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#### The aff is based on neoliberal exploitation, which makes monopolies and violence inevitable ⁠— 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of a few platitudes, the passage of some policies, or the creation of some agencies that claim to be able to fix the outdated economic system, especially when all of the above come from billionaires themselves.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.

#### Competition necessitates racism and antiblackness; 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’

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\*2 point font and paragraph merging for readability

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

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

#### Reject the aff and critically interrogate neoliberal discourse ⁠— resisting capitalist pedagogy in educational spaces is a prerequisite towards anti-capitalist political projects; COVID-19 provides a unique transition opportunity

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As educators, it is crucial for us to examine how we talk, teach, and write about inequality as an object of critique in an age of precarity, uncertainty and the current pandemic crisis. This is especially true at a time when a growing number of authoritarian regimes around the globe substitute replace thoughtful dialogue and critical engagement with the suppression of dissent and a culture of forgetting r. How do we situate our analysis of education as part of a broader discourse and mode of analysis that interrogates the promises, ideals, and claims of a substantive democracy? How do we fight against iniquitous relations of power and wealth that empty power of its emancipatory possibilities, and as Hannah Arendt has argued, “makes most people superfluous as human beings”? How might we understand how neoliberal ideology, with its appropriation of market-based values, regressive notions of freedom and agency, uses language to infiltrate daily life? How does a pandemic pedagogy in the service of neoliberalism produce identities defined by market values, and normalize a notion of responsibility and individuality that convinces people that whatever problem they face they have no one to blame but themselves? Repeated endlessly on right-wing media platforms, the underlying conditions that disproportionately produce chronic illness among poor people of color disappear among a public distracted, if not persuaded, by a pandemic pedagogy that celebrates unchecked self-interest, disdains social responsibility, and turns away from the reality of a society with deep-seated institutional rot and unravelling of social connections and the social contract. Pandemic pedagogy thrives on inequality and becomes a militarized and heartless normalizing tool to convince the broader public that the lives of the elderly, sick, and vulnerable should be valued according to how much they contribute to the economy. And if they are willing to die in order not to be a drain on the economy, all well and good. Nothing escapes the cruel logic of neoliberalism with its arrogance and hubris on full display as it bathes in the glow of right-wing populism, ultra-nationalism, and neofascism. Its accoutrements of dictatorship are everywhere and can be seen in the swagger of militia that storm state capitals, in police who punch and pepper spray protesters and push elderly men to the ground, and in military forces on the streets without badges reinforcing a climate of fear, repression, and unaccountability. There is more at work here than a lack of humanity on the part of the Trump administration. As the Irish journalist Fintan O’Toole observes, there is also the deepening grip of a culture of cruelty and dehumanization. He writes: “As a society the American people are being habituated into accepting cruelty on a wide scale. Americans are being taught by Trump and his administration not to see other people as human beings whose lives are as important as their own. Once that line has been crossed – and it is not just Trump and the people around him, but many of Trump’s supporters as well – then we know where that all leads, what the ultimate destination is. There is no mystery about it. We know what happens when a government and its leaders dehumanize large numbers of people.”

Depoliticization and the Authoritarian Turn

Neoliberalism is not only an economic system, it is also an ideological apparatus that relentlessly attempts to structure consciousness, values, desires, and modes of identification in ways that align individuals with its governing structures. Central to this pedagogical project is the attempt to prevent individuals from translating private issues and troubles into broader systemic considerations. By doing this, it becomes difficult for individuals to grasp the historical, social, economic, and political forces at work in shaping a social order as a human activity deeply immersed in specific relations of power. Neoliberalism’s attempt to erase or rewrite historical and social forces makes it difficult for individuals to imagine alternative notions of society, with themselves as collective actors, or view their problems as more than the limitations of faulty character, moral failure, or a problem of personal responsibility. Reducing individuals to isolated, discrete, hermetically-sealed human beings whose lives are shaped only by notions of self-reliance and self-sufficiency is a pedagogical strategy that utterly depoliticizes people, leading them to believe that however a society is shaped, it is part of a natural order. President Trump echoed this “no alternative” narrative when asked about celebrities and rich people having special access to being tested for the coronavirus while few others had access. He replied, “Perhaps that’s been the story of life.” This individualization of the social with its mounting privatization, gated communities, and social atomization undermines collective action, any viable notion of solidarity, and weakens the notion of global connectivity. The philosopher Byung-Chul Han has rightly argued that contemporary neoliberal society is shaped by a dysfunctional notion of solitude and hermitically-sealed notions of agency, all of which undermine the values and social connections vital to a democracy. He writes: “Those subject to the neoliberal economy do not constitute a we that is capable of collective action. The mounting egoization and atomization of society is making the space for collective action shrink… The general collapse of the collective and the communal has engulfed it. Solidarity is vanishing. Privatization now reaches into the depths of the soul itself. The erosion of the communal is making all collective efforts more and more unlikely.” This panoptical nature of hyper-individualism is more aligned with shared fears than shared responsibilities. Under such circumstances, trust and the notion that all life is related become difficult to grasp as the myopic language of private self-interest inures individuals to wider social problems such as extreme inequality. There is no understanding in this discourse of the damage fanatical entrepreneurialism does to our embodied collectivity. Nor is there any value attributed to the important responsibilities, social values, and notion of the common good that exceeds who we are as individuals, or how we have been shaped by diverse social forces in particular ways. It should be clear that questions of economic and social justice cannot be addressed by a neoliberal pedagogy that enshrines self-interest and privatization while converting every social problem into individualized market solutions or regressive matters of personal responsibility. Under neoliberalism’s disimagination machine, individual responsibility is coupled with an ethos of greed, avarice, and personal gain. One consequence is the tearing up of social solidarities, public values, and an almost pathological disdain for democracy. This radical form of privatization is also a powerful force for the rise of fascist politics because it depoliticizes individuals, immerses them in the logic of social Darwinism, and makes them susceptible to the dehumanization of those considered a threat or disposable. Just as the spread of the pandemic virus in the United States was not an innocent act of nature, neither is the rise and pervasive grip of inequality. What is clear is that neoliberal support for unbridled individualism has weakened democratic pressures and eroded democracy and equality as governing principles. Moreover, as a mode of public pedagogy, it has undercut social provisions, the social contract, and support for public goods such as education, public health, essential infrastructure, public transportation, and the most basic elements of the welfare state. As a form of pedagogical practice, neoliberalism has morphed into a form of pandemic pedagogy that sacrifices social needs and human life in the name of an economic rationality that values reviving economic growth over human rights. As a lived system of meaning and values, self-reliance and rugged individualism are the only categories available for shaping how individuals view themselves, and their relationship to others and to the planet. The individualization of everyone and the reduction of social problems to private troubles is paralleled by sanctioning a world marked by borders, walls, racism, hate, and a rejection of government intervention in the interest of the common good. Most importantly, neoliberal individualization personalizes power, creating a depoliticized subject whose only obligation as a citizen is defined by consuming and living in a world free from ethical and social responsibilities. In many ways, it does not just empty politics of any substance, it destroys its emancipatory prospects. The neoliberal strategists use education not only to mask their abuses and the effects of their criminogenic policies, they also – in a time of crisis, when dissatisfaction of the masses might lead to chaos, revolts, and dangerous levels of resistance – move dangerously close to creating the conditions for a fascist politics. The noted theologian Frei Betto is right in stating that under such conditions, “…they cover up the causes of social ills and cover up their effects with ideologies that, by obscuring causes, fuel mood in the face of the effects. That’s why neoliberalism is now showing its authoritarian face – building walls that divide countries and ethnic groups, executive power over legislature and judiciary, disinformation about digital networks, the cult of the homeland, the brazen offensive against human rights.” Neoliberalism and its regressive notion of individualism and individual responsibility has undermined the belief that human beings both make the world and can change it. The pandemic has ushered in a crisis that undermines that belief and opens the door for rethinking what kind of society and notion of politics will be faithful to the creation of a socialist democracy that speaks to the core values of justice, equality and solidarity. Under such circumstances, private resistance must give way to collective resistance, and personal and political rights must include economic rights. If inequality is to be defeated, the social state must replace the corporate state and social rights must be guaranteed for all. There can be no adequate struggle for economic justice and social equality unless economic inequality on a global level is addressed along with a movement for climate justice, the elimination of systemic racism and a halt to the spiraling militarism that has resulted in endless wars. This can only take place if the anti-democratic ideology of neoliberalism, with its collapse of the public into the private and its institutional structures of domination, are fully addressed and discredited. Étienne Balibar is right in stating that the triumph of neoliberalism has resulted in the “death zones of humanity.” Following Balibar, what must be made clear is that neoliberal capitalism is itself a pandemic and a dangerous harbinger of an updated fascist politics.

Overcoming Pandemic Pedagogy

The kind of societies that will emerge after the pandemic is up for grabs. In some cases, the crisis will give way to authoritarian regimes such as Chile, Hungary and Turkey, all of which have used the urgency of COVID-19 as an excuse to impose more state control and surveillance, squelch dissent, eliminate civil liberties and concentrate power in the hands of an authoritarian political class. As is well documented, history in a time of crisis also has the potential to change dominant ideologies, rethink the meaning of governance, and enlarge the sphere of justice and equality through a vision that fights for a more generous and inclusive politics. It is crucial to rethink the project of politics in order to imagine forms of resistance that are collective, inclusive and global, capable of producing new democratic arrangements for social life, more radical values and a “global economy which will no longer be at the mercy of market mechanisms.” This is a politics that must move beyond siloed identities and fractured political factions in order to build transnational solidarities in the service of an alternative radically democratic society. Making the pedagogical more political means challenging those forms of pandemic pedagogy that turn politics into theater, a favorite tactic of Trump. In this case, the performance works to suspend disbelief, hold power accountable and unravel one’s sense of critical agency. Pandemic pedagogy does more than undermine critical thinking and informed judgments, it dissolves the line between the truth and lies, fantasy and reality, and in doing so, destroys the foundation for understanding, engaging and promoting that social and economic justice. The endgame under the rubric of a pandemic pedagogy is not simply the destruction of the truth, but the elimination of democracy itself. Central to developing an alternative democratic vision is development of a language that refuses to look away and be commodified. Such a language should be able to break through the continuity and consensus of common sense and appeals to the natural order of things. At stake here is the need to reclaim both critical and redemptive elements of a radical democracy in order to address the full spectrum of violence that structures institutions and everyday life in the United States. This is a language connected to the acquisition of civic literacy, and it demands a different regime of desires and identifications to enable us to move from “shock and stunned silence toward a coherent visceral speech, one as strong as the force that is charging at us.” Of course, there is more at stake here than a struggle over meaning; there is also the struggle over power, over the need to create a formative culture that will produce informed critical agents who will fight for and contribute to a broad social movement that will translate meaning into a fierce struggle for economic, political and social justice. Agency in this sense must be connected to a notion of possibility and education in the service of radical change. Reimagining the future only becomes meaningful when it is rooted in a fierce struggle against the horrors and totalitarian practices of a pandemic pedagogy that falsely claims that it exists outside of history. Václav Havel, the late Czech political dissident-turned-politician, once argued that politics follows culture, by which he meant that changing consciousness is the first step toward building mass movements of resistance. What is crucial here in the age of multiple crises is a thorough grasp of the notion that critical and engaged forms of agency are a product of emancipatory education. Moreover, at the heart of any viable notion of politics is the recognition that politics begins with attempts to change the way people think, act and feel with respect to both how they view themselves and their relations to others. There is more to agency than the neoliberal emphasis on the “empire of the self,” with its unchecked belief in the virtues of a form of self-interest that despises the bonds of sociality, solidarity and community. The U.S. is in the midst of a political and pedagogical crisis. This is a crisis defined not only by a brutalizing racism and massive inequality, but also a constitutional crisis produced by a growing authoritarianism that has been in the making for some time. The recent attacks by the police on journalists, peaceful protesters and even elderly people marching for racial justice echoes the violence of the Brownshirts in the 1930s. Let’s stop the futile debate about whether or not the U.S. is in the midst of a fascist state and shift the register to the more serious question of how to resist it and restore a semblance of real democracy. Under such circumstances, education should be viewed as central to politics, and it plays a crucial role in producing informed judgments, actions, morality and social responsibility at the forefront not only of agency, but politics itself. In this scenario, truth and politics mutually inform each other to erupt in a pedagogical awakening at the moment when the rules are broken. Taking risks becomes a necessity, self-reflection narrates its capacity for critically engaged agency and thinking the impossible is not an option, but a necessity. Without an informed and educated citizenry, democracy can lead to tyranny, even fascism. Trump represents the malignant presence of a fascism that never dies and is ready to remerge at different times in different context in sometimes not-so-recognizable forms. The COVID-19 crisis and the pandemic of inequality and racism have revealed elements of a fascist politics that are more than abstractions. The struggle against a fascist politics is now visible in the rebellions taking place across the United States. While there are no political guarantees for a victory, there is a new sense that the future can be changed in the image of a just and sustainable society. There is a new energy for reform taking place in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd. Massive protests for racial, economic and social justice are emerging all over the globe. As I have argued in The Terror of the Unforeseen, at stake here is the need for these protests to transition from a pedagogical moment and collective outburst of moral anger to a progressive international movement that is well organized and unified. Such a movement must build solidarity among different groups, imagine new forms of social life, make the impossible possible, and produce a revolutionary project in defense of equality, social justice and popular sovereignty. The racial, class, ecological and public health crisis facing the globe can only be understood as part of a comprehensive crisis of the totality. Immediate solutions such as defunding the police and improving community services are important, but they do not deal with the larger issue of eliminating a neoliberal system structured in massive racial and economic inequalities. David Harvey is right in arguing that the “immediate task is nothing more nor less than the self-conscious construction of a new political framework for approaching the question of inequality, through a deep and profound critique of our economic and social system.” This is a crisis in which different threads of oppression must be understood as part of the general crisis of capitalism. The various protests now evolving internationally at the popular level offer the promise of new global anti-fascist and anti-capitalist movements. In the current moment, democracy may be under a severe threat and appear frighteningly vulnerable, but with young people and others rising up across the globe — inspired, energized and marching in the streets — the future of a radical democracy is waiting to breathe again.

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#### Law Enforcement Tradeoff DA

#### Antitrust law enforcement has two areas of focus now: health care and big tech. Health care is under the radar.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### US ag exports prevent hotspot escalation

Castellaw 17

Lieutenant General John Castellaw is the Founder and CEO of Farmspace Systems LLC, a provider of precision agricultural aerial services and equipment. He is a highly decorated 36-year veteran of the United States Marine Corp where he participated in and led several humanitarian operations in Africa, Asia and Europe. He is also the former President of the non-profit Crockett Policy Institute where he created the “SOLDIER 2 CIVILIAN” program to help veterans find jobs in precession agriculture. He graduated from the University of Tennessee, Martin (UTM) with a degree in Agriculture. He currently operates his family farm in Tennessee. “Opinion: Food Security Strategy Is Essential to Our National Security.” Agri-Pulse. May 1st, 2017. https://www.agri-pulse.com/articles/9203-opinion-food-security-strategy-is-essential-to-our-national-security

The United States faces many threats to our National Security. These threats include continuing wars with extremist elements such as ISIS and potential wars with rogue state North Korea or regional nuclear power Iran. The heated economic and diplomatic competition with Russia and a surging China could spiral out of control. Concurrently, we face threats to our future security posed by growing civil strife, famine, and refugee and migration challenges which create incubators for extremist and anti-American government factions. Our response cannot be one dimensional but instead must be a nuanced and comprehensive National Security Strategy combining all elements of National Power including a Food Security Strategy. An American Food Security Strategy is an imperative factor in reducing the multiple threats impacting our National wellbeing. Recent history has shown that reliable food supplies and stable prices produce more stable and secure countries. Conversely, food insecurity, particularly in poorer countries, can lead to instability, unrest, and violence. Food insecurity drives mass migration around the world from the Middle East, to Africa, to Southeast Asia, destabilizing neighboring populations, generating conflicts, and threatening our own security by disrupting our economic, military, and diplomatic relationships. Food system shocks from extreme food-price volatility can be correlated with protests and riots. Food price related protests toppled governments in Haiti and Madagascar in 2007 and 2008. In 2010 and in 2011, food prices and grievances related to food policy were one of the major drivers of the Arab Spring uprisings. Repeatedly, history has taught us that a strong agricultural sector is an unquestionable requirement for inclusive and sustainable growth, broad-based development progress, and long-term stability. The impact can be remarkable and far reaching. Rising income, in addition to reducing the opportunities for an upsurge in extremism, leads to changes in diet, producing demand for more diverse and nutritious foods provided, in many cases, from American farmers and ranchers. Emerging markets currently purchase 20 percent of U.S. agriculture exports and that figure is expected to grow as populations boom. Moving early to ensure stability in strategically significant regions requires long term planning and a disciplined, thoughtful strategy. To combat current threats and work to prevent future ones, our national leadership must employ the entire spectrum of our power including diplomatic, economic, and cultural elements. The best means to prevent future chaos and the resulting instability is positive engagement addressing the causes of instability before it occurs. This is not rocket science. We know where the instability is most likely to occur. The world population will grow by 2.5 billion people by 2050. Unfortunately, this massive population boom is projected to occur primarily in the most fragile and food insecure countries. This alarming math is not just about total numbers. Projections show that the greatest increase is in the age groups most vulnerable to extremism. There are currently 200 million people in Africa between the ages of 15 and 24, with that number expected to double in the next 30 years. Already, 60% of the unemployed in Africa are young people. Too often these situations deteriorate into shooting wars requiring the deployment of our military forces. We should be continually mindful that the price we pay for committing military forces is measured in our most precious national resource, the blood of those who serve. For those who live in rural America, this has a disproportionate impact. Fully 40% of those who serve in our military come from the farms, ranches, and non-urban communities that make up only 16% of our population. Actions taken now to increase agricultural sector jobs can provide economic opportunity and stability for those unemployed youths while helping to feed people. A recent report by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs identifies agriculture development as the core essential for providing greater food security, economic growth, and population well-being. Our active support for food security, including agriculture development, has helped stabilize key regions over the past 60 years. A robust food security strategy, as a part of our overall security strategy, can mitigate the growth of terrorism, build important relationships, and support continued American economic and agricultural prosperity while materially contributing to our Nation’s and the world’s security.

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#### The United States federal government should

#### amend Internal Revenue Code Section 7704 to include renewable energy projects as eligible for Master Limited Partnerships

#### establish a carbon tax that starts at $25 per metric ton and increases at 5% per year

#### increase efforts toward environmental justice

#### increase research and development for innovative technology

#### The first plank scales-up green-tech and out-competes fossil fuels

Maganga 16 - J.D. Candidate, 2016, Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law; M.S., 2012, Villanova University (David, “COMMENT: CONGRESS, GIVE RENEWABLE ENERGY A FAIR FIGHT: PASSAGE OF T HE MASTER LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS PARITY ACT WOULD GIVE RENEWABLE ENERGY THE FINANCIAL FOOTING NEEDED TO INDEPENDENTLY SUCCEED,” 27 Vill. Envtl. L.J. 149)

D. Benefits of Passing the MLP Bill

As previously discussed in earlier sections, passing the MLP bill has substantial advantages for renewable energy, as it would increase renewable energy's access to capital and dramatically reduce renewable energy projects' costs. 201 Extending MLPs to renewable energy projects would open renewable projects to a new class of investors, which would reduce project costs because more access to capital means more bargaining power and options for renewable energy developers. 202

Extending the MLP structure to the renewable energy industry would also give the industry the predictability and stability needed to attract financial capital. 203 Financial capital flocks to stable industries with relatively low risk and predictable rates of return. 204 Renewable energy projects, especially solar and wind projects, generate these stable and predictable rates of return. 205 Allowing these solar and wind projects to use MLPs would permit these projects to take advantage of the abundance of public capital that renewable projects currently lack. 206

[\*173] Amending IRC Section 7704 to include renewable energy would also provide funding permanence not currently found in the tax credit system because it allows renewable developers to always rely on public capital rather than certain-to-expire tax credits. 207 This funding permanence would also allow renewable projects to take advantage of certain tax benefits. 208 The current tax credit regime does not offer renewables funding permanence and long-term renewable investment because Congress's tax credit support always has limited time frames. 209 For instance, Congress letting the wind industry's vital production tax credit expire in 2014 made completing wind projects more expensive as developers no longer have federal support to rely on. 210 Most renewable tax credit programs face these same limitations. 211 Congress recognizing renewables in the IRC would alleviate many of these time frame concerns. 212

Extending MLPs to the renewable energy industry has additional economic and environmental benefits; more capital creates jobs, promotes a more diverse and carbon-neutral energy supply, and democratizes the renewable energy investment process. 213 First, renewable energy projects utilizing MLPs would create more jobs because increased industry capital leads to more development and projects, and subsequently more jobs. 214 Second, the MLP structure would promote a more diverse and carbon-neutral energy supply because renewables would financially compete with the fossil fuel industry. 215 Investors would no longer lose out on better financial opportunities in the fossil fuel sector because renewable [\*174] projects could offer similar rates of return. 216 A comparable rate of return to fossil fuels would increase renewables' sales value and likelihood of completing more renewable projects because renewables are a socially and economically beneficial alternative. 217

Third, extending MLPs to renewable energy can democratize the renewable energy investment process because individuals can invest in renewable energy projects as limited partners through the MLP structure. 218 This is important because, as it currently stands, only wealthier individuals and cash-rich companies have the opportunity to invest in renewable projects. 219 In fact, large cash-rich companies are the main investors for current renewable projects. 220 Individuals looking to make a small contribution, like buying a few shares of a company's stock, cannot offer this kind of monetary support. 221 Extending MLPs to renewables makes this small-scale investing possible and more accessible to all. 222

#### The second plank taxes carbon and slashes electricity sector emissions

**Kaufman et al. 16** - economist for the U.S. Climate Initiative in the Global Climate Program; Michael Obeiter, member of the U.S. Climate Initiative; Eleanor Krause, conducts research and analysis for WRI's Carbon Pricing program through the U.S. Climate Initiative,

(Noah, “PUTTING A PRICE ON CARBON: REDUCING EMISSIONS”, January 2016, <http://admin.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/file/Putting_a_Price_on_Carbon_Emissions.pdf>)

**The electricity sector produces more greenhouse gas emissions than any other sector** in the United States. **Over four billion megawatt hours of electricity are produced each year, approximately two thirds of which are produced using fossil fuels** (U.S. EIA 2015a). **The result is over 2 billion metric tons of annual CO2 -equivalent emissions, which comprise roughly one third of total** U.S. greenhouse gas **emissions** (U.S. EPA 2013a).¶ **For the United States to meet its emissions reduction targets, fossil-fuel usage in the electricity sector must be significantly curtailed**. **Fortunately, there are viable alternatives**. Nuclear energy provides nearly 20 percent of total electricity generation, and renewables provide another 13 percent (U.S. EIA 2015b). The amount of electricity produced by solar and wind energy in particular has increased dramatically in the past decade as the costs of these technologies have plummeted (Feldman et al. 2012), making them a more viable alternative to fossil-fuel generation each year.¶ Still, **absent strong climate change policies, the transition away from fossil fuels is unlikely to occur quickly enough to enable the United States to achieve its emissions targets**. **Accounting for the effects of the Clean Power Plan** (the regulation of greenhouse gas emissions from existing power plants), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (**EPA) forecasts that fossil fuels will still comprise about 60 percent of U.S. electricity generation in 2030**. As explained below, **carbon pricing can have dramatic effects on emissions in the electricity sector**. **As soon as the policy is implemented, high-carbon generating units will operate less often because of higher operating costs. The carbon price will also change decisions about how much electricity to consume, which plants to build, and what efficiency measures to implement**. Simultaneously, **pricing carbon will induce investments in low-carbon technologies, the development of which will be crucial if the United States is to meet its long-term emissions targets**. **A carbon price translates societal costs of climate change into explicit costs to electricity producers**, and the price of electricity will incorporate these additional costs. **In response, some producers and consumers will adjust their behavior to save money**, as they would in response to any other increase in costs. **Unlike in other sectors, where change takes place gradually, the electricity sector has systems in place to adjust to the carbon price virtually immediately.** In any power system, due to the difficulties of storing electricity, producers build sufficient generating capacity to exceed customers’ maximum demand levels. As a result, significantly more resources are usually available to serve customers than are needed on a daily basis. **The resources operating at any given time depend on a multitude of factors**—including geographic location, the costs of starting and stopping power plants, and whether plants are engaged in a bilateral contract—**but no factor is as important as operating costs** (U.S. EIA 2012). In simplified terms, **power plants with the lowest costs of operation are “dispatched”** first, and **those with higher costs are brought on line sequentially as demand increases** (U.S. EIA 2012.) Because demand for electricity is constantly fluctuating, the dispatch of power plants changes frequently as well. **Electricity grids are therefore designed to respond almost immediately to changes in the cost of fuel** (due to a carbon price or any other reason). Figure 2 displays a hypothetical (and greatly oversimplified) electricity grid “dispatch curve,” with and without a carbon price. **Because a carbon price increases the costs of operating fossil-fuel units in proportion to the carbon content of the fuel, the primary consequence** (in the very short run) **is a reduction in generation from coal units, which have the highest emissions rate of any electricity source**. The biggest beneficiaries of this immediate adjustment are natural gas units, whose operating costs (with no carbon price) are higher than coal plants on average (U.S. EIA 2015c) but, because of the lower carbon content of natural gas, pay a carbon price that is only 50 to 60 percent of the price paid by coal plants for the same generation (U.S. EIA 2015d). Once built, the costs of operating nuclear and renewable energy units are typically much lower than those of coal or natural gas plants, so a carbon price will not significantly affect the usage of these units in the very short run (but a carbon price does incentivize the construction of more renewable plants, as explained below). Indeed, changes in operating costs have caused large fluctuations in coal and natural gas usage in recent years (see Box 2 below), confirming the intuition of Figure 2. Short-run Effects of Carbon Pricing in the Electricity Sector In the short run, responses to a carbon price in the electricity sector are somewhat constrained by existing commitments and the lags associated with construction and large purchases. Nevertheless, both producers and consumers will begin to change their behavior in the short run when the costs of carbon-intensive goods and services increase. Owners of electricity generation facilities can retrofit or refurbish fossil-fuel power plants so that they produce the same amount of electricity while burning less carbon. A coal plant operator will find that efficiency alternatives that were too costly without a carbon price are cost-effective with one. A study by Resources for the Future concluded that a carbon price of $10 per metric ton would lead to reductions in emissions rates at coal plants of 1 to 2 percent, with higher prices leading to greater efficiencies (Linn et al. 2014). Because the carbon price also encourages reduced usage of coal-fired power plants, the efficiency gains will lead to emissions reductions (in contrast, policies that mandate efficiency improvements can encourage coal units to operate more often, because more efficient plants are less costly to operate) (Linn et al. 2014). A carbon price also affects electricity consumption decisions. When the price of electricity increases, consumers tend to use less of it (EPRI 2008). Lower demand for electricity will typically lead to a fall in usage of fossil-fuel power plants because they have the highest operating costs. Reduced electricity usage also implies lower electricity bills, and the net effect of a carbon price on electricity bills depends on the extent to which consumers respond to the price change.3 Economists have exhaustively studied the extent to which electricity demand decreases when prices increase (referred to as the “price elasticity of demand”). Table 1 displays the results of recent studies of the short-run (i.e. usually within the first few years, although definitions vary) and longrun responsiveness of U.S. electricity consumers to electricity price changes. In the short run, consumers respond to changes in electricity prices by reducing their demand for electricity, but they do not respond as much as they do over longer periods, when consumers have had the opportunity to invest in more efficient machinery and appliances. Short-run elasticities between −0.1 and −0.4 imply that a 10 percent price increase would only lead to a 1−4 percent reduction in electricity use. Some consumers may at first perceive the price change to be temporary (if they notice it at all), and others may not adjust their behavior until they purchase new equipment or appliances. **In the long run, consumers are more responsive to a carbon price, in large part because they are less constrained by currently installed technologies. The long-run price elasticities in Table 1 imply that a 10 percent electricity price increase will lead to an average of 3 to 12 percent reductions in electricity use**. Such a wide range should not be surprising, considering the diversity of consumers and electricity uses across the economy. **Consumer responses to a carbon price may be larger than are suggested by these empirical estimates based on general electricity price changes**, for several reasons. First, **a carbon price may be perceived as more permanent**, **which could cause consumers to change their behavior rather than wait** for temporary price increases to subside. In addition, **the salience of the tax may coax consumers into fundamentally reducing electricity consumption**, either to save money or for altruistic reasons (Chetty et al. 2007). The UK introduced a “Climate Change Levy” in 2001 that taxed electricity use at roughly 10 percent. **A study of manufacturing plants and other commercial users found that electricity use declined by over 22 percent at plants subject to the tax compared to plants that were eligible to opt out** (Martin et al. 2011), **which implies a much larger response than the elasticities presented above**. (The authors of the study caution that some of this shift away from electricity in the UK may have been toward gas and coal, which were taxed at lower rates, thus offsetting the emissions reductions from the policy.) Finally, **progress with “smart grids” and home energy management products could enable individuals and businesses to respond more efficiently to price signals than they have in the past**. **A carbon price will also have long-run effects on electricity production.** Hundreds of new electricity generating units are brought online each year in the United States, either to meet additional demand for electricity or to replace older generating units (U.S. EIA 2015e). **A carbon price would have a substantial impact on decisions regarding which plants are most cost-effective to build and operate over their lifetimes**. A useful (though imperfect) metric to compare the costs of different types of new power plants is the levelized cost of electricity (LCOE), which depicts the lifetime costs of producing a given amount of electricity, including the costs of building and operating the plant. Figure 4 displays LCOE estimates from the company Lazard, with and without illustrative carbon prices of $25 and $50 per metric ton. Coal plants are omitted because few are likely to be built in the United States going forward.4 Figure 4 shows that **with a carbon price, wind and solar become more competitive with natural gas**, which has been the dominant source of fossil-fuel electricity being added to the grid for more than a decade (Shellenberger et al. 2014). While (unsubsidized) solar would remain more expensive than natural gas in some regions of the country at today’s prices, **this will change if the cost of solar energy continues to fall** (Feldman et al. 2012). **Building wind and solar units in lieu of natural gas plants avoids decades of emissions that would come from those plants** (although it also introduces challenges associated with more unpredictable generation sources). **A carbon price will cause grid operators to dispatch lower-carbon generation alternatives, producers to retrofit existing power plants and build new lower-carbon plants, and consumers to use less electricity**. Taken together, **these actions will lead to substantial emissions reductions in the electricity sector**. U.S. EIA estimated the effects of a national carbon price in its 2014 Annual Energy Outlook Report (U.S. EIA 2014a).5 EIA’s modeling is widely cited and highly influential, and its results are broadly similar to other prominent energy/economic models (Fawcett et al. 2015) (many of which rely in part on information from EIA). **We display results for EIA’s carbon price scenarios that start at a price of $25 per metric ton** (in 2012 dollars) in 2015, **growing at 5 percent per year**. This carbon price trajectory is comparable to certain projections of carbon prices from the cap-and-trade program that passed the U.S. House of Representatives in 2009 (as part of the American Clean Energy and Security Act, commonly known as “Waxman-Markey”) (U.S. EIA 2009). However, the price trajectory is low compared to economists’ and scientists’ best estimates of the carbon prices needed to achieve long-term emissions targets.6 While implementation of a national economy-wide carbon price in the next few years is unlikely, EIA’s results should be viewed as illustrative of how a model of the U.S. economy and energy system forecasts the impacts of a carbon price over the first 10 to 15 years of implementation. ¶ Table 2 displays the results of EIA’s analysis for the electricity sector. **Retail electricity prices increase by 14 percent in 2030** compared to the Reference Case (which differs only in its lack of a carbon price), **leading to a reduction in electricity usage of 6 percent**. Recall that the best estimates of long-run price elasticities from Table 1 range from -0.3 to -1.2, implying that a 14 percent price increase would lead to a decrease in demand between 4 and 17 percent. EIA’s forecast of 6 percent is near the bottom of that range.¶ On the supply side, **the carbon price causes coal use to decline by 85 percent** below the Reference Case level in 2030. (For comparison, EPA projects the Clean Power Plan to cause a reduction in coal usage of 22 to 23 percent by 2030 (U.S. EPA 2015).) Natural gas usage increases rapidly in the initial years to replace this coal generation. **By 2030, with higher carbon prices and more time to build new infrastructure, renewable energy increasingly replaces coal (and** to some extent **natural gas**) generation.¶ **EIA’s forecasts of changes in electricity supply are pessimistic in that the model does not consider the possibility of transformative changes or disruptive technological progress. It assumes that no new technologies provide meaningful competition to fossil fuels, even though a carbon price will increase the incentive for technological progress** (discussed in the next section). In fact, **the recent trends of rapidly decreasing costs of solar and wind technologies are assumed not to continue—for example, the projected costs of building utility-scale solar photovoltaic generating plants are assumed to remain higher through 2025 than typical cost estimates from 2014**.7 Consequently, **the extent to which wind and solar generation is available to replace coal and natural gas generation is constrained in EIA’s analysis, and consumers are not increasingly responsive to price changes due to innovative “smart grid” technologies.**¶ **Still, EIA projects that the carbon price reduces electricity sector emissions in 2030 by over 60 percent** below Reference Case emissions levels. Actual emissions reductions in the sector could be larger or smaller. But **if clean energy technologies continue to improve, it is far more likely that a carbon price will cause larger emissions reductions than are predicted in these conservative forecasts.**

### 1NC

#### Counterplan Text —

#### The United States Federal Government should:

#### 1 — retool customs requirements and encourage digital e-commerce platforms

#### 2 — invest in infrastructure and affordable housing

#### 3 — encourage career-orientated education pathways

#### 4 — encourage usage of new energy technology

#### That solves their ‘Economy’ advantage

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

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

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their disposable income, and their quality of life. Second, the United States needs to build a more responsive labor market with more career paths outside the traditional degree track. Policy makers and the private sector need to work together to establish more apprenticeships and training programs and to leverage technology solutions to connect people with employment opportunities more efficiently. And finally, the United States can ride a wave of innovation to make the energy sector more productive, speeding the allocation of capital to the most promising opportunities. Making the entire economy more energy-efficient would spur capital investment and create household savings that could spur demand growth.

## Case

### 1NC---Turn

#### Growth is unsustainable — pursuit causes extinction and turns war.

Trainer 20, PhD from University of Sydney. Conjoint Lecturer in the School of Social Sciences, University of New South Wales (Ted, The Simpler Way: Collected Writings of Ted Trainer, *The Simplicity Institute*, pp. 3-6)

1. Unsustainability

The way of life we have in rich countries is grossly unsustainable. There is no possibility of all people on Earth ever rising to rich world per capita levels of consumption of energy, minerals, timber, water, food, phosphorous etc. These rates of consumption are generating numer-ous alarming global problems, now threatening our survival and the survival of other species. Most people have no idea of the magnitude of the overshoot – of how far we are beyond sustainable levels of re-source use and environmental impact. If all the estimated 9.8 billion people living on earth in 2050 were to consume resources at the pres-ent per capita rate in rich countries, world annual resource production rates would have to be about eight times as great as they are now.

For instance, the ‘Ecological Footprint’ analysis indicates that the amount of productive land required to provide one person in Australia with food, water, energy and settlement area is about 6.6 ha (Global Footprint Network, 2019). If 9.8 billion people were to live as Australians do, approximately 65 billion ha of productive land would be required. However, the total amount of productive land available is only 12 billion ha. If we assume one third of this should be set aside for nature (see, e.g., Baillie Yang, 2018) the amount available for humans might be about 8 billion ha. In other words, our rich world per capita footprint is about eight times as big as it would ever be possible for all of the world’s people to sustainably share.

Figures for some other items indicate much worse ratios. For instance, the top 10 nations consuming iron ore and bauxite (from which we ob-tain aluminium and steel) have per capita use rates that are respectively around 65 and 90 times the rates for all the other nations (Wiedmann et al., 2015). Mineral ore grades are falling. All people could not rise to present rich world levels of mineral use. The same case can be made with respect to just about all other resources and ecosystem services, such as agricultural land, forests, fisheries, water and biomass.

These simple figures clearly demonstrate the impossibility of all people ever having the material ‘living standards’ we have taken for granted in rich countries like Australia. We are not just a little beyond sustainable levels of resource demand and ecological impact – we are far beyond sustainable levels. Rich world practices, systems and ‘living standards’ are grossly unsustainable, and can never be extended to all the world’s people. Again, few people seem to grasp the magnitude of the over-shoot. We must face up to dramatic reductions in our present per capita levels of production and consumption.

1.1. Now add the absurd commitment to economic growth

The main worry is not the present level of resource use and ecological impact discussed above, it is the level we will rise to given the obsession with constantly increasing the amount of production and consumption. The supreme goal in all countries is to raise incomes, ‘living standards’ and GDP as much as possible, constantly and without any idea of a limit. That is, the most important goal is economic growth.

Consider the implications. If we assume a) a 3% p.a. economic growth, b) a population of 9.8 billion, c) all the world’s people rising to the living standards we in the rich world would have in 2050 given 3% p.a. growth – in that scenario, the total volume of world economic output would be 20 times as great as it is now and doubling every 23 years thereafter.

So even though the present levels of production and consumption are grossly unsustainable, the determination to have continual increase in income and economic output will multiply these towards absurd and impossible levels in coming decades.

Why analyse in terms of 9.8 billion rising to rich world levels? Because a) it is not morally acceptable to assume that they remain much poorer than we are, and b) that’s what everyone aspires to, so we had better think about whether it is viable.

1.2 But what about technical advance?

When confronted by global sustainability problems most people just assume that technical advance and ‘green growth’ will solve them, enabling us to go on living with ever-increasing levels of affluence. They do not realise that the magnitude of the problems rules this out.

The core ‘tech-fix’ faith is that resource demand and environmental impacts can be ‘decoupled’ from economic growth, i.e., that produc-tion and consumption can go on increasing while resource demand is sufficiently reduced. This is extremely implausible (see Part Three of this anthology for more detail). How likely is it that the world’s amount of production could be multiplied by 20 while resource use and environmental impacts are reduced by, say, 50% – i.e., a factor 40 reduction? None of the thirty or more reports over the last 20 years show any global reduction at all; they all show that as GDP rises so do the impacts. The recent review essay by Hickel and Kallis (2019) pro-vides a powerful critique of ‘green growth’ (see also Ward et al., 2016).

1.3 Global problems should be seen in terms of ‘limits to growth’

The ‘limits to growth’ perspective (Meadows et al., 1972) is essential if we are to understand the most serious global problems facing us:

The environmental problem is basically due to the fact that far too much producing and consuming is going on, taking too many resources rom nature and dumping too many wastes back into nature. We are eliminating species mainly because we are taking or ruining so much habitat. The environmental problems cannot be solved in an economy that is geared to providing ever-rising production, con-sumption, ‘living standards’ and GDP (see the next essay, ‘Why this economy must be scrapped’, for more detail).

Third World poverty and underdevelopment are inevitable if a few living in rich countries insist on taking far more of the world’s re-sources than all could have. The Third World can never develop to rich world levels of consumption, because there are far too few re-sources for that. (For more detail on this issue, see the essay ‘Third World development’ in Part Two.)

Conflict and war are inevitable if all aspire to rich world rates of consumption, and if rich countries insist on limitless growth on a planet with limited resources. Rich countries now have to support repressive regimes willing to establish policies that enable our cor-porations to ship out cheap resources, use Third World land for export crops, exploit cheap labour etc. This means we must be ready to get rid of regimes and to invade and run countries that threaten to follow policies contrary to our First World interests. Our rich world living standards could not be as high as they are if a great deal of repression and violence was not taking place, and rich countries contribute significantly to this. If we are determined to remain affluent, we should remain heavily armed! (This issue is developed in the essay in part Two called ‘If you want affluence, prepare for war’.)

Social cohesion is deteriorating and quality of life is being damaged. This is so even in the richest nations, because the supreme goals are raising business turnover, incomes and the GDP, not meet-ing needs, building community and improving the quality of life. (Some details of this decline in quality of life and the benefits of an alternative way to live are discussed in Part Four.)

#### A second recession during COVID guarantees a successful transition — it both forces degrowth policies and makes them more popular.

Kallis et al. 20, ICREA Professor at the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology, Autonomous University of Barcelona, With: Susan Paulson, Giacomo D’Alisa, Federico Demaria (Giorgios, “The case for degrowth in a time of pandemic,” *openDemocracy*, 5/14/2020, <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/oureconomy/case-degrowth-time-pandemic/>)

The pandemic has lain bare the fragility of existing economic systems. Wealthy nations have more than enough resources to cover public health and basic needs during a crisis, and could weather declines in non-essential parts of the economy by reallocating work and resources to essential ones. Yet the way current economic systems are organized around constant circulation, any decline in market activity threatens systemic collapse, provoking generalized unemployment and impoverishment. It doesn’t have to be this way. To be more resilient to crises – pandemic, climatic, financial, or political – we need to build systems capable of scaling back production in ways that do not cause loss of livelihood or life. We make the case for degrowth. Conservative outlets such as [Forbes](https://www.forbes.com/sites/wlf/2020/04/29/still-against-degrowth/), the [Financial Times](https://www.ft.com/content/0b171892-8afd-11ea-9dcb-fe6871f4145a), or the [Spectator](https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-coronavirus-crisis-reveals-the-misery-of-degrowth-), have been pronouncing that the coronavirus crisis reveals “the misery of degrowth”. But what is happening during the pandemic [is not degrowth](https://twitter.com/DegrowthMemes/status/1255783275987177473). Degrowth is a project of living meaningfully, enjoying simple pleasures, commoning, sharing and relating more with others, and working less, in more equal societies. The goal of degrowth is to purposefully slow things down in order to minimize harm to humans and earth systems and to reduce exploitation. The current situation is terrible, not because carbon emissions are declining, which is good, but because many lives are lost; it is terrible not because GDPs are going down, to which we are indifferent, but because processes in place to protect livelihoods when growth falters are grossly insufficient and unjust. We would like to see societies become slower by design, not disaster. This pandemic is a growth-induced disaster, harbinger of more to come. Drives for growth have accelerated global flows of material and money, paving the way for lightning-fast circulation of bodies and diseases. The economic policies and social arrangements proposed by degrowth offer ways to make such situations more liveable and just, to emerge stronger and better post-crisis, and to reorient practices and politics towards care and community solidarity. The end of growth will not necessarily involve a smooth transition. It may very well be unplanned, unwilled, and messy, in conditions not of our own choosing. Conditions like the ones we are living through now. History often evolves with punctuations; periods of seeming paralysis can reach a tipping point, when unexpected events open new possibilities and violently close others. The COVID-19 pandemic is such an event. Suddenly, things take radical new directions, and the unthinkable becomes thinkable, for better or for worse. Severe economic depression led to Roosevelt’s New Deal, and also to Hitler’s Third Reich. What are the possibilities and dangers now? Amid this pandemic, many scientific, political, and moral authorities are communicating the message that caring for people’s health and wellbeing should come before profit, and that is great. A resurgence of a care ethic that we advocate in our forthcoming book [The Case for Degrowth](https://politybooks.com/bookdetail/?isbn=9781509535620) is evident in the willingness of people to stay home to protect their elders, and in the spirit of duty and sacrifice among care and health workers. Of course, many stay home also because they fear the virus and worry about themselves, or to avoid police fines. And many care workers go to work because they must earn a living. Acting collectively against crises, pandemic, or climate change requires such combinations of sacrifice and solidarity, self and collective interest, government interventions and people’s participation. Deep inequalities are coming into play in new ways. Residents of some countries are suffering different, and sometimes more severe, hardships than those of others, as are those who are deprived of full citizenship in prisons, migrant labor camps, and refugee settlements. Within each country, actors differentiated by gender, racial, socioeconomic, and occupational positions suffer different vulnerabilities in the face of the disease, and of the economic downturns that follow. Data from countries around the world show that [COVID tends to be much more severe and deadly in men](https://www.livescience.com/why-covid-19-more-severe-men.html) than in women. US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show a disproportionate burden of illness and death among [racial and ethnic minority groups](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/racial-ethnic-minorities.html). Nurses, health aids, and caretakers, positions in which women prevail, are especially vulnerable to infection. As are millions of men working in essential jobs including sanitation, trucking, taxi-driving, and meat packing. These jobs, in very large majority performed by men, were already among the most dangerous occupations before adding exposure to coronavirus. While some have the luxury of sheltering at home, others must choose between unemployment without an adequate safety net and working at jobs that expose them to the coronavirus. Yet, unless whole populations are protected, not even the wealthiest are fully safe from contagion. In this crisis, like others before, [people have mobilized and self-organized](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/mar/31/virus-neighbours-covid-19) where businesses and governments have failed to provide for their needs – from mutual aid groups delivering food and medicines for elders, to groups of doctors, engineers, and hackers collaborating to 3-D print components for oxygen ventilators, to students babysitting the children of doctors and nurses. The proliferation of caring and commoning endeavors, which form the bedrock of the degrowth societies we envision, are all the more commendable given the contagious nature of the virus. After the pandemic is over, and the difficult path of economic reconstruction starts, this resurgent dynamism of commoning and care will be vital. Positive impulses among individuals and grassroots networks are necessary but not sufficient for sustained change. We need governments to secure healthcare for all, protect the environment, and provide economic safety nets. [The degrowth-supporting policies](https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/can-we-prosper-without-growth-10-policy-proposals/) we advocate were necessary before the pandemic, and are more so during and after: a Green New Deal and public investment program, work-sharing, a basic care income, universal public services, and support for community economies. So is the reorganization of public finance through measures including carbon fees, caps on wealth and high incomes, taxes on natural resource use, and pollution. Whereas degrowth debates have traditionally focused on demobilizing resource-intensive and ecologically damaging aspects of current economies, [pandemic responses](https://tribunemag.co.uk/2020/03/the-anti-wartime-economy) deal with demobilizing those aspects not immediately essential for sustaining life. We coincide in facing the fundamental challenge of managing political economies without growth during and after the pandemic: how to demobilize parts of the capitalist economy while securing the provisioning of basic goods and services, experimenting with resource-light ways of enjoying ourselves, and finding collective meanings in life. Radical proposals are already being considered and selectively adopted across the political spectrum as they provide concrete solutions amid the pandemic. Companies and governments have reduced working hours and implemented work-sharing; different forms of basic income are being debated; financial measures have been instituted to subsidize workers in the quarantine period and after businesses close; an international campaign for [care income](https://globalwomenstrike.net/) has been launched; governments have engaged the productive apparatus to secure vital supplies and services; and moratoriums are being considered or imposed on rent, mortgage, and debt payments. There is growing understanding that vast government spending will be required. The world will change after the pandemic, and there will be struggles over which paths to take. People will have to fight to direct change toward more equitable and resilient societies that have gentler impacts on humans and natural environments. Powerful actors will try to reconstitute status quo arrangements, and to shift costs to those with less power. It takes organizing and a confluence of alliances and circumstances to ensure that it won’t be the environment and the workers who pay the bill, but those who profited most from the growth that preceded this disaster. [Degrowth is not forced deprivation](https://vocabulary.degrowth.org/), but an aspiration to secure enough for everyone to live with dignity and without fear; to experience friendship, love, and health; to be able to give and receive care; to enjoy leisure and nature, and to legitimize a life that it is also an experience of interdependence and vulnerability. This goal will not be met by subsidizing fossil fuel companies, airlines, cruise ships, hotels, and tourism mega-businesses. Instead, states need to finance Green New Deals and rebuild their health and care infrastructures, creating jobs in a just transition to economies that are less environmentally damaging. As oil prices fall, fossil fuels should be taxed heavily, raising funds to support green and social investments, and to provide tax breaks and dividends to working people. Rather than using public money to bail out corporations and banks, we urge the establishment of a [basic care income](https://comune-info.net/reddito-di-cura/) that will help people and communities to reconstruct their lives and livelihoods. These fundamental questions related to the strategies for socio-ecological transformation will be at the center of the [international Vienna degrowth conference](https://www.degrowthvienna2020.org/en/landing-page/) taking place as an online event in late May 2020. A good starting point are the principles for the recovery of the economy and the basis of creating a just society contained in the open letter [‘Degrowth: New Roots for the Economy’](https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/oureconomy/degrowth-new-roots-economy/). This crisis arguably opens up more dangers than it does possibilities. We worry about the politics of fear that the coronavirus pandemic engenders, the intensification of surveillance and control of peoples’ movements, xenophobia and blame of others, as well as home isolation that curbs commoning and political organizing. Once measures such as curfews, quarantines, rule-by-decree, border controls, or election postponements are taken, they can easily become part of the arsenal of political possibility, opening dystopian horizons. To counter these risks, degrowth motivates and guides us to re-found societies on the commons of mutual aid and care, orienting collective pursuits away from growth and toward wellbeing and equity. These are not just lofty aspirations; in our forthcoming book [The Case for Degrowth](https://politybooks.com/bookdetail/?isbn=9781509535620) we identify everyday practices and concrete policies to start building the world we want today, together with political strategies to support synergy among these efforts in the construction of equitable and low-impact societies. This book is unlike any other on degrowth, in that it is the first to try to address the hard question of ‘how to’ in the current political conjuncture. Before the pandemic, we had to work hard to convince people of the case for degrowth. Our job may be somewhat easier now amid such tangible evidence that the current system is crumbling under its own weight. As we embark on the second major global economic crisis in a dozen years, perhaps some of us will be more willing to question the wisdom of producing and consuming more and more, just to keep the system going. The time is ripe for us to refocus on what really matters: not GDP, but the health and wellbeing of our people and our planet.

#### Economic decline will be peaceful — COVID proves.

Walt 20, Belfer professor of international relations at Harvard University. (Stephen, May 13th, “Will a Global Depression Trigger Another World War?” *Foreign Policy*, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/13/coronavirus-pandemic-depression-economy-world-war/>, Accessed 04-20-2021)

For these reasons, the pandemic itself may be conducive to peace. But what about the relationship between broader economic conditions and the likelihood of war? Might a few leaders still convince themselves that provoking a crisis and going to war could still advance either long-term national interests or their own political fortunes? Are the other paths by which a deep and sustained economic downturn might make serious global conflict more likely?

One familiar argument is the so-called diversionary (or “scapegoat”) theory of war. It suggests that leaders who are worried about their popularity at home will try to divert attention from their failures by provoking a crisis with a foreign power and maybe even using force against it. Drawing on this logic, some Americans now worry that President Donald Trump will decide to attack a country like Iran or Venezuela in the run-up to the presidential election and especially if he thinks he’s likely to lose.

This outcome strikes me as unlikely, even if one ignores the logical and empirical flaws in the theory itself. War is always a gamble, and should things go badly—even a little bit—it would hammer the last nail in the coffin of Trump’s declining fortunes. Moreover, none of the countries Trump might consider going after pose an imminent threat to U.S. security, and even his staunchest supporters may wonder why he is wasting time and money going after Iran or Venezuela at a moment when thousands of Americans are dying preventable deaths at home. Even a successful military action won’t put Americans back to work, create the sort of testing-and-tracing regime that competent governments around the world have been able to implement already, or hasten the development of a vaccine. The same logic is likely to guide the decisions of other world leaders too.

Another familiar folk theory is “military Keynesianism.” War generates a lot of economic demand, and it can sometimes lift depressed economies out of the doldrums and back toward prosperity and full employment. The obvious case in point here is World War II, which did help the U.S economy finally escape the quicksand of the Great Depression. Those who are convinced that great powers go to war primarily to keep Big Business (or the arms industry) happy are naturally drawn to this sort of argument, and they might worry that governments looking at bleak economic forecasts will try to restart their economies through some sort of military adventure.

I doubt it. It takes a really big war to generate a significant stimulus, and it is hard to imagine any country launching a large-scale war—with all its attendant risks—at a moment when debt levels are already soaring. More importantly, there are lots of easier and more direct ways to stimulate the economy—infrastructure spending, unemployment insurance, even “helicopter payments”—and launching a war has to be one of the least efficient methods available. The threat of war usually spooks investors too, which any politician with their eye on the stock market would be loath to do.

Economic downturns can encourage war in some special circumstances, especially when a war would enable a country facing severe hardships to capture something of immediate and significant value. Saddam Hussein’s decision to seize Kuwait in 1990 fits this model perfectly: The Iraqi economy was in terrible shape after its long war with Iran; unemployment was threatening Saddam’s domestic position; Kuwait’s vast oil riches were a considerable prize; and seizing the lightly armed emirate was exceedingly easy to do. Iraq also owed Kuwait a lot of money, and a hostile takeover by Baghdad would wipe those debts off the books overnight. In this case, Iraq’s parlous economic condition clearly made war more likely.

Yet I cannot think of any country in similar circumstances today. Now is hardly the time for Russia to try to grab more of Ukraine—if it even wanted to—or for China to make a play for Taiwan, because the costs of doing so would clearly outweigh the economic benefits. Even conquering an oil-rich country—the sort of greedy acquisitiveness that Trump occasionally hints at—doesn’t look attractive when there’s a vast glut on the market. I might be worried if some weak and defenseless country somehow came to possess the entire global stock of a successful coronavirus vaccine, but that scenario is not even remotely possible.

If one takes a longer-term perspective, however, a sustained economic depression could make war more likely by strengthening fascist or xenophobic political movements, fueling protectionism and hypernationalism, and making it more difficult for countries to reach mutually acceptable bargains with each other. The history of the 1930s shows where such trends can lead, although the economic effects of the Depression are hardly the only reason world politics took such a deadly turn in the 1930s. Nationalism, xenophobia, and authoritarian rule were making a comeback well before COVID-19 struck, but the economic misery now occurring in every corner of the world could intensify these trends and leave us in a more war-prone condition when fear of the virus has diminished.

On balance, however, I do not think that even the extraordinary economic conditions we are witnessing today are going to have much impact on the likelihood of war. Why? First of all, if depressions were a powerful cause of war,

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there would be a lot more of the latter. To take one example, the United States has suffered 40 or more recessions since the country was founded, yet it has fought perhaps 20 interstate wars, most of them unrelated to the state of the economy. To paraphrase the economist Paul Samuelson’s famous quip about the stock market, if recessions were a powerful cause of war, they would have predicted “nine out of the last five (or fewer).”

Second, states do not start wars unless they believe they will win a quick and relatively cheap victory. As John Mearsheimer showed in his classic book Conventional Deterrence, national leaders avoid war when they are convinced it will be long, bloody, costly, and uncertain. To choose war, political leaders have to convince themselves they can either win a quick, cheap, and decisive victory or achieve some limited objective at low cost. Europe went to war in 1914 with each side believing it would win a rapid and easy victory, and Nazi Germany developed the strategy of blitzkrieg in order to subdue its foes as quickly and cheaply as possible. Iraq attacked Iran in 1980 because Saddam believed the Islamic Republic was in disarray and would be easy to defeat, and George W. Bush invaded Iraq in 2003 convinced the war would be short, successful, and pay for itself.

The fact that each of these leaders miscalculated badly does not alter the main point: No matter what a country’s economic condition might be, its leaders will not go to war unless they think they can do so quickly, cheaply, and with a reasonable probability of success.

Third, and most important, the primary motivation for most wars is the desire for security, not economic gain. For this reason, the odds of war increase when states believe the long-term balance of power may be shifting against them, when they are convinced that adversaries are unalterably hostile and cannot be accommodated, and when they are confident they can reverse the unfavorable trends and establish a secure position if they act now. The historian A.J.P. Taylor once observed that “every war between Great Powers [between 1848 and 1918] … started as a preventive war, not as a war of conquest,” and that remains true of most wars fought since then.

The bottom line: Economic conditions (i.e., a depression) may affect the broader political environment in which decisions for war or peace are made, but they are only one factor among many and rarely the most significant. Even if the COVID-19 pandemic has large, lasting, and negative effects on the world economy—as seems quite likely—it is not likely to affect the probability of war very much, especially in the short term.

# 2NC

## Counterplan

## Warming

### 2NC ⁠— Solvency

#### Granting MLP eligibility solves warming---scales up quickly

Maganga 16 - J.D. Candidate, 2016, Villanova University Charles Widger School of Law; M.S., 2012, Villanova University (David, “COMMENT: CONGRESS, GIVE RENEWABLE ENERGY A FAIR FIGHT: PASSAGE OF T HE MASTER LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS PARITY ACT WOULD GIVE RENEWABLE ENERGY THE FINANCIAL FOOTING NEEDED TO INDEPENDENTLY SUCCEED,” 27 Vill. Envtl. L.J. 149)

C. MLP Structure

MLPs blend the advantages of a partnership, limited partnership, and corporation into one distinct corporate entity. 80 MLPs incorporate some elements of partnerships because they require a general partner to own at least two percent of the business and to be personally liable for its contract and tort liability. 81 MLPs also function like limited partnerships, however, because they allow limited partners to invest money into the business, with personal liability limited to each limited partner's financial investment. 82 Finally, MLPs have the fundraising advantages of traditional public corporations because they trade on national exchanges. 83 MLPs are different from traditional limited partnerships because traditional limited partnerships do not have access to all of the capital available on national exchanges. 84 Traditional limited partnerships have much smaller investor pools, thus making capital more difficult to acquire. 85 Conversely, MLPs have a much broader potential investor pool because they can raise money from any investor willing to invest. 86 Additionally, MLPs also make investors more comfortable investing because investors can track their capital performance on national exchanges, whereas they cannot in a typical private investment. 87 MLPs do not pay entity-level taxes. 88 MLPs are only required to pay taxes on earnings at the individual investor level, like a partnership [\*159] or limited partnership. 89 Thus, MLPs avoid the expensive double-taxation that burdens corporations. 90 This tax savings is a subtle advantage to MLPs that compounds over time. 91 By avoiding entity-level taxes, MLPs can retain more capital than corporations and distribute more capital to investors. 92 Investors prefer investments which provide a high rate of return, thus avoiding entity-level taxation gives MLPs a strong fundraising advantage over corporations. 93 III. Background To understand why MLPs trump any current federal renewable financial incentives, it is helpful to understand their history in the U.S. and why Congress has limited and continues to limit their formation. 94 This section explains how Congress's current system works, how the current system has unintended negative consequences, and how Congress can remedy the situation by extending MLPs to renewables. 95 A. MLP Structure in the U.S. Arguably, many American businesses would take advantage of the preferential MLP structure if given the opportunity. 96 Unfortunately, the significant financial advantages of the MLP structure are only offered to a limited number of congressionally-preferred businesses [\*160] structures. 97 Since the rise in popularity of MLPs in the early 1980s, Congress has substantially limited their use. 98 In 1981, Apache Oil (Apache) created the first MLP by combining thirty-three oil and gas limited partnerships into one large partnership. 99 Apache's new corporate structure raised capital like a traditional corporation; Apache, however, only paid taxes at the individual investor level. 100 Thus, Apache's newly formed MLP structure revealed the substantial tax savings MLPs offer to the investment community. 101 On a dollar-per-dollar basis, MLP tax savings continually prove to be substantial when compared to a traditional corporation. 102 For example, a traditional corporation with ten thousand dollars in pre-tax net income pays over five thousand dollars in entity and shareholder level federal income taxes, while an MLP with the same net income pays only four thousand dollars in federal income taxes. 103 Tax advantages like these allow the MLP to save substantial sums of money each year. 104 Several financially-savvy companies noticed Apache's MLP structure and chose to follow suit, taking advantage of the tax and fundraising advantages MLPs provide. 105 Many different industries started using MLPs including hotels, amusement parks, and sports teams. 106 In 1987, Congress recognized MLPs could potentially destroy the country's tax base, and subsequently decided to take action. 107 [\*161] Congress's worry derived from the fact that MLPs' tax savings were readily apparent to nearly all companies. 108 Consequently, to stop the growth of MLPs, Congress placed substantial limitations on which companies could use them. 109 Despite the limitations, Congress made exceptions for the real estate and fossil fuel industries. 110 Congress passed the MLP limitations and related exceptions as part of its 1987 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act. 111 This Act substantially limited MLP usage, made narrow exceptions for powerful industries as a result of effective lobbying, and specifically excluded renewable energy companies from ever using MLPs. 112 At the time, congressional staffers who drafted the 1987 legislation had no idea how beneficial the legislation would be for fossil fuels, and they consequently did not appreciate how the legislation would stifle renewable energy development. 113 B. The Current State of Investing in Renewable Energy Projects Investing in renewable energy has improved recently due to technological improvements and discounts in production. 114 For example, Chinese-manufactured solar panels have drastically reduced the per watt installation cost of solar energy. 115 In 2011, Chinese [\*162] solar panels cost about $ 1.31 per watt to install; by 2014, the same Chinese solar panels only cost $ 0.50 per watt to install. 116 These cost savings can be attributed to cost reductions and efficiencies in solar production. 117 Unfortunately, these important technological advances and substantial cost savings have not been as impactful as possible because the renewable energy industry still needs more financial capital to accomplish its goals. 118 Financial capital for renewable energy projects, for the most part, remains prohibitively expensive because renewables cannot take advantage of inexpensive public capital like their fossil fuel competitors. 119 As a result, the renewable energy industry still relies on expensive private capital from individual companies and investors. 120 The renewable energy industry desperately needs financial innovation for two reasons: (1) to allow renewable energy to compete with fossil fuels; and (2) to increase future renewable energy capacity development. 121 [\*163] Renewable energy project financing is currently limited, scarce, and expensive. 122 Most renewable energy project funding comes from Congress's 2009 American Recovery and Reconstruction Act in the form of tax credits and accelerated depreciation. 123 The Act's funding, however, is depleting, and Congress is reluctant to pass any additional renewable energy tax credits. 124 For example, in 2014, Congress let the wind power industry's vital production tax credit expire. 125 Congress could do the same with the solar industry's investment tax credit in 2016. 126 Uncertainty surrounding the future of renewable energy tax credits is an inefficient way for the government to support renewables. 127 The federal government's tax credit and accelerated depreciation incentives are also inefficient because most corporations, including renewable developers, do not have large enough tax liabilities to take advantage of the tax credits or large enough taxable incomes to take advantage of renewable projects' accelerated depreciation. 128 To utilize a one-dollar tax credit, a corporation [\*164] must have a one-dollar tax liability to offset. 129 Renewable developers face significant financial expenditures when beginning new projects, including purchasing equipment and materials like solar panels, wind turbines, and project engineers. 130 Considering renewable projects' substantial upfront costs, it could take years for a project to be profitable and generate enough tax liability to take advantage of federal tax credits. 131 Thus, developers will not receive any financial benefits until their projects generate enough profit to offset their losses so they actually have federal tax liability. 132 The federal government's tax credit support of renewables does not match the modern realities of renewable project development. 133 Developers need cash rebates up front to help pay renewable projects' large fixed costs including solar panels, wind turbines, and engineering design. 134 Congress's current tax regime fails because it provides developers with financial benefits too late in projects' life cycles. 135 A similar problem occurs with accelerated depreciation. 136 Accelerated deprecation allows renewable energy developers to reduce their projects' net income by a higher than usual depreciation [\*165] allowance and thereby creates a similar problem. 137 For example, a corporate rooftop solar array may cost $ 100,000 and have an expected life of twenty years. 138 Through accelerated depreciation, Congress allows the developer to recoup the cost of this income-producing asset with a yearly tax deduction from the project's net income. 139 Under the customary straight-line depreciation method, Congress allows this renewable energy developer to deduct five thousand dollars per year from his project's net income for twenty years ($ 100,000/20 years). 140 Under the more favorable accelerated depreciation regime, Congress allows this same renewable developer to take substantial depreciation deductions early in the project's life cycle. 141 For example, the developer can deduct twenty thousand dollars per year from the project's net income for the project's first five years. 142 Based on the accelerated cost recovery, the renewable developer can use additional funds to invest elsewhere, such as in more renewable energy projects. 143 While these depreciation deductions are certainly beneficial, they will not be useful unless the renewable developer's project has enough taxable income to reduce. 144 Tax deductions like these can only be used when the taxpayer has sufficient taxable income to offset. 145 Renewable projects usually do not have substantial taxable incomes early in the project's life cycle because of all the expensive capital investment. 146 [\*166] In response to Congress's well-intentioned - but poorly designed - renewable incentives, investment professionals created a "tax-equity" market. 147 The tax-equity market emerged as a solution to renewable energy developers' funding problems. 148 In this market, renewable energy developers team with large, multi-national corporations that provide up-front renewable project funds in exchange for the renewable energy project's tax benefits. 149 The large corporations partnering with renewable developers have the required substantial taxable incomes and tax liabilities to use the project's accelerated depreciation and tax credit benefits. 150 Renewable developers trade their project's tax benefits for the multi-national corporation's financial capital. 151 While efficient in theory, the tax-equity market has proven to be prohibitively expensive and an ineffective way to support renewable developers. 152 For example, most tax equity investors are large multi-national banks looking to offset their own substantial tax liabilities and incomes. 153 These banks provide renewable developers with the up- front capital required, but they charge steep and unaffordable prices. 154 Tax-equity investing also imposes wasteful administrative spending for both the renewable developer and the multi-national corporation entering the deal. 155 In order to complete a tax-equity project, renewable developers and the interested multi-national corporation must hire expensive professionals such [\*167] as tax accountants and attorneys to ensure the deal is structured so the multi-national corporation takes advantage of all the project's tax benefits. 156 While Congress may not have intended the emergence of a tax-equity market, its current renewable support regime has led to renewable developers paying exorbitant prices for socially, environmentally, and economically beneficial projects. 157 Unlike its treatment of renewable developers, the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) allows fossil fuel developers to take advantage of the MLP structure and access inexpensive public capital markets cheaply. 158 Fossil fuel developers also save on transaction costs by avoiding the expensive professional fees associated with tax-equity deals in the renewable energy sector. 159 IV. Analysis: Congress Must Act and Extend MLPs to Renewables This section demonstrates that MLPs are the superior choice for the renewable energy industry by showing their ability to generate substantial returns on investment (ROI). 160 Furthermore, this section highlights Congress's unexplainable reasons for denying MLPs to renewables and illustrates how Congress can alleviate all these concerns by extending MLPs to renewables. 161 This section, however, also explains why these potential shortcomings are insignificant. 162 This section concludes by addressing the potential shortcomings associated with extending MLPs to renewable developers. 163 A. MLPs Generate Substantial ROIs and Savings Renewables Need MLP investments outperform most traditional equity investments. 164 According to one commentator, "$ 1,000 invested [ten] years ago in MLPs would have a value of $ 4,924, while $ 1,000 invested in Standard & Poor's stock index over the same period would be worth $ 2,116." 165 MLPs generate substantial ROIs because their structure allows companies to distribute nearly all of the profits to their investors. 166 MLPs are thus a popular investment for investors and companies. 167 MLPs can also potentially save the renewable energy industry substantial sums of money. 168 Industry experts estimate that total wind project costs would drop by forty percent if the renewable energy industry utilized MLPs. 169 MLPs facilitate substantial reductions in project capital costs because their structure increases companies' access to capital supply. 170 This increased capital supply is the result of growing national interest to invest in MLPs due to their proven track record and substantial returns. 171 The mass of interested investors allows MLPs to pay less to borrow money for their capital supply. 172 The presence of more investors drives down the cost of capital because the bargaining power shifts from the individual [\*169] investor to the renewable developer, who is now capable of completing more projects. 173 B. The Federal Government's Role and the Extension of the MLP Structure to the Renewable Energy Industry Congress determines who may take advantage of the MLP structure. 174 Congress exercised this authority in 1987 when it passed IRC Section 7704, which limits MLP usage to companies who derive ninety percent or more of their income from congressionally-specified sources. 175 The legislation's qualifying source language includes income derived from most natural resources except for renewable energy. 176 In 2008, Congress amended Section 7704's definition of "qualifying income" to include carbon dioxide, ethanol, biodiesel, and other alternative fuels. 177 Congress, however, expressly refused to address renewable energy, waiting until its planned comprehensive tax reform. 178 Congress's refusal to extend the MLP structure to renewable energy has widespread environmental implications. 179 Congress's decision to keep MLPs from renewable energy functions essentially as a "reverse carbon tax" by incentivizing investors to continue to invest in tax-preferred fossil fuel MLPs rather than renewable energy. 180 Current industry investment statistics support this theory. 181 Since 2008, investors have poured hundreds of billions of dollars into traditional fossil fuel companies, bolstering an already strong industry, while ignoring the capital-hungry renewable energy industry. 182 Congress's refusal to extend the MLP structure to the renewable energy industry discretely perpetuates the country's continued [\*170] reliance on fossil fuels. 183 Congress has the power to change this trajectory, but most legislators refuse to address the issue; they instead prefer to wait until Congress fully addresses all tax issues through comprehensive tax reform. 184

## Income Inequality

### O/V ⁠— 2NC

#### \*Only warming kills everyone.

McDonald ‘19 (Samuel Miller McDonald is a writer and geography PhD student at University of Oxford studying the intersection of grassroots movements and energy transition; 1/4/19; “Deathly Salvation”; *The Trouble*; https://www.the-trouble.com/content/2019/1/4/deathly-salvation)

A devastating fact of climate collapse is that there may be a silver lining to the mushroom cloud. First, it should be noted that a nuclear exchange does not inevitably result in apocalyptic loss of life. Nuclear winter—the idea that firestorms would make the earth uninhabitable—is based on shaky science. There’s no reliable model that can determine how many megatons would decimate agriculture or make humans extinct. Nations have already detonated 2,476 nuclear devices. An exchange that shuts down the global economy but stops short of human extinction may be the only blade realistically likely to cut the carbon knot we’re trapped within. It would decimate existing infrastructures, providing an opportunity to build new energy infrastructure and intervene in the current investments and subsidies keeping fossil fuels alive. In the near term, emissions would almost certainly rise as militaries are some of the world’s largest emitters. Given what we know of human history, though, conflict may be the only way to build the mass social cohesion necessary for undertaking the kind of huge, collective action needed for global sequestration and energy transition. Like the 20th century’s world wars, a nuclear exchange could serve as an economic leveler. It could provide justification for nationalizing energy industries with the interest of shuttering fossil fuel plants and transitioning to renewables and, uh, nuclear energy. It could shock us into reimagining a less ~~suicidal~~ civilization, one that dethrones the death-cult zealots who are currently in power. And it may toss particulates into the atmosphere sufficient to block out some of the solar heat helping to drive global warming. Or it may have the opposite effects. Who knows? What we do know is that humans can survive and recover from war, probably even a nuclear one. Humans cannot recover from runaway climate change. Nuclear war is not an inevitable extinction event; six degrees of warming is.

### AT: Cap Good---Poverty

#### Poverty is increasing because of capitalism---they put a happy face on colonialism.

Hickel 19, An academic at the University of London and a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (Jason, January 29th, “Bill Gates says poverty is decreasing. He couldn’t be more wrong,” *The Guardian*, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jan/29/bill-gates-davos-global-poverty-infographic-neoliberal>, Accessed 07-12-2021)

There are a number of problems with this graph, though. First of all, real data on poverty has only been collected since 1981. Anything before that is extremely sketchy, and to go back as far as 1820 is meaningless. Roser draws on a dataset that was never intended to describe poverty, but rather inequality in the distribution of world GDP – and that for only a limited range of countries. There is no actual research to bolster the claims about long-term poverty. It’s not science; it’s social media.

What Roser’s numbers actually reveal is that the world went from a situation where most of humanity had no need of money at all to one where today most of humanity struggles to survive on extremely small amounts of money. The graph casts this as a decline in poverty, but in reality what was going on was a process of dispossession that bulldozed people into the capitalist labour system, during the enclosure movements in Europe and the colonisation of the global south.

Prior to colonisation, most people lived in subsistence economies where they enjoyed access to abundant commons – land, water, forests, livestock and robust systems of sharing and reciprocity. They had little if any money, but then they didn’t need it in order to live well – so it makes little sense to claim that they were poor. This way of life was violently destroyed by colonisers who forced people off the land and into European-owned mines, factories and plantations, where they were paid paltry wages for work they never wanted to do in the first place.

In other words, Roser’s graph illustrates a story of coerced proletarianisation. It is not at all clear that this represents an improvement in people’s lives, as in most cases we know that the new income people earned from wages didn’t come anywhere close to compensating for their loss of land and resources, which were of course gobbled up by colonisers. Gates’s favourite infographic takes the violence of colonisation and repackages it as a happy story of progress.

But that’s not all that’s wrong here. The trend that the graph depicts is based on a poverty line of $1.90 (£1.44) per day, which is the equivalent of what $1.90 could buy in the US in 2011. It’s obscenely low by any standard, and we now have piles of evidence that people living just above this line have terrible levels of malnutrition and mortality. Earning $2 per day doesn’t mean that you’re somehow suddenly free of extreme poverty. Not by a long shot.

Scholars have been calling for a more reasonable poverty line for many years. Most agree that people need a minimum of about $7.40 per day to achieve basic nutrition and normal human life expectancy, plus a half-decent chance of seeing their kids survive their fifth birthday. And many scholars, including Harvard economist Lant Pritchett, insist that the poverty line should be set even higher, at $10 to $15 per day.

So what happens if we measure global poverty at the low end of this more realistic spectrum – $7.40 per day, to be extra conservative? Well, we see that the number of people living under this line has increased dramatically since measurements began in 1981, reaching some 4.2 billion people today. Suddenly the happy Davos narrative melts away.

Moreover, the few gains that have been made have virtually all happened in one place: China. It is disingenuous, then, for the likes of Gates and Pinker to claim these gains as victories for Washington-consensus neoliberalism. Take China out of the equation, and the numbers look even worse. Over the four decades since 1981, not only has the number of people in poverty gone up, the proportion of people in poverty has remained stagnant at about 60%. It would be difficult to overstate the suffering that these numbers represent.

This is a ringing indictment of our global economic system, which is failing the vast majority of humanity. Our world is richer than ever before, but virtually all of it is being captured by a small elite. Only 5% of all new income from global growth trickles down to the poorest 60% – and yet they are the people who produce most of the food and goods that the world consumes, toiling away in those factories, plantations and mines to which they were condemned 200 years ago. It is madness – and no amount of mansplaining from billionaires will be adequate to justify it.

### Impact Run — 2NC

#### Growth makes catastrophic disease inevitable — extinction.

Morand & Walther 20 (\*Serge Morand; PhD, disease ecologist @ Kasetsart University; \*\*Bruno A. Walther; DPhil, Taipei Medical University; 4/20/20; “The accelerated infectious disease risk in the Anthropocene: more outbreaks and wider global spread”; pg. 3-4; Accessible at: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.04.20.049866>) \*”to” added to preserve grammatical integrity, brackets denote a change

We here want to draw attention to another important and noteworthy feature of the Anthropocene which greatly affects public health, human well-being, and economic performance. These findings are especially pertinent as the world reels from the health, social and economic impact of the current SARS-CoV-2 pandemic (El Zowalaty and Järhult, 2020; Ghebreyesus and Swaminathan, 2020; Lorusso et al., 2020). The increasing connectivity of human populations due to international trade and travel (Guimerà et al., 2005; Colizza et al., 2006; Brockmann and Helbing, 2013; Gabrielli et al., 2019), the rapid growth of the transport of wild and domesticated animals worldwide (Rosen and Smith, 2010; Schneider, 2012; Rohr et al., 2019; Levitt, 2020), and other factors such as the increasing encroachment of human populations on hitherto isolated wild animal populations through loss and fragmentation of wild habitats (Patz et al., 2004; Despommier et al., 2006; Pongsiri et al., 2009; Myers et al., 2013) have led to a great acceleration of infectious disease risks, e.g., the increase in emerging infectious diseases and drug-resistant microbes since 1940 (Jones et al., 2008) and the increase in the number of disease outbreaks since 1980 (Smith et al., 2014). To expand the previous analysis (Smith et al., 2014) to the beginning of the Anthropocene, we investigated whether the number of disease outbreaks has increased since the Second World War. In addition, we examined whether the global pattern of infectious disease outbreaks changed possibly due [to] the increasing connectivity of human populations. In other words, have the disease outbreaks become more globalized in the sense that these outbreaks are increasingly shared by countries worldwide? To investigate these questions, we used a the most complete, reliable, and up-to-date global dataset (GIDEON Informatics, 2020) which had already been used in the previous analysis (Smith et al., 2014). This dataset can be used to enumerated the recorded annual number of disease outbreaks. To investigate the changing global patterns of disease outbreaks, we used this dataset to calculate two measures which have been recently introduced into ecological and parasitological studies. These two measures, namely modularity and centrality, quantify the connectivity of bipartite networks. Modularity is defined as the extent to which nodes (specifically, sites and species for presenceabsence matrices) in a compartment are more likely to be connected to each other than to other nodes of the network (Thébault, 2013). The calculation of a modularity measure is useful for global phenomena because it allows the overall level of compartmentalization (or fragmentation) into compartments (or clusters, modules, subgroups, or subsets) of an entire dataset to be quantified. High modularity in a global network means that subgroups of countries and disease outbreaks interact more strongly among themselves (that is, within a compartment) than with the other subgroups (that is, among compartments) (Bordes et al., 2015). Centrality is defined as the degree of the connectedness of a node (e.g., a keystone species in ecological studies; Jordán, 2009; González et al., 2010). In the context of our study, centrality is the degree of the connectedness of a country and those countries connected to it. We estimated the countries which are the potential centres of disease outbreaks by investigating the eigenvector centrality of a given country in a network of countries which share disease outbreaks among each other. Eigenvector centrality is a generalization of degree centrality, which is the number of connections a country has to other countries in terms of sharing disease outbreaks. Eigenvector centrality considers countries to be highly central if the connected countries to them through shared outbreaks are connected to many other well-connected countries (Bonacich and Lloyd, 2001; Wells et al., 2020). Modularity and centrality analyses have been used to investigate various ecological, parasitological and epidemiological questions (e.g., Tylianakis et al., 2007; Jordán, 2009; González et al., 2010; Anderson and Sukhdeo, 2011; Bascompte and Jordano, 2014; Poisot et al., 2014; Bordes et al., 2015; Genrich et al., 2017). Using a widely used world dataset on infectious disease outbreaks, we here present results which demonstrate that the accelerated number of disease outbreaks and their increased global spread are two further threatening aspects of the accelerated infectious disease risk associated with the globalization process which characterizes the Anthropocene.

#### 2. Chemical emissions.

Julian Cribb 17, Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, 2017, “The Poisoner,” in Surviving the 21st Century, p. 113-117

There are two essential points about the Earthwide chemical flood. First it is quite new. It began with the industrial revolution of the late nineteenth century, but expanded dramatically in the wake of the two world wars—where chemicals were extensively used in munitions—and has exploded in deadly earnest in the past 50 years, attaining a new crescendo in the early twenty-first century. It is something our ancestors never faced—and to which we, in consequence, lack any protective adaptations which might otherwise have evolved due to constant exposure to poisons. ¶ Second, the toxic flood is, for the most part, preventable. It is not compulsory—but is an unwanted by-product of economic growth. Though driven by powerful industries and interests, it still lies within the powers and rights of citizens, consumers and their governments to demand it be curtailed or ended and to encourage industry to safer, healthier products and production systems. ¶ The issue is whether, or not, a wise humanity would choose to continue poisoning our children, ourselves and our world. ¶ Regulatory Failure ¶ Despite the fact that around 2000 new chemicals are released onto world markets annually, most have not received proper health, safety or environmental screening—especially in terms of their impact on babies and small children. Regulation has so far failed to make any serious curtailment of this flood: only 21 out of 144,000 known chemicals have been banned internationally, and this has not eliminated their use. At such a rate of progress it will take us more than 50,000 years to identify and prohibit or restrict all the chemicals which do us harm. Even then, bans will only apply in a handful of well-regulated countries, and will not protect the Earth system nor humanity at large. Clearly, national regulation holds few answers to what is now an out-of-control global problem. ¶ Furthermore, the chemical industry is relocating from the developed world (where it is quite well regulated and observes its own ethical standards) and into developing countries, mainly in Asia, where it is largely beyond the reach of either ethics or the law. However, its toxic emissions return to citizens in well-regulated countries via wind, water, food, wildlife, consumer goods, industrial products and people. The bottom line is that it doesn’t matter how good your country’s regulations are: you and your family are still exposed to a growing global flood of toxins from which even a careful diet and sensible consumer choices cannot fully protect you. ¶ The wake-up call to the world about the risks of chemical contamination was issued by American biologist Rachel Carson when she published Silent Spring in 1962, in which she warned specifically about the impact of certain persistent pesticides used in agriculture. Since her book came out, the volume of pesticide use worldwide has increased 30-fold, to around four million tonnes a year in the mid-2010s. Since the modern chemical age began there has been a string of high-profile chemical disasters: Minamata, the Love Canal, Seveso, Bhopal, Flixborough, Oppau, Toulouse, Hinkley, Texas City, Jilin, Tianjin. Most of these display a familiar pattern of unproductive confrontation between angry citizens, industry and regulators, involving drawn-out legal battles that deliver justice to nobody. By their spectacular and local nature, such events serve to distract from the far larger, more insidious and ubiquitous, universal toxic flood. ¶ Chemists and chemical makers often claim that their products are ‘safe’ because individual exposure (e.g. in a given product, like a serve of food) is too low to result in a toxic dose, a theory first put forward by the mediaeval scholar Paracelsus in the sixteenth century. This ‘dose related’ argument is disingenuous, if not dishonest—as modern chemists well know—for the following reasons: Most chemicals target a receptor or receptors on certain of your body cells, to cause harm. There may be not one, but hundreds or even thousands of different chemicals all targeting the same receptor, so a particular substance may contribute an unknowable fraction to an overall toxic dose. That does not make it ‘safe’. Chemicals not known to be poisonous in small doses on their own can combine with other substances in water, air, food or your body to create a toxin. No manufacturer can truthfully assert this will not happen to their products. Chemical toxicity is a function of both dose and the length of time you are exposed to it. In the case of persistent chemicals and heavy metals, this exposure may occur over days, months, years, even a lifetime in some cases. Tiny doses may thus accumulate into toxic ones. Most chemical toxicity is still measured on the basis of an exposed adult male. Babies and children being smaller and using much more water, food and air for their bodyweight, are therefore more at risk of receiving a poisonous dose than are adults. ¶ Chemicals and minerals are valuable and extremely useful. They do great good, save many lives and much money. No-one is suggesting they should all be banned. But their value may be for nothing if the current uncontrolled, unmonitored, unregulated and unconscionable mass release and planetary saturation continues.¶ Chemical Extinction ¶ Two billion years ago, excessive production of one particular poisonous chemical by the inhabitants of Earth caused a colossal die-off and threatened the extermination of all life. That chemical was oxygen and it was excreted by the blue-green algae which then dominated the planet, as part of their photosynthetic processes. After several hundred million of years, the planet’s physical ability to soak up the surplus O2 in iron formations, oceans and sediments had reached saturation and the gas began to poison the existing life. This event was known as the ‘oxygen holocaust’, and is probably the nearest life on Earth has ever come to complete disaster before the present (Margulis and Sagan 1986). Since it developed slowly, over tens of millions of years, the poisonous atmosphere permitted some of these primitive organisms to evolve a tolerance to O2—and this in time led to the rise of oxygen-dependent species such as fish, mammals and eventually, us. The takehome learning from this brush with total annihilation is that it is possible for living creatures to pollute themselves into oblivion, if they don’t take care to avoid it or rapidly adapt to the new, toxic environment. It’s a message that humans, with our colossal planetary chemical impact, would do well to ponder. ¶ While it is unlikely that human chemical emissions alone could reach such a volume and toxic state as to directly threaten our entire species with extinction (other than through carbon emissions in a runaway global warming event) or even the collapse of civilization, it is likely they will emerge as a serious contributing factor during the twenty-first century in combination with other factors such as war, climate change, pandemic disease and ecosystem breakdown. Credible ways in which man-made chemicals might imperil the human future include: Undermining the immune systems, physical and mental health of the population through growing exposure to toxins Reducing the intelligence of current and future generations through the action of nerve poisons on the developing brains and central nervous systems of children, rendering humanity less able to solve its problems and adapt to major changes; and by increasing the level of violent crime and conflict in society, which is closely linked to lower IQ. Bringing down the economy through the massive healthcare costs of having to nurse, treat and maintain a growing proportion of the population disabled by lifelong chronic chemical exposure. By poisoning the ecosystem services—clean air, water, soil, plants, insects and wildlife—on which humanity depends for its own survival and thereby contributing to potential global ecosystem breakdown By augmenting the global arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and hence the risk of their use by nations or uncontrollable fanatics.

#### 3. Soil erosion causes extinction.

George Monbiot 15, author and investigative reporter, “We’re treating soil like dirt. It’s a fatal mistake, as our lives depend on it,” 3/25/15, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/mar/25/treating-soil-like-dirt-fatal-mistake-human-life

Imagine a wonderful world, a planet on which there was no threat of climate breakdown, no loss of freshwater, no antibiotic resistance, no obesity crisis, no terrorism, no war. Surely, then, we would be out of major danger? Sorry. Even if everything else were miraculously fixed, we’re finished if we don’t address an issue considered so marginal and irrelevant that you can go for months without seeing it in a newspaper.It’s literally and – it seems – metaphorically, beneath us. To judge by its absence from the media, most journalists consider it unworthy of consideration. But all human life depends on it. We knew this long ago, but somehow it has been forgotten. As a Sanskrit text written in about 1500BC noted: “Upon this handful of soil our survival depends. Husband it and it will grow our food, our fuel and our shelter and surround us with beauty. Abuse it and the soil will collapse and die, taking humanity with it.”The issue hasn’t changed, but we have. Landowners around the world are now engaged in an orgy of soil destruction so intense that, according to the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organisation, the world on average has just 60 more years of growing crops. Even in Britain, which is spared the tropical downpours that so quickly strip exposed soil from the land, Farmers Weekly reports, we have “only 100 harvests left”.To keep up with global food demand, the UN estimates, 6m hectares (14.8m acres) of new farmland will be needed every year. Instead, 12m hectares a year are lost through soil degradation. We wreck it, then move on, trashing rainforests and other precious habitats as we go. Soil is an almost magical substance, a living system that transforms the materials it encounters, making them available to plants. That handful the Vedic master showed his disciples contains more micro-organisms than all the people who have ever lived on Earth. Yet we treat it like, well, dirt.The techniques that were supposed to feed the world threaten us with starvation. A paper just published in the journal Anthropocene analyses the undisturbed sediments in an 11th-century French lake. It reveals that the intensification of farming over the past century has increased the rate of soil erosion sixtyfold.Another paper, by researchers in the UK, shows that soil in allotments – the small patches in towns and cities that people cultivate by hand – contains a third more organic carbon than agricultural soil and 25% more nitrogen. This is one of the reasons why allotment holders produce between four and 11 times more food per hectare than do farmers.Whenever I mention this issue, people ask: “But surely farmers have an interest in looking after their soil?” They do, and there are many excellent cultivators who seek to keep their soil on the land. There are also some terrible farmers, often absentees, who allow contractors to rip their fields to shreds for the sake of a quick profit. Even the good ones are hampered by an economic and political system that could scarcely be better designed to frustrate them.This is the International Year of Soils, but you wouldn’t know it. In January, the Westminster government published a new set of soil standards, marginally better than those they replaced, but wholly unmatched to the scale of the problem. There are no penalities for compromising our survival except a partial withholding of public subsidies. Yet even this pathetic guidance is considered intolerable by the National Farmers’ Union, which greeted them with bitter complaints. Sometimes the NFU seems to me to exist to champion bad practice and block any possibility of positive change.Few sights are as gruesome as the glee with which the NFU celebrated the death last year of the European soil framework directive, the only measure with the potential to arrest our soil-erosion crisis. The NFU, supported by successive British governments, fought for eight years to destroy it, then crowed like a shedful of cockerels when it won. Looking back on this episode, we will see it as a parable of our times.Soon after that, the business minister, Matthew Hancock, announced that he was putting “business in charge of driving reform”: trade associations would be able “to review enforcement of regulation in their sectors.” The NFU was one the first two bodies granted this privilege. Hancock explained that this “is all part of our unambiguously pro-business agenda to increase the financial security of the British people.” But it doesn’t increase our security, financial or otherwise. It undermines it.The government’s deregulation bill, which has now almost completed its passage through parliament, will force regulators – including those charged with protecting the fabric of the land – to “have regard to the desirability of promoting economic growth”. But short-term growth at the expense of public protection compromises long-term survival. This “unambiguously pro-business agenda” is deregulating us to death.There’s no longer even an appetite for studying the problem. Just one university – Aberdeen – now offers a degree in soil science. All the rest have been closed down.This is what topples civilisations. War and pestilence might kill large numbers of people, but in most cases the population recovers. But lose the soil and everything goes with it.Now, globalisation ensures that this disaster is reproduced everywhere. In its early stages, globalisation enhances resilience: people are no longer dependent on the vagaries of local production. But as it proceeds, spreading the same destructive processes to all corners of the Earth, it undermines resilience, as it threatens to bring down systems everywhere.Almost all other issues are superficial by comparison. What appear to be great crises are slight and evanescent when held up against the steady trickling away of our subsistence.

#### 4. Insect loss.

Robert Hunziker 18, MA in Economic History from DePaul University, environmental journalist for over fifty publications, 3/27/18, “Insect Decimation Upstages Global Warming,” https://www.transcend.org/tms/2018/04/insect-decimation-upstages-global-warming/

Everybody’s heard about global warming. It is one of the most advertised existential events of all time. Who isn’t aware? However, there’s a new kid on the block. An alarming loss of insects will likely take down humanity before global warming hits maximum velocity.¶ For the immediate future, the Paris Accord is riding the wrong horse, as global warming is a long-term project compared to the insect catastrophe happening right now! Where else is found 40% to 90% species devastation?¶ The worldwide loss of insects is simply staggering with some reports of 75% up to 90%, happening much faster than the paleoclimate record rate of the past five major extinction events. It is possible that some insect species may already be close to total extinction!¶ It’s established that species evolve and then go extinct over thousands and millions of years as part of nature’s course, but the current rate of devastation is simply “off the charts, and downright scary.”¶ Without any doubt, it is difficult to imagine how humanity survives without insects, which are dropping dead in bunches right before our eyes. For proof, how many insect splats do people clean off windshields nowadays? Not many…. How many fireflies do children chase at night? Not many….¶ Several naturalists and environmental writers believe the massive loss of insects has everything to do with three generations of industrialized farming and the vast tide of poisons pouring over the landscape year-after-year, especially since the end of WWII. Ours is the first-ever pesticide-based agricultural society. Dreadfully, it’s an experiment that is going dead wrong… all of a sudden!¶ Insects are basic to thousands of food chains; for example, the disappearance of Britain’s farmland birds by over 50% in 40 years. Additionally, North America and Europe species of birds like larks, swallows, and swifts that feast on flying insects have plummeted.¶ But, these are only a few of many, many recorded examples of massive numbers of wildlife dropping dead right before our eyes.¶ Significantly, insects are the primary source for ecosystem creation and support. The world literally crumbles apart without mischievous burrowing, forming new soil, aerating soil, pollinating food crops, etc. Nutrition for humans happens because insects pollinate.

#### 5. Deforestation

Dominik Goldstein 16, “Eliminating deforestation and forest degradation in order to prevent species from extinction, especially with regard to areas in Asia, Africa and South America,” <http://www.balmun.de/fileadmin/2016/Research_Reports/RR_EC_I_Deforestation.pdf>

Deforestation and forest degradation are undoubtedly part of the largest environmental problems our world is facing today. Of the 16 million square kilometers of forest that once covered the earth’s surface, only 6.2 million remain up to date. 2.3 million have been destroyed between 2000 and 2012 alone. Not only does this threaten the balance of local important environmental factors such as water cycles and greenhouse gas decomposition and harm the economy and society of affected areas, but it also endangers many different species, as 80% of all biodiversity is found in forests. The entire planet and its population rely on the fate of forests, it is vital that the issues of deforestation and forest degradation are tackled thoroughly, however, it can only be achieved through close cooperation amongst all UN member nations.

### AT: No Link

#### Labor market power collapses the economy---inequality and wage stagnation.

Posner, Professor at University of Chicago, 21

(Eric, Kirkland & Ellis Distinguished Service Professor at University of Chicago, 08/31/21, “How Antitrust Failed Workers” Oxford University Press, MAC)

#### Slow growth is key to empower degrowth movements---accelerating trades off.

Michael **Maniates 17**, Professor of Environmental Studies at Yale-NUS College, Singapore, 2017, “Suddenly More Than Academic: Higher Education for a Post-Growth World,” in EarthEd: Rethinking Education on a Changing Planet, p. 194-196

The rough outline of social innovations for this post-growth society is clear. As Speth explains: "[W]e already know the types of policies that move us toward a post-growth economy that sustains both human and natural communities .... [There is] a long list of public policies that would slow GDP growth, thus sparing the environment, while simultaneously improving social and individual well being." Speth's list, which draws on work by numerous scholars, includes shorter workweeks, longer vacations, and more investment in local, small-scale economic enterprises that prosper by staying small. A shift to worker cooperatives and community banking with a strong commitment to social equity and environmental limits also makes the list. So too do progressive taxation policies, seed grants to promote community entrepreneurship, and guarantees for part-time workers."4 Speth's recommendations could easily be dismissed by those unpersuaded by the post-growth argument, except for one glaring reality: for more than a decade, we have been living in the very low-growth world that many dismiss as impossible, hopelessly dismal, or a retreat to some dark age. "Economic growth," explains Neil Irwin of the New York Times, "has been weaker for longer than it has been in the lifetime of most people on Earth." Since 2001, U.S. economic growth per capita rose 0.9 percent a year, almost a 60 percent decline from the 2.2 percent annual increase between 1947 and 2000. Economic growth in Western Europe and Japan has been even lower. Because of a number of still-unclear factors—aging populations, slowing population growth, and the intermittency of economically transformative technologies, among others—there is good reason to expect this tepid growth to continue, with some ups and downs, for the foreseeable future. These will be turbulent times that call for a particular kind of education across colleges and universities. (See Box 16-1.)5 It is tempting to double-down on the economic growth machine by mobilizing multiple forces in society, including higher education, to get us back to the time of 2 percent-plus growth per year. In the short run, this might work, but it ultimately will heighten the conflict between exponential economic growth and the integrity of environmental systems upon which human prosperity rests. Much of this growth, after all, delivers ambiguous benefits, and some of it actively undermines human prosperity. In the end, we will still need to deal with the implications of persistent low- or no-growth—the material base of the economy cannot continue to grow exponentially—with an even more despoiled environment on our hands.6 More important, pining for the "good old days" of robust growth diverts us from the critical task of adjusting, now, to a low-growth world in ways that are just, equitable, democratic, and environmentally restorative. Even if we believed that a return to muscular growth was just a few years away, wouldn't we want to explore how to gracefully adapt to our current conditions, if only as an insurance policy against the possibility that the days of high growth are behind us? Few, if any, of the social innovations described by Speth are inherently anti-growth, so there is little to lose by assessing and spreading them as we are able. For reasons still opaque to economists, slow growth is no longer a fuzzy wish tossed about by environmental scholars. It is here, among us, in our communities, on the ground, affecting our pocketbooks and driving our politics. It is no longer just academic. Rather than treating tepid growth as a problem to be solved ("how do we get the economy growing again?"), higher education can reclaim its beacon of sustainability by attacking an altogether different but immediately relevant question: How do complex human societies thrive— environmentally, equitably, and justly—in a post-growth world?

#### The problem is not the type of growth---it is growth itself---even if they transition to a socially or financially sustainable growth model, we all still die!

Ted Trainer 19, Conjoint Lecturer in the School of Social Sciences, University of New South Wales. PhD from University of Sydney, “Why De growth is Essential: A Rejection of Left Ecomodernists Phillips, Sharzer, Bastini, and Parenti,” Resilience, 10/17/2019, https://www.resilience.org/stories/2019-10-17/why-de-growth-is-essential-a-rejection-of-left-ecomodernists-phillips-sharzer-bastini-and-parenti/, kyujin

Our limits to growth predicament show that the main goal is not getting rid of capitalism, essential though that is. The goal must be to get those resource and ecological impacts right down. If the eco-socialists only got rid of capitalism but continued to pursue affluence and growth, we would have a more just society…still heading for ecological collapse.

#### Labor market inequities create slow and unstable growth---COVID proves.

Joseph E. Stiglitz 21. Joseph E. Stiglitz is an economist and professor at Columbia University. He is the co-chair of the High-Level Expert Group on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress at the OECD, and the Chief Economist of the Roosevelt Institute. He has served as chief economist of the World Bank and chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in economics in 2001“Fostering More-Competitive Labor Markets” Inequality and the Labor Market: The Case for Greater Competition. Brookings Institution Press. (2021) https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7864/j.ctv13vdhvm.6

Why It Matters

It should be fairly obvious why these imperfections in the labor market matter so much: one of the most disturbing aspects of growth in the United States in recent decades is the growing inequality (see, e.g., Ostry, Berg, and Tsangarides 2019; Stiglitz 2012, 2019; and a rash of other books on the topic). Most of the gains in the economy have gone to the top 10 percent, the top 1 percent, and the top 0.1 percent. Some of the growing inequality has to do with increases in wage disparity—known as labor market polarization. But much of it has to do with the decreasing share of national income going to workers.8 This is where the decreasing market power of workers and the increasing market power of corporations comes in. This decreasing market power is more than just changes in technology or even globalization: it is also the broader changes in our economy, society, and politics—and especially the changes described earlier in this introduction and elsewhere in this volume—that have led to this growing imbalance of market power.

Research at the International Monetary Fund (Ostry, Berg, and Tsangarides 2014) and elsewhere (Ostry, Berg, and Tsangarides 2019) has highlighted the broader consequences of this growing inequality, even on economic performance. Economies that are more unequal are less stable and grow more slowly. In The Price of Inequality I explain the reasons that we pay such a high price for inequality.

The COVID-19 crisis has provided a dramatic illustration: inequalities in income translate into inequalities in health, especially in a society, like that of the United States, that relies on markets to dispense healthcare. The virus is not an equal opportunity virus—it appears to have the most devastating effects on people who have underlying health conditions. Our health inequalities are undoubtedly one of the reasons that the United States led the world in COVID-19 deaths.

Short-sighted employers did not provide sick leave and government did not require it—even when Congress seemed to recognize that workers without sick leave, who live paycheck to paycheck with virtually no money in the bank, would go to work even when they were sick. They had to work in order to survive, but that meant they helped to spread the disease. After lobbying by the large corporations, Congress decided that employers with more than 500 employees—almost half of the private labor force— were exempt from providing sick leave. With so few workers unionized, employees simply did not have the bargaining power to demand paid sick leave, personal protective equipment, or COVID-19 tests. Government should have required all these things, of course, and it had the power to do so under OSHA, but chose not to. Workers were desperate for the protection, but lacked the bargaining power to get it.

### AT: Framing

#### Prioritize magnitude

Baum & Barrett 18, American research in the field of risk, executive director of the Global Catastrophic Risk Institute, affiliated with Blue Marble Space Institute of Science and Columbia University Center for Research on Environmental Decisions, Affiliate Scholar for the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, BS in optics and mathematics at University of Rochester, MS in Electrical Engineer, Northeastern University; risk and decision analyst based in Washington, D.C, focusing on risk assessment, PhD., Engineering & Public Policy from Carnegie Mellon University, BA of Science, Chemical Engineering, University of California, San Diego (Seth Baum; Anthony Barrett, 2018, “Global Catastrophes: The Most Extreme Risks,” Global Catastrophic Risk Institute. Risk in Extreme Environments: Preparing, Avoiding, Mitigating, and Managing, <https://sethbaum.com/ac/2018_Extreme.pdf>)

2. What Is GCR And Why Is It Important?

Taken literally, a global catastrophe can be any event that is in some way catastrophic across the globe. This suggests a rather low threshold for what counts as a global catastrophe. An event causing just one death on each continent (say, from a jet-setting assassin) could rate as a global catastrophe, because surely these deaths would be catastrophic for the deceased and their loved ones. However, in common usage, a global catastrophe would be catastrophic for a significant portion of the globe. Minimum thresholds have variously been set around ten thousand to ten million deaths or $10 billion to $10 trillion in damages (Bostrom and Ćirković 2008), or death of one quarter of the human population (Atkinson 1999; Hempsell 2004). Others have emphasized catastrophes that cause long-term declines in the trajectory of human civilization (Beckstead 2013), that human civilization does not recover from (Maher and Baum 2013), that drastically reduce humanity’s potential for future achievements (Bostrom 2002, using the term “existential risk”), or that result in human extinction (Matheny 2007; Posner 2004). A common theme across all these treatments of GCR is that some catastrophes are vastly more important than others. Carl Sagan was perhaps the first to recognize this, in his commentary on nuclear winter (Sagan 1983). Without nuclear winter, a global nuclear war might kill several hundred million people. This is obviously a major catastrophe, but humanity would presumably carry on. However, with nuclear winter, per Sagan, humanity could go extinct. The loss would be not just an additional four billion or so deaths, but the loss of all future generations. To paraphrase Sagan, the los[e]s would be billions and billions of lives, or even more. Sagan estimated 500 trillion lives, assuming humanity would continue for ten million more years, which he cited as typical for a successful species. Sagan’s 500 trillion number may even be an underestimate. The analysis here takes an adventurous turn, hinging on the evolution of the human species and the long-term fate of the universe. On these long time scales, the descendants of contemporary humans may no longer be recognizably “human”. The issue then is whether the descendants are still worth caring about, whatever they are. If they are, then it begs the question of how many of them there will be. Barring major global catastrophe, Earth will remain habitable for about one billion more years 2 until the Sun gets too warm and large. The rest of the Solar System, Milky Way galaxy, universe, and (if it exists) the multiverse will remain habitable for a lot longer than that (Adams and Laughlin 1997), should our descendants gain the capacity to migrate there. An open question in astronomy is whether it is possible for the descendants of humanity to continue living for an infinite length of time or instead merely an astronomically large but finite length of time (see e.g. Ćirković 2002; Kaku 2005). Either way, the stakes with global catastrophes could be much larger than the loss of 500 trillion lives. Debates about the infinite vs. the merely astronomical are of theoretical interest (Ng 1991; Bossert et al. 2007), but they have limited practical significance. This can be seen when evaluating GCRs from a standard risk-equals-probability-times-magnitude framework. Using Sagan’s 500 trillion lives estimate, it follows that reducing the probability of global catastrophe by a mere one-in-500-trillion chance is of the same significance as saving one human life. Phrased differently, society should try 500 trillion times harder to prevent a global catastrophe than it should to save a person’s life. Or, preventing one million deaths is equivalent to a one-in500-million reduction in the probability of global catastrophe. This suggests society should make extremely large investment in GCR reduction, at the expense of virtually all other objectives. Judge and legal scholar Richard Posner made a similar point in monetary terms (Posner 2004). Posner used $50,000 as the value of a statistical human life (VSL) and 12 billion humans as the total loss of life (double the 2004 world population); he describes both figures as significant underestimates. Multiplying them gives $600 trillion as an underestimate of the value of preventing global catastrophe. For comparison, the United States government typically uses a VSL of around one to ten million dollars (Robinson 2007). Multiplying a $10 million VSL with 500 trillion lives gives $5x1021 as the value of preventing global catastrophe. But even using “just" $600 trillion, society should be willing to spend at least that much to prevent a global catastrophe, which converts to being willing to spend at least $1 million for a one-in-500-million reduction in the probability of global catastrophe. Thus while reasonable disagreement exists on how large of a VSL to use and how much to count future generations, even low-end positions suggest vast resource allocations should be redirected to reducing GCR. This conclusion is only strengthened when considering the astronomical size of the stakes, but the same point holds either way. The bottom line is that, as long as something along the lines of the standard risk equals-probability-times-magnitude framework is being used, then even tiny GCR reductions merit significant effort. This point holds especially strongly for risks of catastrophes that would cause permanent harm to global human civilization. The discussion thus far has assumed that all human lives are valued equally. This assumption is not universally held. People often value some people more than others, favoring themselves, their family and friends, their compatriots, their generation, or others whom they identify with. Great debates rage on across moral philosophy, economics, and other fields about how much people should value others who are distant in space, time, or social relation, as well as the unborn members of future generations. This debate is crucial for all valuations of risk, including GCR. Indeed, if each of us only cares about our immediate selves, then global catastrophes may not be especially important, and we probably have better things to do with our time than worry about them. While everyone has the right to their own views and feelings, we find that the strongest arguments are for the widely held position that all human lives should be valued equally. This position is succinctly stated in the United States Declaration of Independence, updated in the 1848 Declaration of Sentiments: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and 3 women are created equal”. Philosophers speak of an agent-neutral, objective “view from nowhere” (Nagel 1986) or a “veil of ignorance” (Rawls 1971) in which each person considers what is best for society irrespective of which member of society they happen to be. Such a perspective suggests valu[e]ing everyone equally, regardless of who they are or where or when they live. This in turn suggests a very high value for reducing GCR, or a high degree of priority for GCR reduction efforts.

3. Challenges To Analyzing GCR

Given the goal of reducing GCR, one must know what the risks are and how they can be reduced. This requires diving into the details of the risks themselves—details that we largely skip in this paper—but it also requires attention to a few analytical challenges. The first challenge is the largely unprecedented nature of global catastrophes. Simply put, modern human civilization has never before ended. There have been several recent global catastrophes of some significance, the World Wars and the 1918 flu among them, but these clearly did not knock civilization out. Earlier catastrophes, including the prehistoric mass extinction events, the Toba volcanic eruption, and even the Black Death plague, all occurred before modern civilization existed. The GCR analyst is thus left to study risks of events that are in some way untested or unproven. But the lack of historical precedent does not necessarily imply a lack of ongoing risk. Indeed, the biggest mistake of naïve GCR analysis is to posit that, because no global catastrophe has previously occurred, therefore none will occur. This mistake comes in at least three forms. The first and most obviously false form is to claim that unprecedented events never occur. In our world of social and technological innovation, it is easy to see that this claim is false. But accounting for it in risk analysis still requires some care. One approach is to use what is known in probability theory as zero-failure data (Hanley 1983; Bailey 1997; Quigley and Revie 2011). Suppose that no catastrophe has occurred over n prior time periods—for example, there has been no nuclear war in the 65 years since two countries have had nuclear weapons. (The second country to build nuclear weapons was the Soviet Union, in 1949.) It can thus be said that there have been zero failures of nuclear deterrence in 65 cases. An approximate upper bound can then be estimated for the probability p of nuclear deterrence failure, i.e. the probability of nuclear war, occurring within an upcoming year. Specifically, p lies within the interval [0, u] with (1 – α) confidence, where u = 1 – α(1/n) gives the upper limit of the confidence interval. Thus for 95% confidence (α = 0.05), u = 1-0.05(1/65) = 0.05, meaning that there is a 95% chance that the probability of nuclear war within an upcoming year is somewhere between 0 and 0.05. Note that this calculation assumes (perhaps erroneously) that the 65 non-failures are independent random trials and that p is approximately constant over time, but it nonetheless provides a starting point for estimating the probability of unprecedented events. Barrett et al. (2013) uses a similar approach as part of a validation check of a broader risk analysis of U.S.-Russia nuclear war. The second form of the mistake is to posit that the ongoing existence of human civilization proves that global catastrophes will not occur. It is true that civilization’s continued existence despite some past threats should provide some comfort, but it should only provide some comfort. Consider this: if a global catastrophe had previously occurred, nobody would still be around to ponder the matter (at least for catastrophes causing human extinction). The fact of being able to observe one’s continued survival is contingent upon having survived. While it is easy to see that this is a mistake, it is harder to correct for it. Again, it requires careful application of probability theory, correcting for what is known as an observation selection effect (Bostrom 2002b, Ćirković 4 et al. 2010). The basic idea is to build the existence of the observer into probability estimates for catastrophes that would eliminate future observers. The result is probability estimates unbiased by the observer’s existence, with global catastrophe probability estimates typically revised upwards. The third form of the mistake is to posit that, because humanity has survived previous catastrophes, or risks of catastrophes, therefore it will survive future ones. This mistake is especially pervasive in discussions of nuclear war. People sometimes observe that no nuclear war has ever occurred and cite this as evidence to conclude that therefore nuclear deterrence and the fear of mutually assured destruction will indefinitely continue to keep the world safe (for discussion see Sagan and Waltz 2013). But there have been several near misses, from the 1962 Cuban missile crisis to the 1995 Norwegian rocket incident, and there is no guarantee that nuclear war will be avoided into the distant future. Similarly, just because no pandemic has ever killed the majority of people (Black Death killed about 22%), or just because early predictions about the rise of artificial intelligence proved false (they expected human-level AI within decades that have long since come and gone; see Crevier 1993; McCorduck 2004), it does not necessarily follow that no pandemics would be so lethal, or that AI cannot reach the lofty heights of the early predictions. Careful risk analysis can correct for the third form by looking at the full sequences of events that would lead to particular global catastrophes. For example, nuclear weapons in the United States are launched following a sequence of decisions by increasingly high ranking officials, ultimately including the President. This decision sequence can be built into a risk model, with model parameters estimated from historical data on how often each step in the decision sequence has been reached (Barrett et al. 2013). The more often near misses have occurred, and the nearer the misses were, the higher the probability of an eventual “hit” in the form of a nuclear war. The same analytic structure can be applied to other GCRs.

### 2NC ⁠— AT: Probability

#### 2 ⁠— vagueness ⁠— it lacks a clear bright-line

⁠— de minimis principle: low risks should be discounted

Peterson 8, Professor of Philosophy and the Sue and Harry Bovay Professor of History and Ethics of Professional Engineering in the Department of Philosophy at Texas A&M University (Martin Peterson, 2008, “What Is a de Minimis Risk?,” Risk Management, Vol. 4, No. 2 (2002), pages 47-55)

In the previous sections it has been argued that none of the traditional explications of the de minimis principle can be used for distinguishing negligible and non-negligible risk in a satisfactory manner. So how then, one might ask, should this line be drawn? The best answer to this question is, arguably, that there is no sharp line to be drawn, even though there are clear examples of negligible and non-negligible risks respectively. The concept of vagueness can be used to clarify this claim. Imagine, for instance, a city populated by 100 inhabitants - a clear example of a small city. Then assume that one additional person moves into the city, which now has 101 inhabitants, and is still a small city. Then one more person moves into the city, then one more, and so on. After a few years the city has ten million inhabitants, and is thus a clear example of a big city. But exactly when did the city become 'big' ? The traditional philosophical analysis of this kind of example is that there is no single inhabitant whose decision to move into the city made it big. Concepts like 'small city' and 'big city' are vague, that is, there is no sharp boundary between 'big' and 'small', or between 'big' and 'almost- big', and so on. That the concept of 'de minimis risk' is vague does not mean that there are no clear examples of de minimis risks but simply that there is no sharp boundary between those risks that are de minimis and those that are de manifestis, and between those that are de minimis and almost de minimis, etc. Suppose for instance that lifetime risks smaller than 10^10 are clear examples of de minimis risks, in the same sense that cities with ten million inhabitants are clear examples of big cities. What we now wish to claim is not that a lifetime risk of 1.00001 x 10^6 is not de minimis, but rather that it is not the case that this risk is de manifestis. This difference is subtle, but of high importance for decision makers. For instance, different normative recommendations may be justified depending on whether the risk in question is de manifestis or only not de minimis. If we accept that the concept of de minimis risks is vague we can explain why it has been so difficult to reach consensus about whether a lifetime risk of, say, 10^6 is negligible or not, whereas no one seems to doubt thata lifetime risk of eg 10^12 is truly negligible. The explanation is that the latter risk is a clear example of a de minimis risk, whereas the former risk is located somewhere in the grey middle zone.

#### The fear of death is productive

Macy 2K, adjunct professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies (Joanna Macy, 2000, Environmental Discourse and Practice: A Reader, page 243)

The move to a wider ecological sense of self is in large part a function of the dangers that are threatening to overwhelm us. We are confronted by social breakdown, wars, nuclear proliferation, and the progressive destruction of our biosphere. Polls show that people today are aware that the world, as they know it, may come to an end. This loss of certainty that there will be a future is the pivotal psychological reality of our time. Over the past twelve years my colleagues and I have worked with tens of thousands of people in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, helping them confront and explore what they know and feel about what is happening to their world. The purpose of this work, which was first known as “Despair and Empowerment Work,” is to overcome the numbing and powerlessness that result from suppression of painful responses to massively painful realities. As their grief and fear for the world is allowed to be expressed without apology or argument and validated as a wholesome, life-preserving response, people break through their avoidance mechanisms, break through their sense of futility and isolation. Generally what they break through into is a larger sense of identity. It is as if the pressure of their acknowledged awareness of the suffering of our world stretches or collapses the culturally defined boundaries of the self. It becomes clear, for example, that the grief and fear experienced for our world and our common future are categorically different from similar sentiments relating to one’s personal welfare. This pain cannot be equated with dread of one’s own individual demise. Its source lies less in concerns for personal survival than in apprehensions of collective suffering – of what looms for human life and other species and unborn generations to come. Its nature is akin to the original meaning of compassion – “suffering with.” It is the distress we feel on behalf of the larger whole of which we are a part. And, when it is so defined, it serves as a trigger or getaway to a more encompassing sense of identity, inseparable from the web of life in which we are as intricately connected as cells in a larger body. This shift in consciousness is an appropriate, adaptive response. For the crisis that threatens our planet, be it seen in its military, ecological, or social aspects, derives from a dysfunctional and pathogenic notion of the self. It is a mistake about our place in the order of things. It is the delusion that the self is so separate and fragile that we must delineate and defend its boundaries, that it is so small and needy that we must endlessly acquire and endlessly consume, that it is so aloof that we can – as individuals, corporations, nation-states, or as a species – be immune to what we do to other beings.

### AT: Geoengineering Cross-App

#### Geoengineering fails---SRM causes future spikes in temperatures and CCS won’t reduce emissions. PLUS, both technologies are unproven.

Wildfire 20 (Mary, May 11th, “False Solutions to Climate Change: Geoengineering,” *Resilience*, https://www.resilience.org/stories/2020-05-11/false-solutions-to-climate-change-geoengineering/)

Part 5: Geoengineering

Geoengineering refers to proposals for solving the problem of climate change, not by mitigation—that is, reducing emissions and deforestation, the causes of global heating—but instead by the use of new technologies. There are quite a few ideas out there for geoengineering, or “negative emissions,” but they all come down to one of two approaches. “Solar radiation management” means blocking some incoming sunlight so as to reduce temperatures on Earth, and “carbon capture and sequestration” refers to various means of sequestering carbon dioxide so it isn’t added to the overabundance in the Earth’s atmosphere.

All of the proposals have major risks. One they all have in common is the risk that governments, heavily influenced by big corporations, might be persuaded that an easy technofix is in the offing. This would reduce pressure to finally, at last, take serious action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions: mitigation. This is the obvious solution we’ve been evading for several decades now. Pronouncements by proponents of geoengineering almost always state that they aren’t intended to replace mitigation which is still necessary, but to supplement it because it no longer seems possible to reduce emissions fast enough. But one doesn’t have to be a cynic to see that any talk about magic solutions will be eagerly seized upon by those resisting the obvious solution that is anathema to powerful interests, especially fossil fuel, electric utility and agribusiness corporations. If you look at the projection by the IPCC of scenarios in which we keep emissions low enough to stay below two degrees of warming—never mind 1.5 degrees—all of them assume “negative emissions.”

So what are these technologies? Let’s take the solar radiation management category—SRM—first. Some propose to fly airplanes continuously around, spraying aerosols into the atmosphere to reflect some incoming sunlight, so the Earth warms less. Another proposal involves ships sailing the seas, perhaps run by robots, each emitting billions of micro-droplets of water sucked from the sea into the sky to form reflective clouds. There have also been proposals to paint roofs or roads or big swathes of desert white, and fantasies of launching a lot of mirrors into orbit to reflect incoming sunlight.

A big issue with any such plan is that SRM doesn’t actually reduce greenhouse gas levels at all; so if it is ever stopped—because the planes run out of fuel, or the unintended consequences cause conflict, perhaps—then the temperature would quickly climb to what it would have been if the technique had never been implemented, thus creating an even more extreme adjustment problem for species. It also does nothing to reduce the increasing acidity of the ocean, which threatens to wipe out most species there.

Furthermore, many if not all of these approaches will influence weather patterns. If they do, it won’t matter what the change is—someone will benefit and someone else be harmed. The Asian monsoon is a likely example. If India fails to get the monsoon and a neighboring country gets plenty of rain, millions of angry Indian farmers will accuse the other country of “stealing our rain.” Wars can easily ignite over such accusations, and the fact that the U.S. military is a chief funder of research into these approaches, and has discussed the possibility of using weather modification in warfare in the past, means such reactions would not be all paranoia. Given the unpredictability of weather, it would be impossible to tell whether a weather pattern with adverse effects on any area was caused by the geoengineering, or naturally; which means that if these gambits are put into effect, it’s pretty much guaranteed that someone will soon be screaming that they have been harmed by it.

Another two problems with any form of solar radiation management is that reduced incoming sunlight means reduced efficiency in solar panels, and in the photosynthesis which is the basis of both our crops and the natural food web.

Now let’s look at the other category of geoengineering, carbon capture and sequestration, CCS.

One form of carbon dioxide removal is ocean fertilization. The idea here is that the ocean absorbs much more carbon dioxide than either the air or the land, so why not get it to take even more? CO2 is absorbed by phytoplankton doing photosynthesis, so we need to get more sea plants growing faster, by fertilizing the oceans. Small experiments have tried dumping iron filings in the ocean, as iron is seen as a key limiting nutrient—but it didn’t work. Wrong place maybe. Turns out ecosystems are complex!

Afforestation is another proposal, but I have a logical problem with this popular idea. If it’s possible for trees to grow in a certain area, why isn’t it already forested? Surely because humans have cut down the native trees, whether for lumber and fuel, or to use the land for agriculture or cities. Unless we have a drastic loss of population, we will not soon need less land for such things. There are places trees can be planted, but I question the idea that we can simply calculate how much CO2 a tree absorbs, then multiply by how much we want absorbed and assume there will be someplace to plant that many trees

Sometimes people talk about directly capturing CO2 from the air with machinery, either by collecting it from the smokestacks of power plants, or by Direct Air Capture (DAC) machines. The trouble with smokestack schemes is that they make the plants much more expensive, and reduce the efficiency so that it’s necessary to burn 30% more coal for the same amount of power. Since coal can no longer compete with renewable energy even where carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) is not mandated, this doesn’t look like a likely solution. As for DAC, the energy requirement to run plants to collect the much more diffuse CO2 from the ambient air makes them a non-starter. In either case, the collected CO2 must then be conveyed to a geological formation in which proponents hope it will be permanently sequestered. If done on a large scale, this would require a major new network of pipelines—it makes no sense to invest in such a major undertaking when renewables would be cheaper. What has actually been done with CO2 collected from pilot projects is to use it for enhanced oil recovery, in which it’s pumped into depleted oil wells to bring a last remnant up—obviously, we are not looking at reduced emissions here.

#### And its worse for the environment!

**Dunne  18** (Daisy holds a BSc in biology from the University of Bristol and a science journalism MA from City, University of London. She previously worked at MailOnline covering science and technology. She was Carbon Brief's science writer from 2017-2020., 1-22-2018, Carbon Brief, "Geoengineering carries ‘large risks’ for the natural world, studies show | Carbon Brief", https://www.carbonbrief.org/geoengineering-carries-large-risks-for-natural-world-studies-show)

Reducing the impacts of human-caused climate change through the use of bioenergy with carbon capture and storage – better known as BECCS – could have major consequences for wildlife, forests and water resources, a new study shows.

The large-scale conversion of existing land to BECCS plantations could cause global forest cover to fall by as much as 10% and biodiversity “intactness” to decline by up to 7%, the lead author tells Carbon Brief.

And the introduction of solar geoengineering could also threaten wildlife, a second study shows. The new research finds that implementing – and then not sustaining – such a technology could cause global temperatures to rebound rapidly, leaving many species unable to cope with the sharp change in conditions.

The two studies reiterate the need to fully consider the possible consequences of implementing geoengineering technologies if they are used to lessen the effects of global warming, the authors of both studies tell Carbon Brief.

The findings also highlight “the solution to global warming is mitigation”, one author concludes. “In order to achieve climate goals, it is now essential to immediately reduce CO2 emissions, instead of using harmful technologies to compensate for a more leisurely pace,” another author says.

The first study, published in Nature Climate Change, assesses how using BECCS could affect different aspects of the natural world, including forest cover, biodiversity and freshwater resources.

BECCS has been labelled by many as a promising “negative emissions technology”, meaning it could be used to reduce the amount of CO2 in the atmosphere. Put simply, BECCS involves burning biomass – such as trees and crops – to generate energy and then capturing the resulting CO2 emissions before they are released into the air.

Though yet to be demonstrated on a commercial basis, large-scale BECCS is already included by scientists in many of the modelled “pathways” showing how global warming can be limited to 2C above pre-industrial levels.

Some scientists hope that BECCS could be used to soak up some of the CO2 that is released by human activity, which could, in turn, help the world to achieve “net zero” emissions.

The new study explores whether this could be achieved without causing too much damage to many aspects of the natural world.

BECCS could cause problems for the natural world by taking up a large amount of land, water and other resources, explains lead author Dr Vera Heck, from the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impacts Research (PIK).

Her research finds that using BECCS on a wide scale could come with “large risks” for the natural world. She tells Carbon Brief:

## DA---FTC

### 1NR---!

#### Independent of war, ag decline kills billions

Lugar 4 – Richard G. Lugar, U.S. Senator from Indiana and Former Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, “Plant Power”, Our Planet, 14(3), http://www.unep.org/ourplanet/imgversn/143/lugar.html

To meet the expected demand for food over the next 50 years, we in the United States will have to grow roughly three times more food on the land we have. That’s a tall order. My farm in Marion County, Indiana, for example, yields on average 8.3 to 8.6 tonnes of corn per hectare – typical for a farm in central Indiana. To triple our production by 2050, we will have to produce an annual average of 25 tonnes per hectare. Can we possibly boost output that much? Well, it’s been done before. Advances in the use of fertilizer and water, improved machinery and better tilling techniques combined to generate a threefold increase in yields since 1935 – on our farm back then, my dad produced 2.8 to 3 tonnes per hectare. Much US agriculture has seen similar increases. But of course there is no guarantee that we can achieve those results again. Given the urgency of expanding food production to meet world demand, we must invest much more in scientific research and target that money toward projects that promise to have significant national and global impact. For the United States, that will mean a major shift in the way we conduct and fund agricultural science. Fundamental research will generate the innovations that will be necessary to feed the world. The United States can take a leading position in a productivity revolution. And our success at increasing food production may play a decisive humanitarian role in the survival of billions of people and the health of our planet.

#### Turns democracy and populism.

Lehane 17, is research manager for Future Directions International’s Global Food and Water Crises Research program. Her current research projects include Australia’s food system and water security in the Tibetan Plateau region. (Sinéad, 2-2-2017, Shaping Conflict in the 21st Century – The Future of Food and Water Security. www.hidropolitikakademi.org/shaping-conflict-in-the-21st-century-the-future-of-food-and-water-security.html)

In his book, The Coming Famine, Julian Cribb writes that the wars of the 21st century will involve failed states, rebellions, civil conflict, insurgencies and terrorism. All of these elements will be triggered by competition over dwindling resources, rather than global conflicts with clearly defined sides. More than 40 countries experienced civil unrest following the food price crisis in 2008. The rapid increase in grain prices and prevailing food insecurity in many states is linked to the outbreak of protests, food riots and the breakdown of governance. Widespread food insecurity is a driving factor in creating a disaffected population ripe for rebellion. Given the interconnectivity of food security and political stability, it is likely food will continue to act as a political stressor on regimes in the Middle East and elsewhere. Addressing Insecurity Improving food and water security and encouraging resource sharing is critical to creating a stable and secure global environment. While food and water shortages contribute to a rising cycle of violence, improving food and water security outcomes can trigger the opposite and reduce the potential for conflict. With the global population expected to reach 9 billion by 2040, the likelihood of conflict exacerbated by scarcity over the next century is growing. Conflict is likely to be driven by a number of factors and difficult to address through diplomacy or military force. Population pressures, changing weather, urbanization, migration, a loss of arable land and freshwater resources are just some of the multi-layered stressors present in many states. Future inter-state conflict will move further away from the traditional, clear lines of military conflict and more towards economic control and influence.

#### No threat inflation

Raventhal 9 — Earl C. Ravenal (Int’l Studies PhD, distinguished senior fellow in foreign policy studies @ Cato, professor emeritus of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, expert on NATO, defense strategy, and the defense budget, the author of Designing Defense for a New World Order. What's Empire Got to Do with It?), 2009, The Derivation of America's Foreign Policy.” Critical Review: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Politics and Society 21.1 (2009) 21-75

The underlying notion of “the security bureaucracies . . . looking for new enemies” is a threadbare concept that has somehow taken hold across the political spectrum, from the radical left (viz. Michael Klare [1981], who refers to a “threat bank”), to the liberal center (viz. Robert H. Johnson [1997], who dismisses most alleged “threats” as “improbable dangers”), to libertarians (viz. Ted Galen Carpenter [1992], Vice President for Foreign and Defense Policy of the Cato Institute, who wrote a book entitled A Search for Enemies). What is missing from most analysts’ claims of “threat inflation,” however, is a convincing theory of why, say, the American government significantly(not merely in excusable rhetoric) might magnify and even invent threats (and, more seriously, act on such inflated threat estimates). In a few places, Eland (2004, 185) suggests that such behavior might stem from military or national security bureaucrats’ attempts to enhance their personal status and organizational budgets, or even from the influence and dominance of “the military-industrial complex”; viz.: “Maintaining the empire and retaliating for the blowback from that empire keeps what President Eisenhower called the military-industrial complex fat and happy.” Or, in the same section: In the nation’s capital, vested interests, such as the law enforcement bureaucracies . . . routinely take advantage of “crises”to satisfy parochial desires. Similarly, many corporations use crises to get pet projects – a.k.a. pork – funded by the government. And national security crises, because of people’s fears, are especially ripe opportunities to grab largesse. (Ibid., 182) Thus, “bureaucratic-politics” theory, which once made several reputa- tions (such as those of Richard Neustadt, Morton Halperin, and Graham Allison) in defense-intellectual circles, and spawned an entire sub-industry within the field of international relations,5 is put into the service of dismissing putative security threats as imaginary. So, too, can a surprisingly cognate theory, “public choice,”6 which can be considered the right-wing analog of the “bureaucratic-politics” model, and is a preferred interpretation of governmental decision- making among libertarian observers. As Eland (2004, 203) summarizes: Public-choice theory argues [that] the government itself can develop sepa- rate interests from its citizens. The government reflects the interests of powerful pressure groups and the interests of the bureaucracies and the bureaucrats in them. Although this problem occurs in both foreign and domestic policy, it may be more severe in foreign policy because citizens pay less attention to policies that affect them less directly. There is, in this statement of public-choice theory, a certain ambiguity, and a certain degree of contradiction: Bureaucrats are supposedly, at the same time, subservient to societal interest groups and autonomous from society in general. This journal has pioneered the argument that state autonomy is a likely consequence of the public’s ignorance of most areas of state activity (e.g., Somin 1998; DeCanio 2000a, 2000b, 2006, 2007; Ravenal 2000a). But state autonomy does not necessarily mean that bureaucrats substitute their own interests for those of what could be called the “national society” that they ostensibly serve. I have argued (Ravenal 2000a) that, precisely because of the public-ignorance and elite-expertise factors, and especially because the opportunities – at least for bureaucrats (a few notable post-government lobbyist cases nonwithstanding) – for lucrative self-dealing are stringently fewer in the defense and diplomatic areas of government than they are in some of the contract-dispensing and more under-the-radar-screen agencies of government, the “public-choice” imputation of self-dealing, rather than working toward the national interest (which, however may not be synonymous with the interests, perceived or expressed, of citizens!) is less likely to hold. In short, state autonomy is likely to mean, in the derivation of foreign policy, that “state elites” are using rational judgment, in insulation from self-promoting interest groups – about what strategies, forces, and weapons are required for national defense. Ironically, “public choice” – not even a species of economics, but rather a kind of political interpretation – is not even about “public” choice, since, like the bureaucratic-politics model, it repudiates the very notion that bureaucrats make truly “public” choices; rather, they are held, axiomatically, to exhibit “rent-seeking” behavior, wherein they abuse their public positions in order to amass private gains, or at least to build personal empires within their ostensibly official niches. Such sub- rational models actually explain very little of what they purport to observe. Of course, there is some truth in them, regarding the “behavior” of some people, at some times, in some circumstances, under some conditions of incentive and motivation. But the factors that they posit operate mostly as constraints on the otherwise rational optimization of objectives that, if for no other reason than the playing out of official roles, transcends merely personal or parochial imperatives. My treatment of “role” differs from that of the bureaucratic-politics theorists, whose model of the derivation of foreign policy depends heavily, and acknowledgedly, on a narrow and specific identification of the role- playing of organizationally situated individuals in a partly conflictual “pulling and hauling” process that “results in” some policy outcome. Even here, bureaucratic-politics theorists Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow (1999, 311) allow that “some players are not able to articulate [sic] the governmental politics game because their conception of their job does not legitimate such activity.” This is a crucial admission, and one that points – empirically – to the need for a broader and generic treatment of role. Roles (all theorists state) give rise to “expectations” of performance. My point is that virtually every governmental role, and especially national-security roles, and particularly the roles of the uniformed military, embody expectations of devotion to the “national interest”; rationality in the derivation of policy at every functional level; and objectivity in the treatment of parameters, especially external parameters such as “threats” and the power and capabilities of other nations. Sub-rational models (such as “public choice”) fail to take into account even a partial dedication to the “national” interest (or even the possibility that the national interest may be honestly misconceived in more parochial terms). In contrast, an official’s role connects the individual to the (state-level) process, and moderates the (perhaps otherwise) self-seeking impulses of the individual. Role-derived behavior tends to be formalized and codified; relatively transparent and at least peer-reviewed, so as to be consistent with expectations; surviving the particular individual and transmitted to successors and ancillaries; measured against a standard and thus corrigible; defined in terms of the performed function and therefore derived from the state function; and un-corrupt, because personal cheating and even egregious aggrandizement are conspicuously discouraged. My own direct observation suggests that defense decision-makers attempt to “frame” the structure of the problems that they try to solve on the basis of the most accurate intelligence. They make it their business to know where the threats come from. Thus, threats are not “socially constructed” (even though, of course, some values are). A major reason for the rationality, and the objectivity, of the process is that much security planning is done, not in vaguely undefined circum- stances that offer scope for idiosyncratic, subjective behavior, but rather in structured and reviewed organizational frameworks. Non-rationalities (which are bad for understanding and prediction) tend to get filtered out. People are fired for presenting skewed analysis and for making bad predictions. This is because something important is riding on the causal analysis and the contingent prediction. For these reasons, “public choice” does not have the “feel” of reality to many critics who have participated in the structure of defense decision-making. In that structure, obvious, and even not-so-obvious, “rent-seeking” would not only be shameful; it would present a severe risk of career termination. And, as mentioned, the defense bureaucracy is hardly a productive place for truly talented rent-seekers to operate compared to opportunities for personal profit in the commercial world. A bureaucrat’s very self-placement in these reaches of government testifies either to a sincere commitment to the national interest or to a lack of sufficient imagination to exploit opportunities for personal profit.

### 1NR---AT: Impact Defense

#### Doesn’t thump the internal link, we are on the brink

FA 20 (Farm Aid, “Understanding the Economic Crisis Family Farms are Facing,” <https://www.farmaid.org/blog/fact-sheet/understanding-economic-crisis-family-farms-are-facing/>)

Faced with multiple years of losses that have whittled away equity, many farmers are making hard choices. Many are selling off land, livestock or equipment in an effort to hold on. Others are finding off-farm jobs to supplement farm income, only to see those jobs go away. Some farmers are choosing to retire early, while others are declaring bankruptcy in an effort to keep their farm. These tough choices are raising concerns that we are on the cusp of a slow but huge wave of farm losses not seen since the 1980s. Chapter 12 bankruptcy was created during the 1980s Farm Crisis specifically for family farmers and fisherman and offers one indicator of extreme stress in the farm sector. Because most farmers who are in crisis do not end up filing a Chapter 12, bankruptcy data is really just the tip of the iceberg that contains much larger number of farms in crisis. By June 2020, Chapter 12 bankruptcy filings totaled 580, representing an 8% rise from June 2019 levels.[25] The largest increases in bankruptcies came from the Midwest (23%), Northwest (70%) and Southeast (22%), with more than half of filings occurring in the Midwest alone over the last year. Wisconsin, the country’s second largest dairy state, had the country’s highest number of Chapter 12 filings (69) between July 2019 and June 2020, followed by Nebraska (38), Georgia (36), Minnesota (36), Iowa (33) and Kansas (32). In total, 23 states saw bankruptcy filings rise over the last 12 months, with the biggest increases occurring in Wisconsin, Oregon and Iowa.[26]

#### Hospital closures are the death-knell for rural America

Weingarten 18, writer and editor based in Tucson, Arizona, with a background in food systems, agriculture, and community organizing. Her journalism and creative nonfiction has appeared in the New York Times, The New York Review of Books, The Guardian, the Economic Hardship Reporting Project, Guernica, and Longreads, and elsewhere. She was a finalist for the James Beard Award in Investigative Reporting. (Debbie, “Rural Emergency: Hospital Closures Are Putting Farmers Out of Business,” *In These Times*, <https://inthesetimes.com/article/rural-poverty-hospital-closures-affordable-health-care-farmers>)

Still, rural communities are facing the closure of hospitals and clinics. In 2016, The National Rural Health Association (NRHA) announced that 673 rural hospitals were at risk to close. Of those, 210 were at ​“extreme risk” of closure. The NRHA warns that ​“Medical deserts are forming across the nation, significantly adding to the health care workforce shortage in rural communities. Seventy-seven percent of rural U.S. counties are already considered Primary Care Health Professional Shortage Areas.” Knudson says the health care industry is undergoing a significant transformation in terms of how medical care is being reimbursed. ​“Our reimbursement system is moving from a volume to value,” she says. ​“Historically hospitals have been reimbursed by the number of hospitalizations they provided — you have 10 hospitalizations and you get reimbursed for 10 stays. Our country has really shifted as much as possible to outpatient to make health care more affordable.” That means a decrease in admissions, more outpatient procedures, and less reimbursable care for hospitals. Additionally, Knudson says many of the rural hospitals closing are in states that have not expanded Medicaid, which has led to a higher number of uninsured patients. ​“When people are uninsured, it’s difficult to collect payment for that hospitalization.” Hospital closures can be devastating to rural communities, creating gaps in access to the detriment of residents. ​“Many of these hospital closures are happening in areas with the highest concentration of heart disease and diabetes, and in some of the poorest communities in the country,” says Maggie Elehwany of the NRHA. ​“When that hospital closes, it’s like putting a nail in the coffin of that community. You can’t attract businesses or families with kids or keep retirees. So we’re fighting not only for rural hospitals, but also for the economies of these rural communities as well.”

#### US shocks prevent extinction –causes global conflict and destabilizes international order

DoCampo 17 [Isabel DoCampo joined the Council's Global Food and Agriculture Program in 2015 and currently serves as a research associate. Previously, she has conducted research for Vivo en Positivo, a Bolivian HIV organization, and served as a fellow for the Project on International Peace and Security, through which she presented a policy brief regarding epidemic security at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. DoCampo holds a BA in international relations with a minor in public health from the College of William and Mary 2-8-2017 https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/blog/global-food-thought/food-secure-future-warding-instability-and-conflict]

Food Insecurity and Price Shocks can Spark Violence and Political Instability

We have learned time and again that food supply shocks—like food price spikes—lead to instability, violence, and even regime collapse. In 2007 and 2008, when global food prices spiked dramatically, the governments of Haiti and Madagascar fell in the wake of food price-related protests. In 2010 and 2011, food prices were again implicated in the destabilizing uprisings of the Arab Spring. More recently, severe food shortages and soaring inflation have sparked rioting and lootings throughout Venezuela, as 90 percent of Venezuelan families struggle to afford food.

Council research has found that food price-related unrest occurs most often in urban areas, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Africa and Asia, where rates of undernourishment are high and rates of urbanization are higher, housed 28 of the 29 riots that occurred during the food price spikes in 2007-2008 and 2010-2011. In developing cities on these continents, impoverished urban dwellers may spend up to 50 percent of their incomes on food. Additionally, food supplies in these cities many be tenuous—either dependent on food imports or domestic production vulnerable to external shocks. As such, urban consumers in low- and middle-income countries may face chronic food insecurity, significant food price volatility, and little ability to absorb price shocks—these factors all contribute to the likelihood of rioting and unrest in urban areas plagued by hunger crises.

Rural citizens—though they aren’t able to mobilize as readily as their urban counterparts—are deeply impacted by instability in agricultural markets and chronic food insecurity. Rural communities depend on stable food prices, sufficient agricultural inputs, and fair agrarian policy to sustain their livelihoods. In their absence, rural residents may be more likely to engage in civil unrest. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)—which concluded peace negotiations with the government in December after a bloody, 52-year conflict—was formed by disenfranchised rural communities, who had suffered from a collapse in agricultural markets and a lack of agrarian reform. FARC continued to recruit poor, rural people throughout its insurgency.

Food Insecurity is a Powerful Driver for Migration

Food insecurity is not only a potential driver of conflict, but it can also spur large-scale migration. The World Food Programme and the International Organization for Migration first identified this relationship in the migratory patterns of subsistence farmers and households impacted by drought in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras in 2014. They found that food insecurity proved a significant factor in decisions to migrate, particularly to the United States, while violence may have also played a less consistent role in outward migration from the region.

This is a phenomenon we, sadly, see playing out today across the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. In South Sudan, where nearly one third of the population is in need of emergency food assistance as a result of civil war, 450,000 people have left the country since July 2016. Conflict in Syria, meanwhile, has decimated agricultural production, destroying agricultural infrastructure and disrupting food supply chains. With little ability to generate livelihood or secure sufficient food, many farmers and rural households have had no choice but to migrate. Those that have fled to refugee camps in the region continue to face hunger as funding cuts have restricted the ability of organizations like WFP and UNHCR to supply sufficient rations and aid; many refugees have chosen to migrate farther, to Europe in many cases, in response.

Food Security Promotes International Security

The impacts of food insecurity, especially when they provoke instability and unrest, reach well beyond national borders.

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When food insecurity topples governments, the international order is invariably altered and regions are destabilized. When food insecurity forces migration across regions, or continents, international relations are strained, public services are weakened, and families are torn apart.

These are lessons, however, that are too often employed in hindsight. In Cameroon, the United Nations Development Programme has begun to provide agricultural inputs and training to youth, who, without economic alternative, were being recruited to Boko Haram. The Colombian government incorporated agricultural development and rural poverty reduction measures into its peace treaty with FARC, having completed its first rural census in 45 years in 2015.

We all have enormous stake in ensuring the food security of individuals and communities around the world—in providing both consumers and producers with the resilience to withstand shocks from climate, conflict, or any extreme conditions. We have the opportunity, now, to do so before further instability threatens our collective welfare. Otherwise, we will continue to face new iterations of the challenges we see today: deeply entrenched conflict, widespread migration, and unimaginable human suffering.

### 1NR---Link

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

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

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

#### **Enforcement against multiple companies magnifies the link.**

Sutner 20, News Director @ TechTarget. (Shaun, 12-15-2020, "Efforts to break up big tech expected to continue under Biden", *SearchCIO*, <https://searchcio.techtarget.com/news/252493702/Efforts-to-break-up-big-tech-expected-to-continue-under-Biden>)

Biden pushed on antitrust

Antitrust activists, though, are optimistic about the prospects of a Biden administration clamping down on big tech -- an outcome they argue is long overdue, with decades of light enforcement of antitrust laws. They are pushing Biden toward aggressive antitrust policy. Thirty-three antitrust, consumer and progressive groups in a letter on Nov. 30 urged Biden to reject the influence of big tech vendors and to exclude big tech executives, lobbyists, lawyers and consultants from his administration. Prominent among the signatories was Public Citizen, the liberal consumer advocacy group that has called for Biden to triple the FTC's annual funding, from $400 million to $1.2 billion. "At the front end we want these investigations to be pressed. There are supposed to be investigations of Amazon and Apple and we believe there are cases to be brought there," said Alex Harman, competition policy advocate at Public Citizen and former chief legal counsel to Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii). "It's a lot to bring big antitrust cases against multiple companies, and that requires resources," Harman said. "As a lawyer, I don't want to say 'Biden does this,' but we want results that structurally change these companies. We don't want quick resolutions and quick settlements."

### 1NR---Link Uniqueness

#### Link can only go neg:

#### DOJ can’t do it all

**Palko** & Rand **19**, \*David, associate in Womble Bond Dickinson. \*\*Ripley, associate, one of the President’s United States Attorneys in North Carolina. (8/9/19, "Year One of Trump’s DOJ: An Overview of the Four Major Categories of Offenders", *JD Supra*, https://www.jdsupra.com/legalnews/year-one-of-trump-s-doj-an-overview-of-53913/)

Some of this decrease in the number of drug offenders can be attributed to the **zero-sum nature of DOJ resources** – the direction of **increased** **effort** toward offenses in **one** category will result in **fewer offenses** being prosecuted in **other categories**. But a part of this decrease is likely due to an increase in strategic prosecution of certain drug offenses in state court. In contrast to immigration offenses, which are crimes of exclusive federal jurisdiction, drug offenses are crimes of concurrent jurisdiction – they can be prosecuted either in state court or in federal court. In determining whether to prosecute a drug offense, federal prosecutors look at many factors, including whether the offense would likely be punished more seriously in state court or in federal court. Some state laws provide for harsher punishment for certain drug offenses than federal law does. For example, someone in North Carolina with no criminal record who possesses 28 grams of heroin is looking at a mandatory sentence under North Carolina law of 225-282 months in prison. In North Carolina’s federal courts, the guideline range for the same person with the same amount of heroin starts at 21-27 months. On the other hand, a person who has the highest level criminal record provided for under North Carolina law and who is in possession of 28 grams of crack cocaine is looking at a mandatory sentence under North Carolina law of 35-51 months in prison; the same person with the same amount of crack cocaine is looking at a federal advisory guideline range starting at 100-125 months.

#### Forced choices regarding prosecutors and resources are controlling DOJ efforts

Hudak 18 – PhD in Political Science @ Vandy, deputy director of the Center for Effective Public Management and a senior fellow in Governance Studies. His research examines questions of presidential power in the contexts of administration, personnel, and public policy (John, Brookings Institute, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2018/01/04/why-sessions-is-wrong-to-reverse-federal-marijuana-policy/)

As I have noted previously on the Fresh Toast, the Attorney General does not have unlimited resources to enforce federal law. Every day federal prosecutors make choices about which crimes and cases to pursue. Chasing after the thousands of legal marijuana growers, processers, and dispensaries and the tens of thousands of people they employ will cost DEA significant amounts of federal tax dollars. Add to that the costs US Attorneys will incur prosecuting those individuals and representing the government on appeals. That very quickly eats into the same Department of Justice budget that could be spent fighting terrorism, combating cybercrime, dealing with the opioid epidemic, eradicating MS-13 or dozens of other federal law enforcement priorities. These are the choices the Attorney General has to make. It is clear the public would rather dollars be spent on other priorities, but budgets are limited and the rescission of Cole complicates that.

### 1NR---AT: Healthcare Uniqueness

#### Health consolidation drives high consumer spending

Barsotti 21, citing Professor of Economics Martin Gaynor (Scott, “Small Changes Can Have Drastic Impacts in Health Care,” <https://www.cmu.edu/news/stories/archives/2021/july/health-care.html>)

The U.S. health sector is a huge, sprawling, complicated network of providers, payors and policies that can seem hopelessly complex and stubbornly resistant to change. And while that is true in some respects, it is not to say that improving the system would be impossible. In fact, the U.S. health care sector is so mammoth, that even seemingly incremental fixes can have major impacts. Carnegie Mellon University economist Martin Gaynor has identified some of those fixes. "There are some very simple, straightforward things we can do that can really make a difference," said Gaynor, the E. J. Barone University Professor Of Economics And Public Policy in the Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy. On July 15, Professor Gaynor will be part of an expert panel on health care at Heinz College, moderated by Margot Sanger-Katz of The New York Times. Other panelists include Katherine Baicker from the University of Chicago, Zack Cooper from Yale University, and Shelley White-Means from the University of Tennessee. The panelists will discuss several major issues facing the American health system and propose solutions. Gaynor has extensively studied competition and consolidation in the U.S. health care market, a growing problem nationwide. He has testified before Congress that in markets where there is greater consolidation and less competition (many places in the U.S. only have one or two large health systems that dominate the local market), prices tend to increase substantially, without any improvements in quality (and in some cases reductions in quality). Gaynor remarks that health care consolidation has accelerated in recent years, negatively affecting consumers. Consolidation between close competitors causes prices — and health care spending — to go up. When that happens, the premiums that insurers charge to employers also go up, and workers end up footing the bill, either through reduced wages, paying a higher share of premiums, reductions in insurance coverage or in some cases all three.

#### Consolidation leads to closed-loop care---that drives high costs

Vaidya 21 (Anuja, “As independent practices vanish, experts debate the pros & cons of a consolidated market,” Med City News, <https://medcitynews.com/2021/07/as-independent-practices-vanish-experts-debate-the-pros-cons-of-a-consolidated-market/>)

Independent physician practices are fixtures in their communities, and their loss will lead to a less competitive market in terms of both cost and quality, said Anders Gilberg, senior vice president of Medical Group Management Association, in an email. “Although the impact of consolidation depends on the type of consolidation and how concentrated the market is, research shows that provider consolidation can lead to higher costs to patients without clear evidence of improved quality of care,” he said. Marni J. Carey, executive director of the Association of Independent Doctors, echoed this sentiment, adding that fewer independent practices mean less choice for patients. For example, when a patient goes to a primary care physician who is employed by a hospital, they may only receive referrals to specialists also employed by the hospital. This can result in a closed loop of care that could be far more costly than an independent physician who has more flexibility with regard to referrals. “Patients lose access [when practice acquisitions rise],” Carey said, in a phone interview. “[They] get funneled into systems and don’t get the wide latitude of choosing the best physician for their condition.”