumption would open up space for the employment of disposable time in more creative ways.

In a society of equals—one in which everyone stands in the same relation to the means of production and has the same obligation to work and serve the common welfare—all “needs” that emphasize the superiority of the few and involve the subservience of the many will simply disappear and will be replaced by the needs of liberated human beings living together in mutual respect and cooperation.… Society and the human beings who compose it constitute a dialectical whole: neither can change without changing the other. And communism as an ideal comprises a new society and a new [human being].45

More than simply an ideal, such an organizing principle in which substantive equality and substantive democracy are foremost in the conception of socialism/communism is essential not only to create a socialist path to a better future but as a necessary defense of the global population confronted with the question of survival. Dystopian books and novels notwithstanding, it is impossible to imagine the level of environmental catastrophe that will face the world’s peoples, especially those at the bottom of the imperialist hierarchy, if capitalism’s creative destruction of the metabolism of humanity and the earth is not stopped mid–century.

According to a 2020 article on “The Future of the Human Climate Niche” in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, based on existing trends, 3.5 billion people are projected to be living in unlivable heat outside the human climate niche by 2070, under conditions comparable to those of the Sahara desert.46 Even such projections fail to capture the enormous level of destruction that will fall on the majority of humanity under capitalist business as usual. The only answer is to leave the burning house and to build another now.47

The International of Workers and Peoples

Although untold numbers of people are engaged in innumerable struggles against the capitalist juggernaut in their specific localities all around the world, struggles for substantive equality, including battles over race, gender, and class, depend on the fight against imperialism at the global level. Hence, there is a need for a new global organization of workers based on the model of Marx’s First International.48 Such an International for the twenty-first century cannot simply consist of a group of elite intellectuals from the North engaged in World Social Forum-like discussion activities or in the promotion of social-democratic regulatory reforms as in the so-called Socialist and Progressive Internationals. Rather, it needs to be constituted as a workers-based and peoples-based organization, rooted from the beginning in a strong South-South alliance so as to place the struggle against imperialism at the center of the socialist revolt against capitalism, as contemplated by figures such as Chávez and Amin.

In 2011, just prior to his final illness, Chávez was preparing, following his next election, to launch what was to be called the New International (pointedly not a Fifth International) focusing on a South-South alliance and giving a global significance to socialism in the twenty-first century. This would have extended the Bolivarian Alliance for Peoples of Our America to a global level.49 This, however, never saw the light of day due to Chávez’s rapid decline and untimely death.

Meanwhile, a separate conception grew out of the efforts of Amin, working with the World Forum for Alternatives. Amin had long contemplated a Fifth International, an idea he was still presenting as late as May 2018. But in July 2018, only a month before his death, this had been transformed into what he called an Internationale of Workers and Peoples, explicitly recognizing that a pure worker-based International that did not take into account the situation of peoples was inadequate in confronting imperialism.50 This, he stated, would be an organization, not just a movement. It would be aimed at the

alliance of all working peoples of the world and not only those qualified as representatives of the proletariat…including all wage earners of the services, peasants, farmers, and the peoples oppressed by modern capitalism. The construction must also be based on the recognition and respect of diversity, whether of parties, trade unions, or other popular organizations of struggle, guaranteeing their real independence.… In the absence of [such revolutionary] progress the world would continue to be ruled by chaos, barbarian practices, and the destruction of the earth.51

The creation of a New International cannot of course occur in a vacuum but needs to be articulated within and as a product of the building of unified mass organizations expanding at the grassroots level in conjunction with revolutionary movements and delinkings from the capitalist system all over the world. It could not occur, in Amin’s view, without new initiatives from the Global South to create broad alliances, as in the initial organized struggles associated with the Third World movement launched at the Bandung Conference in 1955, and the struggle for a New International Economic Order.52 These three elements—grassroots movements, delinking, and cross-country/cross-continent alliances—are all crucial in his conception of the anti-imperialist struggle. Today this needs to be united with the global ecological movement.

Such a universal struggle against capitalism and imperialism, Amin insisted, must be characterized by audacity and more audacity, breaking with the coordinates of the system at every point, and finding its ideal path in the principle of from each according to one’s ability, to each according to one’s need, as the very definition of human community. Today we live in a time of the perfect coincidence of the struggles for freedom and necessity, leading to a renewed struggle for freedom as necessity. The choice before us is unavoidable: ruin or revolution.

#### The alternative requires rejecting the aff and critically interrogating the neoliberal discourse of the 1AC---resisting capitalist pedagogy in educational spaces is the first step towards a broader movement away from Capitalism.

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.

## adv – 1

### 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.

### 1NC---!D---Food Wars

#### 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.

## adv – 2

### 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---!D

#### ABR is gradual, slow, and will be addressed---reject scary-sounding headlines

Smith 16, PhD molecular biologist, former R&D director at MicroPhage and SomaLogic. (Drew, 6-14-16, “The Myth Of The Post-Antibiotic Era”, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/quora/2016/06/14/the-myth-of-the-post-antibiotic-era/#db027696fa83>)

Right now, drug resistant infections are mainly a threat to those that are already sick and/or in medical facilities. But, if we continue down this path, mundane infections in the otherwise healthy could someday morph into life-threatening ordeals, and simple medical procedures and surgeries may be skipped to avoid risk of infection. However, while this threat is real, it’s important to keep in mind that this is an ongoing, gradual challenge; it’s extremely unlikely that a single event will herald with complete certainty the abrupt end of modern medicine as we know it. In this context, those scary headlines are inappropriate, if not numbing and counterproductive. In May, Ars wrote about some alarmist and inaccurate news stories dealing with a newly identified type of drug resistance—one that makes bacteria resistant to a last-resort antibiotic called colistin and can spread between bacteria easily. The headlines blared that it was the “first” time such a dastardly microbe had seeped into the US—which is not true. And they suggested that it would certainly mark the end of antibiotics—also not true. This week, scientists provided updates on tracking that type of resistance, and of course some alarmist headlines followed. Yet, the new data actually suggests that a tempering of concerns about this particular resistance may be in order. It turns out that this “dreaded,” “scary,” “nightmare” of a drug-resistant microbe has been in the US for more than a year and elsewhere in the world since as far back as 2005—it’s just that nobody noticed it. And nobody noticed it because so far it hasn’t been the dreaded, scary nightmare some have feared. “It’s not a huge cause for concern,” Mariana Castanheira, lead author of one of this week’s resistance updates, told Ars. Castanheira is the director for Molecular and Microbiology at JMI Laboratories, a private company that monitors drug resistance microbes in hospitals and medical settings. They and others are finding this new type of resistance now simply because they’re looking for it, she said. Castanheira explains that people initially started digging for this new type of drug resistance—a gene called mcr-1—out of concern that it makes bacteria resistant to the antibiotic colistin, which is a relatively toxic drug used only when nearly all others have failed against a multi-drug resistant infection. Bacteria have shown up with colistin resistance before—in fact, many times in the US and elsewhere around the world. But in those cases, the genes were embedded in the bacteria’s chromosomes and generally passed down through generations. The mcr-1 resistance gene, on the other hand, seems to always sit on a plasmid, a small loop of DNA that bacteria can readily pass around to neighbors. If colistin-resistant bacteria shared their mcr-1 plasmid with others that are already resistant to lots of antibiotics, they could create a long-feared invincible germ—a “pan-resistant” bacteria. “Doesn’t scare me” So far that doesn’t seem to be happening, though, Castanheira said. In more than a decade of skulking around, mcr-1 has made its way into bacteria in animals, people, and soil all over the world. Yet, all of the mcr-1 carrying microbes examined have been susceptible to at least one antibiotic—and often several.

## 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

## T

### 2NC---Overview

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.

**2NC/1NR Expand—Courts**

**Courts cannot ‘expand.’**

**Bennett 20** (Richard; April 3; United States District Judge; Casetext, “United States v. Johnson,” https://casetext.com/case/united-states-v-johnson-2908)

Most critically for purposes of this case and other requests in the wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic, federal courts may not develop judicial exceptions to a jurisdictional bar—such as the failure to adhere to jurisdictional exhaustion requirements—as it is **axiomatic** that federal courts **cannot expand** their power to hear cases "by judicial decree." Kokkonen v. Guardian Life In. Co. of America , [511 U.S. 375, 377](https://casetext.com/case/kokkonen-v-guardian-life-insurance-company-of-america-2#p377), [114 S. Ct. 1673](https://casetext.com/case/kokkonen-v-guardian-life-insurance-company-of-america-2), [128 L.Ed.2d 391](https://casetext.com/case/kokkonen-v-guardian-life-insurance-company-of-america-2) (1994) (citations omitted); see also Dolan v. United States , [560 U.S. 605, 610](https://casetext.com/case/dolan-v-us#p610), [130 S. Ct. 2533](https://casetext.com/case/dolan-v-us), [177 L.Ed.2d 108](https://casetext.com/case/dolan-v-us) (2010) ("The expiration of a ‘jurisdictional’ deadline prevents the court from permitting or taking the action to which the statute attached the deadline. The prohibition is **absolute**."); United States v. Martin , [662 F.3d 301, 307-08](https://casetext.com/case/us-v-martin-235#p307) (4th Cir. 2011) (explaining that courts cannot waive jurisdictional conditions); In re United Refuse LLC , 171 F. App'x 426, 432 n.6 (4th Cir. 2006) ("[W]e cannot waive ... jurisdictional requirements even in the face of good cause." (citations and quotations omitted)).

**They may not expand.**

**Bennett 20** (Richard; April 3; United States District Judge; Casetext, “United States v. Johnson,” https://casetext.com/case/united-states-v-johnson-2908)

In this case, there is no question that the Defendant has not complied with these requirements. Defendant first requested a sentence modification on March 27, 2020—one week ago. The BOP has not yet decided whether to grant or deny the Defendant's motion. To circumvent this problem, Defendant asks this Court to waive § 3582(c)(1)(A)'s exhaustion requirements. This Court does **not** have the **jurisdiction** to do so. The exhaustion requirements of § 3582(c)(1)(A) are jurisdictional in nature, and this Court may **not expand** its jurisdiction by waiving such requirements. Alternatively, even if § 3582(c)(1)(A)'s exhaustion requirements were merely mandatory claim processing rules, rather than jurisdictional in nature, this Court may not recognize an exception to their operation which Congress has not authorized.

### Expand the Scope

#### Increasing enforcement of existing law doesn’t not ‘expand’ its ‘scope’

Anne K. McKeig 20, Judge on the Minnesota Supreme Court, “Aim Dev. (USA), LLC v. City of Sartell”, 946 N.W.2d 330, 338-340, 2020 Minn. LEXIS 350, 7/15/2020, Lexis

We determined that the landowner could upgrade his equipment so long as the new equipment was "merely an improvement over the previous method and did not constitute a change in the nature and purpose of the original use." Id. at 866-67. Our holding recognized that landowners are not confined to exercising their nonconforming use rights with outdated or inefficient equipment if it is possible to make improvements that are consistent with the original use [\*\*15] of their land.

We also considered whether increasing the size of the gravel pit violated the city's ordinance. We acknowledged that "[i]f the [property owner] [were] to be limited to the area of land actually excavated at the time of the adoption of the ordinance, the restriction, in effect, [would] prohibit[] any further use of the land as a gravel pit." Id. at 865. Accordingly, we concluded [\*339] that "by the very nature of that business [the landowner] had to expand the area of its operation or be deprived of all value." Hawkinson, 231 N.W.2d at 282 (discussing Hawkins).

Other jurisdictions share similar concerns regarding the nonconforming rights of certain special use properties (such as quarries, gravel pits, and landfills), and have adopted a more flexible approach that takes the nature of nonconforming operations into account. See Bauer, 662 A.2d at 1192; Eddins v. City of Lewiston, 150 Idaho 30, 244 P.3d 174, 178 (Idaho 2010) (using a "flexible approach that focuses on the character of the alleged enlargement or expansion on a case-by-case basis"); Jones v. Town of Carroll, 15 N.Y.3d 139, 931 N.E.2d 535, 537-38, 905 N.Y.S.2d 551 (N.Y. 2010) (noting that "the use of property as a landfill, like a mine, is unique because it necessarily envisions that the land itself is a resource that will be consumed over time"); Chartiers Twp. v. William H. Martin, Inc., 518 Pa. 181, 542 A.2d 985, 989 (Pa. 1988) (upholding the right of the owner of a nonconforming landfill to increase the daily intake [\*\*16] of solid waste); see also Point San Pedro Rd. Coal. v. Cty. of Marin, 33 Cal. App. 5th 1074, 245 Cal. Rptr. 3d 580, 584 (Cal. Ct. App. 2019); but see Twp. of Fairfield v. Likanchuk's, Inc., 274 N.J. Super. 320, 644 A.2d 120, 124 (N.J. Super. Ct. App. Div. 1994) (explaining that "simply because the nature of the use involves a diminishing asset does not necessarily justify its expansion"); Huckleberry Assocs., Inc. v. S. Whitehall Twp. Zoning Hearing Bd., 120 A.3d 1110, 1115 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 2015) (limiting the scope of a landowner's nonconforming use right to operate a surface mine and quarry to the "natural expansion" of that use).

Here, nonindustrial, non-toxic waste is required for the existing operation of a nonconforming waste facility. AIM Development's proposal, with respect to the source of waste, seeks to replace a depleted source with viable waste streams. In this instance, denying AIM Development's request to replace the sources of waste would truncate the landowner's vested right to continue to operate an industrial waste facility.

Our holding today is consistent with the reasoning in Hawkinson and Claussen. In Hawkinson, a multi-lot resort owner wished to expand his unzoned lakeshore property for recreational-commercial purposes when the area was zoned for residential use. 231 N.W.2d at 280. We assessed the landowner's actual use of property, lot by lot, without regard for his comprehensive, but unrealized, design. Id. at 282. Ultimately, we upheld the application of zoning restrictions. Id. We noted, "[w]hile it is true that [\*\*17] [the landowner's] long-range plans have been frustrated, he is not prevented from carrying on at the same level [that was] obtained before the zoning ordinance was adopted." Id. When the same reasoning is applied here, it is clear that precluding AIM Development from replacing its waste stream would do more than "frustrate" its long-term plans. Without new sources of waste, the landowner would be prevented from carrying on altogether.

In Claussen, the landowner wished to enclose his nonconforming, open-air business. 203 N.W.2d at 324. The landowner asserted that the shelter would likely make the nonconformity less disruptive to [\*340] the surrounding area. See id. While that might have been true, we noted that the sheltered workspace would also have unreasonably prolonged the lifespan of the nonconformity and made it more difficult to convert the land to a different use when the nonconformity was eliminated. Id. In addition, a sheltered workspace would change the nature of the operations by allowing the landowner to conduct business during the harsh winter months that could not be completed outside. See id. We held that "construction of a building where none existed before constitutes an expansion of a nonconforming [\*\*18] use in the same manner as an addition to an existing building." Id. Ultimately, because a sheltered workspace was not required for the landowner to continue his nonconforming business, his proposal was denied. See id. at 327.

HN13 Similarly, we have long recognized that the reasonable substitution of equipment used in the operation of a nonconforming business is not an expansion as long as the nature and purpose of the original use remains unchanged. See Hawkins, 80 N.W.2d at 866-67. We choose to treat the reasonable substitution of materials the same. See Eddins, 244 P.3d at 179 (allowing the reasonable substitution of materials and equipment).

## K

### 2nc – link – antitrust

#### 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: Bad for Innovation

#### Capitalism destroys innovation, alt solves better.

Bee 18, Lawyer, and editor at Current Affairs magazine. (Vanessa, 10-24-2018, "Innovation Under Socialism", *Current Affairs*, <https://www.currentaffairs.org/2018/10/innovation-under-socialism>)

But prioritizing profit is a double-edged sword that can hamper innovation. Owning the proprietary rights allows private firms to block workers—through anti-competitive tools like non-compete agreements, patents, and licenses—who put labor into the innovation process from applying the extensive technical expertise and intimate understanding of the product to improve the innovation substantially. This becomes especially relevant once the workers leave the firm division in which they worked, or leave the firm altogether. Understandably, this lack of control and ownership will cause some workers, however passionate they may be about a project, to be less willing to maximize their contribution to the innovation.

Of course, the so-called nimbleness that allows firms to make drastic changes like mass layoffs is extremely harmful to the workers. This is no fluke. The capitalist economy thrives on a reserve army of labor. Inching closer to full employment makes workers scarcer, which empowers the labor force as a whole to bargain for higher wages and better work conditions. These threaten the firm’s bottom line. So, the capitalist economy is structured to maintain the balance of power towards the owners of capital. Positions that pay well (and less than well) come with the precariousness of at-will employment and disappearing union power. A constant pool of unemployed labor is maintained through layoffs and other tactics like higher interest rates, which the government will compel to help slow growth and thereby hiring. This system harms the potential for innovation, too.

The fear of losing work can dissuade workers from taking risks, experimenting, or speaking up as they identify items that could improve a taken approach—all actions that foster innovation. Meanwhile, thousands of individuals who could be contributing to the innovative process are instead involuntarily un-employed. This model also encourages monopolization, as concentrating market power gives private firms the most control over how much profit they can extract. But squashing competition that could contribute fresh ideas hurts every phase of the innovation process, while giving workers in fewer workplaces space to innovate.

Deferring to profit causes many areas of R&D to go unexplored. Private firms have less reason to invest in innovations likely to be made universally available for free if managers or investors do not see much upside for the firm’s bottom line. In theory, the slack in private research can be picked up by the public sector. In reality, however, decades of austerity measures threaten the public’s ability to underwrite risky and inefficient research. Both the Democratic and Republican parties increasingly adhere to a neoliberal ideology that vilifies “big government,” promotes running government like a business, pretends that government budgets should mirror household budgets or the private firm’s balance sheet, and rams privatization under the guises of so-called public-private partnerships and private subcontractors.

In the United States, public investment in R&D has been trending downward. As documented in a 2014 report from the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation, “[f]rom 2010 to 2013, federal R&D spending fell from $158.8 to $133.2 billion … Between 2003 and 2008, state funding for university research, as a share of GDP, dropped on average by 2 percent. States such as Arizona and Utah saw decreases of 49 percent and 24 percent respectively.” Even if public investment in the least profitable aspect of research suddenly surged, in our current model, the private sector continues to be the primary driver of development, production, and distribution. Where there remains little potential for profit, private firms will be reluctant to advance to the next phases of the innovation process. Public-private projects raise similar concerns. Coordinated efforts can increase private investment by spreading some costs and risk to the public. But to attract private partners in the first place, the public sector has a greater incentive to prioritize R&D projects with more financial upsides.

This is how the quest for profits and tight grip over proprietary rights, both important features of the capitalist model, discourage risk. Innovations are bound for plateauing after a few years, as firms increasingly favor minor aesthetic tweaks and updates over bold ideas while preventing other avenues of innovation from blossoming. At the same time, massive amounts of capital continue to float into the hands of a few. The price of innovating under capitalism is then both decreased innovation and decreased equality. The idea that this approach to innovation must be our best and only option is a delusion.

As I see it, four ingredients are key to kindling innovation. First, there must be problems requiring solutions (an easy one to meet). Second, there must be capital and resources available to invent, develop, produce, and distribute the innovative product. There must also be actual human beings available to participate in every phase of the innovation process. And fourth, at least some of these human beings must have the creativity and motivation to participate in the innovation process. The question isn’t really whether a socialist economy can provide these four ingredients at all (it can) but rather, whether it can innovate better than a capitalist economy (it can).

### 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---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.

# 1nr

## Case

### A2 No Food Wars

#### Adaptation makes agriculture resilient

* plants are being modified to be successful in droughts
* ocean and island crops are resilient to rising sea levels and salinity
* livestock resistant to diseases
* livestock prepared for droughts

FAOUN 19 [FAO COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE @ UN, “THE STATE OF THE WORLD’s BIODIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE”, https://www.courthousenews.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/fao-report.pdf]

Maintaining, using and developing adapted genetic resources A number of countries note the significance of well-adapted species, varieties or breeds in terms of enhancing resilience to climate change. Several specific examples of how such components of BFA have been utilized in adaptation efforts are provided. For example, Papua New Guinea mentions the distribution to farmers of crop accessions identified in ex situ collections as being tolerant to salinity (taro and cassava varieties), drought (cassava, banana and aibika13 varieties) and flooding (taro and banana varieties). It notes that this activity proved very useful in sustaining food security during the drought that struck the country in 2015 and 2016,14 when 40 percent of the population was seriously affected. Panama reports that its criollo livestock breeds have a combination of characteristics that are not found in any introduced breeds, including high fertility rates, longevity, resistance to parasites and diseases and good grazing abilities, including the ability to make use of poor-quality pastures. It notes, in particular, the potential of two locally adapted cattle breeds, the Guaymi and the Guabal^, in climate change adaptation. It also mentions, among its climate change adaptation measures, the development of maize varieties and hybrids that are tolerant of drought and diplodia rot (a fungal disease) and that grow well in soils with low nitrogen levels. With regard to choices at species level, Sudan reports that some of its livestock keepers have replaced cattle and sheep with dromedaries and goats, as the latter species are better suited to a climate change-affected environment that is more prone to droughts.

Some countries note the significance of participatory breeding programmes in the context of climate change. For example, Oman mentions that local wheat and barley landraces have been improved through such programmes to obtain varieties that have shorter growing seasons and can be managed more flexibly, especially during years with prolonged periods of extreme heat and limited water availability. Ensuring farmers have access to the adapted germplasm they need is another issue highlighted. Nepal, for example, mentions the role of community-based seed banks in providing farmers with immediate access to locally adapted germplasm that can be used in efforts to cope with climate change.

#### Food prices don’t cause conflict---reject their bad studies.

Demarest 15—PhD Researcher at the Centre for Research on Peace and Development [Leila, “Food price rises and political instability: Problematizing a complex relationship,” *The European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 27, No. 5, p. 650-671, Emory Libraries]

6. Conclusions and Way Forward

While some progress has been made in improving our understanding of the linkages between rising food prices and conflict, several important gaps remain. Firstly, notions of conflict and political instability are often used interchangeably, while these concepts and the relationships between them remain to some extent vague. The ‘food riot’ concept in particular leads to confusion. Although it is popularly seen as a violent rise of the masses, in reality, many peaceful events are gathered under this term, while violence is often committed by the state rather than by hungry consumers. The term also presupposes that food is the central issue at hand, which does not necessarily have to be the case. Many misunderstanding arise from the second gap identified in this paper: the uncritical data gathering based on international news reports. Not only are these remarkably inconsistent, they also make use of classifications which are not scientifically investigated. Finally, causal mechanisms in the relationship between rising food prices and conflict often remain assumptions in the literature and lack empirical foundation. Three crosscutting avenues for improvement therefore exist: better concept definitions, better data gathering, and more focus on contexts.

Clearly defined concepts and categorizations of conflict and instability are a necessary foundation for research on the linkages between rising food prices and conflict. For (food) protests in particular, purposeful categorizations require an enhanced insight in the events that took place on the ground. Local news sources for data gathering can prove to be more reliable than Western (English) media to accomplish this. Event descriptions are also likely to be more detailed in local sources, which allows for a first-hand qualitative analysis of causes and context.

As international food prices are likely to remain high, improving our understanding of the causal mechanisms which can lead to conflict remains crucial. We can draw important lessons from the literature on poverty and conflict, resource scarcity and conflict, and regime transition in Africa. The causal role of economic factors alone has continuously been questioned, and ‘context’ or prevailing political, economic, and social factors play a crucial role in the conflict outcome. The argument that adverse economic shocks seem more of a trigger to conflict rather than an important cause is not particularly remarkable in itself. Yet while many authors acknowledge this, the focus often remains on the trigger. Resource scarcity, climate change, population growth, or food insecurity often remain the starting point of analyses, with researchers consequently tracing the divergent (theoretical) possibilities for conflict. In the end, most admit that these factors do not automatically lead to conflict everywhere, and stress the importance of context. Because the theoretical possibilities for conflict are so large, however, the context factor remains rather understudied with as most agreed upon notions that elements of ‘grievance’ and ‘collective action’ are required.

It is hence important to focus more on the ‘contexts’ that can lead to conflict and, in doing so, to make the distinction between different forms of conflict. This also implies a data collection exercise. Contextual data are currently collected at the aggregate, national level, and only on a yearly basis, which can lead to spurious relations. While the use of these variables is increasingly questioned in civil war studies, we can also doubt their strength in the study of highly localized, one-time events such as riots. I particularly make the case for ‘bringing politics back in’. The policies taken by the government are crucial in the violent escalation of social conflict (e.g. accommodation versus repression), but the only variable currently in use to explain state behaviour seems to be the country-level regime type variable (Polity IV or Freedom House), which is also used with regards to highly localized conflicts. Other ways in which politics matter, can be the strength of the political opposition. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, for example, was probably better organized than other opposition groups to make use of economic unrest.

### 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.

### ! – Superbugs

#### No antibiotic apocalypse---it’s slow and research solves.

Cox 17, Lecturer in Microbiology, Aston University. PhD, Molecular Microbiology and Drug Discovery. (Jonathan, 3-21-2017, "It’s the age of the antibiotic revolution, not apocalypse", *Conversation*, https://theconversation.com/its-the-age-of-the-antibiotic-revolution-not-apocalypse-73476)

Bad news sells papers. Or as Elliot Carver, the media mogul set on world domination in the Bond film Tomorrow Never Dies put it: “There’s no news like bad news.” As a scientist, my responsibility is to separate fact from fiction, to follow evidence, not instinct. So when I read doomsday reports of a coming “antibiotic apocalypse”, I question their legitimacy. Are we really all standing on the edge of the medical precipice, about to tumble into an oblivion of death-by-superbug? We most certainly are not. The end of the world may well be on the horizon, but it surely won’t be due to antibiotic resistance. In order to understand why, you need to understand resistance: where it comes from, what it can do, and crucially, what scientists are doing about it. Predominantly, antibiotic resistance is a man-made problem. Since the discovery of penicillin in 1928, we have consistently provided the opportunity for resistance to evolve, persist and spread through the mismanagement and incorrect administration of antibiotics. We have also learned major lessons in the last decade as to where antibiotic resistance comes from and what measures we can take to control it. Some of these, such as the C-reactive protein (CRP) test – which can help detect if patients actually need antibiotic drugs or not – are proving to be highly effective, while others haven’t been and have occasionally even exacerbated the problem. Sensitivity testing before use The point is, scientists all over the world are working tirelessly to think up new and innovative solutions to the problem. Despite their best efforts, and a growing understanding of antibiotic resistance, we still sometimes get it wrong. A woman in the US recently died of an infection so incredibly resistant that “there were no antibiotics left” to treat her. Some hysterical headlines described the deadly bacteria as a “superbug resistant to all available antibiotics”, because 26 different types failed to work. But was her infection resistant to all of these before she was given the very first antibiotic? The answer is undoubtedly, no. Fundamentally, bacteria are given an opportunity to develop resistance. Sensitivity testing allows infections to be tested against different antibiotics in a lab to see if they will be effective. While this was carried out on the woman’s infection, it was already too late – somewhere along the line, she’d had too much exposure to inappropriately used antibiotics and the infection had become resistant. Sensitivity testing at the start of an infection should be standard practice. The first questions doctors should be asking are “What antibiotics will actually work against this?” and “What am I up against?” so that any prescription will be effective in the first instance. More progressive hospitals with microbiology labs are beginning to do this as a matter of course to better control and manage antibiotic resistance. There isn’t always time, for example with sepsis, which moves very fast, but for chest, skin, and urinary tract infections the results can be available within 24 hours. Treatment is then based on fact rather than a guess. If you get it wrong enough times, you get resistance. Failing to test for bacterial sensitivity early on in the infection, waiting instead until it is known that the infection is resistant, makes the scenario much worse. Claims that the use of colistin, a “last hope” antibiotic, is soaring in English hospitals is true. But this is driven by a failure to test for antibiotic sensitivity before it is too late, leading to a need to turn to colistin. Clinicians often assume everyone’s urinary, respiratory or other infection is the same, and will respond in the same way to tried and tested antibiotics. Scientifically speaking, everyone’s infection is different and should be treated as such. No apocalypse in sight Sad as the death of the woman in the US is, it is not uncommon for a death to result from resistance. Reports suggest that around 700,000 people die from antibiotic resistant infections globally each year, the majority in underdeveloped countries with poor access to healthcare. This number is predicted to rise to 10m deaths a year by 2050 if nothing is done about the problem. But “apocalypse” is the wrong word for this. The global population has doubled since World War II, when around 10m people a year died. Humankind certainly won’t be wiped out. Even if we were to face the worst case scenario by 2050, antibiotic resistance would affect about 1% of people on the planet. And that is assuming we sit back and do nothing. In fact, 1,618 scientific research papers were published on antibiotic resistance in 2015. There is lots of funding into resistance and scientists are doing lots to tackle the problem. Schemes such as the Longitude Prize – a prize for scientists that has currently set a challenge for creating a cost-effective, accurate, rapid and easy-to-use test for bacterial infections – are pushing the momentum of discovery in this area.

#### ABR won’t get close to extinction, and intervening actors solve it.

Cara 17, science writer for The Atlantic, Newsweek, and Vocativ. (Ed, 1-27-2017, “The Attack Of The Superbugs”, http://www.vocativ.com/394419/attack-of-the-superbugs/)

Antibiotic-resistant infections kill at least 700,000 people worldwide a year right now, according to an exhaustive report commissioned by the UK in 2014, and without any substantial medical breakthroughs or policy changes that slow down resistance, they may claim some 10 million deaths annually by 2050 — eclipsing cancer in general as a leading cause. These deaths largely won’t come from pan-resistant infections, just tougher ones. A preventable death there, a preventable death here. Leaving that aside, antibiotics, along with proper sanitation and nutrition, gird our entire way of living. Most every invasive surgery, pregnancy, organ transplant and chemotherapy session we go through will become riskier. Other diseases like HIV, malaria or influenza will become deadlier, since bacteria often exploit the opening in our immune system they leave behind. And already precarious populations like those living with cystic fibrosis, prisoners, and the poor will lose years off their lives. For all the warranted gloom, though, Farewell does think there are reasons to be hopeful. “I don’t think we are doing enough, but the scientific community along with many governmental and private foundations are very actively involved in finding not only new antibiotics, but new solutions to this problem,” she said. There’s been a noticeable change in attitude and increased urgency surrounding antibiotic resistance, she said, one that she hadn’t seen even five years ago, let alone twenty. Until recently, that attitude change could be seen from places as high up as the U.S. federal government. In 2014, former President Obama issued an executive order aimed at addressing antibiotic resistance, the first real acknowledgement of the problem from an administration, devoting funding and outlining a national action for combatting resistance. Through its federal agencies, the administration pushed to reduce antibiotic use on farms and encouraged doctors to stop using them in excess. “There has been a lot of work done the last couple of years, much of it spurned by [Obama’s] National Action Plan,” said Dr. David Hyun, a senior officer for Pew Charitable Trusts’ Antibiotic Resistance Project. The CDC, in particular, has used its funding to open up regional labs that allow them to better detect and respond to antibiotic-resistant outbreaks like the Nevada case, he said. They ultimately hope to create an expansive surveillance system that can easily keep track of resistance rates on a national, state and regional level. A parallel system also exists for monitoring resistance in the food chain, shepherded by the CDC and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In fact, it was this sort of cooperation between national and local health agencies that enabled Nevada doctors to stop the worst from happening, said Dr. Lei Chen. The swift identification of a possible CRE strain by the hospital, coupled with the woman’s medical history, led to a precautionary quarantine, while also prompting Chen’s public health department and eventually the CDC into action. And it may help prevent future cases from spilling into the public. According to Chen, the CDC has allocated funding this year to all of Nevada’s state public health departments so they can better detect CRE and other dangerous resistant strains. Under the Trump administration, there’s no telling how these small victories will hold up or whether they will advance. All references to antibiotics once found on the Whitehouse.gov site have been removed, including a link to the Obama administration’s national action plan, and the fact that they’re already tried to bar USDA scientists from discussing their work with the public while stripping funding from other public health agencies isn’t encouraging. Even with the best public policy, however, there’s no clear light at the end of the tunnel. Antibiotic resistance has gradually been worsening, even within the last 15 to 20 years, when superbugs like methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) first became widely known, said Hyun. The effort needed to develop new drugs has been in short supply, hamstrung by pharmaceutical companies’ inability to recoup the costs of bringing new antibiotics to market. That’s because, unlike the latest heart medication, any new antibiotics will have to be treated like the last drops of water during a drought, used as little as possible — the exact opposite way to make money off a new product. Yet, much like climate change, the financial toll of not doing anything will total in the trillions years down the road. And it already numbers in the billions now, according to the CDC. Of course, we need bacteria to survive. And most need or pay no mind to us in return. Even pan-resistant bacteria don’t really mean harm. Some have been found in perfectly healthy people, a fact that’ll either comfort you or keep you awake at night, only causing problems when our immune system wavers. There’s no army of sentient E. coli that will rise up and someday overthrow the human race. But barring the calvary showing up, a new fear of ours will learn to settle in, almost unnoticed. It’ll creep in when we pick our heads up from a nasty fall that scrapes our skin open or breaks our bones; when we wave goodbye to our loved ones before they enter an operating room, or when we cradle our newborns into a world teeming with the living infinitesimal, wishing there was still a way to shield them from it as our parents once could for us. A fear of naked vulnerability. The antibiotic apocalypse will be gentle, if it fully arrives, but it won’t be any less devastating to the human spirit.