# Wake Round One Wiki Doc

# 1NC

### Racial Capitalism K---1NC

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

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

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of a few platitudes, the passage of some policies, or the creation of some agencies that claim to be able to fix the outdated economic system, especially when all of the above come from billionaires themselves.

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

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

The opening paragraph begins with the following disinformation:

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

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

Disinformation is further escalated in the next paragraph:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### Capitalist 5G innovation causes exploitation, mass layoffs, unsustainable accumulation, IOT explosion, militarism, and US-China conflict---BUT democratic socialist 5G development would allow for widespread access and improvement of 5G technology.

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These high band towers offer incredible performance, but at a cost – they have a range of only around 1000 feet. For comparison current 4G towers and low band 5G towers have a range of 10 miles, more than 50 times further than high frequency 5G. This means that high frequency 5G deployments require a huge number of base stations anywhere that needs coverage. As you can imagine the plans are currently to deploy these only to metropolitan areas – where there would be enough customers for the telecom companies to make a profit from the installation. The cost of high frequency deployment guarantees that 5G will be deployed unevenly – with blazingly fast connections for areas that can afford it, and little improvement for those outside these areas.

The short range of a top end 5G tower also presents a number of important logistical challenges. For a city to be properly wired up with full 5G coverage a base station must be placed around every 500 feet. The question of where these towers should be installed is taking place behind closed doors. Masts are already being installed across the country and we have seen a number of incidents where local residents have objected to the imposition of a base station on their streets – but have been left with no recourse. It’s clear that profits and the abstract idea of ‘progress’ are being put ahead of the real needs of our people.

This has also been undertaken with little regard to preserving historically and culturally important sites. The Church of England has reached an agreement with a number of telecom providers to install 5G base stations in places of worship. This is not a new phenomenon. There are already 16,000 churches in the UK that are formally serving as network nodes. Vodaphone’s head of networks Kye Prigg let the mask slip when, referring to previous rollouts, he stated that “it looked like they were trying to help the community but really it has been about monetising the steeple.”

The government is keen that our concerns do not stop them from becoming a telecoms world leader. They have proposed removing the already very limited power of local councils to reject the installation of 5G infrastructure in their areas. They have even proposed doing away with planning permission entirely – instead, giving private telecom companies a blanket “permitted development right.” This would enable telecom giants to install towers of at least 20m in height without any approval from local authorities. In Birmingham a tower of this height has already been proposed and is being opposed by local councillors. Labour’s Councillor Rob Pocock stated that “in effect, the government intends that masts of the kind being proposed at Sutton Oak Road would be installed by the telecoms companies without residents or indeed councils having any say in it whatsoever. These proposals are potentially robbing people of their right to a democratic vote!”

These concerns are often dismissed by the liberal establishment as pure NIMBYism. One article published at ISPReview.com laments the “tedious process of planning permission” when referring to plans to increase the height of a Manchester tower by 7.5m and to deploy new 5G infrastructure on top of it. The writer callously dismisses local opposition, stating: “Suffice to say that adding a bit of height isn’t likely to make too much of a difference to the local area, which is already fairly mixed in appearance.”

There is little doubt that 5G networks will outperform the current generation. But what will this enable? As Marxists we understand that all large-scale technology is implemented to serve the interests of the current ruling class. Trotsky put this well when he stated that: “Technique and science develop not in a vacuum but in human society, which consists of classes. The ruling class, the possessing class, controls technique and through it controls nature. Technique in itself cannot be called either militaristic or pacifistic. In a society in which the ruling class is militaristic, technique is in the service of militarism.”

In capitalist society the driving force of the ruling class is private profit, and the installation of these new networks definitely enable further exploitation and accelerated accumulation of capital. At the most basic level it will allow industry to automate and monitor far more than the current network allows. With industry in private hands this means job losses for the masses and profits for the bosses. If industry was publicly owned under the democratic control of workers then this automation could benefit the whole of society.

5G towers will allow around one million ‘smart’ devices to communicate per square mile. This will enable an explosion in the Internet of Things (IOT) – networked devices across the country that communicate with each other to collect data. At its best, IOT can be used to develop and deliver incredibly optimised processes. There is an orthodoxy in the ruling class that IOT is going to be the next big thing, that it will produce a huge surplus of value any day now. At present this value is largely speculative in nature, huge troves of data are being collected with the promise that one day somebody will find something to do with it. 5G is likely to be the key that unlocks this data. It will enable lightweight smart devices to send their sensor feeds back to data centres for crunching in real time. Demos are already in place showing factories with robots and cameras being controlled remotely from the cloud.

It is clear that AI and the Internet of Things cannot be left in the hands of the bosses. Companies like Amazon are using their innovations as chains to bind the working class. We are monitored constantly at work and algorithms help them decide who to work harder, who to sack and who is at risk of doing something dangerous like unionising. Internal documents from Amazon have proven that they have created an interactive heat map of their 510 Whole Foods locations across the US – and assigned each store a unionization risk score. Their calculations used factors like “employee loyalty, turnover rate and racial diversity.”

The promise of increased speed for urban centres is also appealing to the ruling class – it will enable a new generation of toys for the super-rich – with self-driving cars, seamless virtual reality and an endless stream of ‘smart’ devices providing a colourful set of distractions while our planet collapses under the weight of their greed.

But beyond the immediate uses of 5G technology itself, the project of deploying it is incredibly valuable for a number of reasons. There is a huge opportunity in the rollout of 5G – it is being called the critical infrastructure of our generation. Private companies stand to make huge profits from the installation and ultimately the ownership of this structure. Huge contracts for the development and installation of 5G infrastructure are providing new market opportunities for the private sector. We are also seeing this become a key part of the trade war between China and the US. Over a sustained period the world is increasingly fractured into competing blocs, with smaller countries forced to choose which superpower they will trust with their telecoms. Cisco or Huawei, Trump or Xi Jinping.

The question of whether or not there is a backdoor in Huawei kit is inane. Of course there is, just like there is a backdoor in Cisco kit, and a backdoor in all the legacy kit. The real argument isn’t whether there’s a risk of Chinese kit being used for spying – it’s a flat choice as to whether we want the American or Chinese state to have access to our data. This is not conjecture. There is a long history of Cisco made network infrastructure being used by American institutions like the National Security Agency (NSA) for spying. In 2013, the German newspaper Der Spiegel revealed that the NSA was able to use backdoors in Cisco kit. Cisco denied that they were collaborating with the state but leaks like this kept happening. In 2014 another so called “undocumented test interface” was found in Cisco small business hardware. And in 2018 it was revealed that 8.5 million Cisco routers had a hidden hardcoded account for remote access.

Of course, none of this is to say that we should reject or oppose technological development, but simply that under capitalist rule its development will continue to deepen inequality and serve as a means for collecting and monetising data on working class people. A democratic planned economy, by contrast, could use the resources that have been piled into 5G to meet the real needs of humankind. For starters, 1.9 million households in Britain have no access to the internet – and at least 10 million more have only ‘pay as you go’ sim cards allowing them a trickle of access to our networks. As digital services increasingly become the default, families are left to choose between an internet connection and food. This inequality is most often described as “the digital divide.”

Those who punt 5G would quickly butt in at this point to explain that 5G will go a long way to addressing the digital divide. Tech companies have spent a great deal of effort convincing us that this is the case. The best example of this is Cisco’s 5G Rural First campaign. They managed a deployment of 5G base stations to rural communities – providing connectivity to those who previously had to go without and proving that the Internet of Things could be useful in tracking salmon for fishing.

Crucially though, the organisers admitted that almost everything they did would have been possible on older 4G technology. The issue is not that we don’t have good enough technology to bring the internet to deprived communities – the issue is that our ruling class doesn’t care to. It’s not profitable to run fibre-optic to sparsely populated countryside and there’s not usually money in providing free unrestricted access to what ought to be infrastructure. The issue is one of resources and where they go. A planned economy could easily prioritise full coverage over blazing fast speeds – but a market economy in the hands of the capitalists simply does not.

Every human should have access to the internet. Crucially this access must be unrestricted. Companies like Facebook are deploying what they call “free” network access across the developing world – but to borrow a term from the open source community – this access is “free as in beer, not free as in freedom.” Users find themselves locked in to Facebook and its subsidiaries and partners – unable to access unrestricted information. While this does cost Facebook money in the short term, much like Coca Cola did in the last century, they are laying the groundwork for a future monopoly – and not acting through altruism.

#### AV’s lock in neoliberal exploitation through corporate profits at the expense of mined communities

Marx 19, doctoral student in Media, Film, and Television, critic of tech futures (Paris, “Self-Driving Cars Will Be a Disaster for Our Environment, Our Health, and Our Privacy,” Medium, https://onezero.medium.com/self-driving-cars-will-be-a-disaster-for-our-environment-our-health-and-our-privacy-6f5b93b7a36f)

If you’ve listened to the musings of some of Silicon Valley’s most prominent visionaries, you might believe we’re headed toward a future with ubiquitous autonomous vehicles to shuttle us wherever we want to go.

No longer would we have to risk getting stuck in traffic, caught in the rain on our bikes, or running into serial killers on the subway — we’d all be closed off in our own pods that guide us to our destination as we sleep, watch a video, or get up to something steamy in the back.

I’m sorry to have to break it to you, but that future has always been an illusion. If self-driving cars ever become a reality — and that’s a big “if” — they won’t be the magic transport cure-all that tech billionaires pretend they’ll be. Sure, they would likely provide benefits for Silicon Valley CEOs, but a lot of people would be made worse off — and we would hardly ever hear about it.

The real transportation revolution doesn’t involve two-ton death machines or hyperintelligent computers, but more common technologies like buses, bicycles, and our own legs. You won’t hear that from Elon Musk or Sergey Brin because rebuilding cities to focus on people won’t necessarily generate big, ongoing profits for their firms. But that’s exactly what we need to do.

False promises

Back in January 2018, when self-driving cars were still a topic of great excitement, I wrote that they were much further away than tech companies were leading us to believe.

Then, on the night of March 18, 2018, an Uber self-driving vehicle was doing a test run when it struck and killed 49-year-old Elaine Herzberg as she crossed the road on her bicycle. At the time, people were quick to blame the safety driver who wasn’t looking at the road, but then leaks began to show Uber’s self-driving team was under immense pressure to deliver. It wasn’t until recently that we found out that Uber’s self-driving team didn’t program the system to consider that people might cross the street outside designated crosswalks. As a result, the car couldn’t figure out what it was picking up when it detected Herzberg, and thus didn’t know how to react. Humans weren’t supposed to be there.

No one has been charged over Herzberg’s death, just as tech companies are rarely prosecuted for the harm caused by their actions. But Herzberg’s death did burst the self-driving bubble: Leaders in the field went from saying self-driving cars would be everywhere in a matter of years to admitting they were actually several decades away, and may never reach the vaunted “level five” status where they’d be able to drive with no intervention from humans.

People without mobility options today will still face those problems in a self-driving future.

High cost of automobility

The timelines have been extended, but that hasn’t stopped people like Elon Musk from keeping the self-driving dream alive — even as he hedges on what “full self-driving” really means — and continuing to ignore the broader consequences of a transportation system reliant on automobiles: tens of thousands of deaths every year in the United States alone, an obesity epidemic that our sprawled communities played a role in creating, and a loneliness crisis created, in part, because so many people live in car-enabled suburbs, where we’re far from our friends, our family, and the vibrant places where we might go to meet them.

Tech companies promised that the self-driving car would solve many of our transport problems: serving the underserved, eliminating parking, reducing congestion, and eliminating car ownership. But we need to be real; it’s all a fantasy. The claim that self-driving cars will be cheaper to use has proven to be questionable, and even if they did reduce the cost marginally, they still wouldn’t be free. That means the people without mobility options today will still face those problems in a self-driving future. And the benefits of reduced parking would actually increase congestion, as the vehicles would keep moving until being hailed. Autonomous vehicles will only cement our sprawled, suburban landscapes and the health crisis that comes with it, along with the high cost of service delivery to low-density areas and the climate cost of living in such inefficient environments.

And what goes into these vehicles to make them work? We never seem to consider that. If autonomous vehicles are electric, as the tech titans promise, they won’t have the tailpipe emissions produced by the internal combustion engines, but that doesn’t necessarily mean they’ll be clean, green driving machines. In fact, the electric vehicle revolution will simply swap an extractivism of fossil fuels for one reliant on metals and minerals, requiring a massive surge in mining activities in Asia, Africa, and South America that will devastate communities, environments, and the lives of workers in the process. For example, the massive lithium reserves in Bolivia shouldn’t be ignored as a factor in the recent military coup.

But self-driving cars wouldn’t just require the extraction of minerals and metals from the earth. A self-driving future would also require the extraction of data from us and our surroundings. These companies wouldn’t just have us pay for a ride; they would also track our movements, the locations we visit, who we travel with, and combine that information with all the other valuable data they already store about us. Tech companies, in partnership with the state, are building an extensive system of surveillance and control. At what point do we say “enough?”

People, not cars

Think hard about the state of our cities and our broken transportation networks, and ask how technology will suddenly solve the problems created by decades of underfunding and the prioritization of cars. Tech isn’t going to save us. That will require structural change.

We’re facing a climate crisis, an urban crisis, a health crisis, a loneliness crisis, and so many more. The Band-Aid solutions of self-driving cars — if they ever appear — won’t solve them. And either way, we don’t have decades to wait. We need action today.

That means we need to stop designing cities and transportation systems around what’s most profitable for real estate, finance, and car companies. Instead we need to put people first. Many Americans claim to love their cars, but spending hours idling in traffic and yet more trapped in a metal box breathing in toxic fumes to get where you need to go serves no one.

We need cities that make it easy for people to walk or bike to get their groceries, go to the doctor, and bring their kids to school. We need transit systems that make it easy for people to get where they need to go on efficient, well-maintained bus routes. We need streets that don’t pose a mortal threat to the life that surrounds them, but are open to everyone and lined with spaces where life can flourish.

This will require us to rethink how cities work and who they work for, and a massive redirection of funding and subsidies from highways to subways, cars to buses, parking spots to bike lanes, sprawl to density — all while putting the lives of everyday people ahead of traffic speed. It can be hard to imagine an alternative to our current, auto-dominated system, but it’s the only way to address the crises we face.

Self-driving cars will keep us atomized in sprawled suburbs, but walkable dense communities with ubiquitous transit will connect us in ways we can scarcely imagine. The future isn’t found in the false promises of tech billionaires who are only concerned with their power and fortunes, but in reconnecting with the fundamentals of mobility and ensuring the system prioritizes the marginalized over the powerful.

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

\*2 point font and paragraph merging for readability.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Polarization of the Class System

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

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

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

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

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

Marx’s Communism as the Socialist Ideal

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Freedom as Necessity

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

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

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

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

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

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

A New System of Social Metabolic Reproduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

The International of Workers and Peoples

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

As educators, it is crucial for us to examine how we talk, teach, and write about inequality as an object of critique in an age of precarity, uncertainty and the current pandemic crisis. This is especially true at a time when a growing number of authoritarian regimes around the globe substitute replace thoughtful dialogue and critical engagement with the suppression of dissent and a culture of forgetting r. How do we situate our analysis of education as part of a broader discourse and mode of analysis that interrogates the promises, ideals, and claims of a substantive democracy? How do we fight against iniquitous relations of power and wealth that empty power of its emancipatory possibilities, and as Hannah Arendt has argued, “makes most people superfluous as human beings”? How might we understand how neoliberal ideology, with its appropriation of market-based values, regressive notions of freedom and agency, uses language to infiltrate daily life? How does a pandemic pedagogy in the service of neoliberalism produce identities defined by market values, and normalize a notion of responsibility and individuality that convinces people that whatever problem they face they have no one to blame but themselves? Repeated endlessly on right-wing media platforms, the underlying conditions that disproportionately produce chronic illness among poor people of color disappear among a public distracted, if not persuaded, by a pandemic pedagogy that celebrates unchecked self-interest, disdains social responsibility, and turns away from the reality of a society with deep-seated institutional rot and unravelling of social connections and the social contract.

Pandemic pedagogy thrives on inequality and becomes a militarized and heartless normalizing tool to convince the broader public that the lives of the elderly, sick, and vulnerable should be valued according to how much they contribute to the economy. And if they are willing to die in order not to be a drain on the economy, all well and good. Nothing escapes the cruel logic of neoliberalism with its arrogance and hubris on full display as it bathes in the glow of right-wing populism, ultra-nationalism, and neofascism. Its accoutrements of dictatorship are everywhere and can be seen in the swagger of militia that storm state capitals, in police who punch and pepper spray protesters and push elderly men to the ground, and in military forces on the streets without badges reinforcing a climate of fear, repression, and unaccountability. There is more at work here than a lack of humanity on the part of the Trump administration. As the Irish journalist Fintan O’Toole observes, there is also the deepening grip of a culture of cruelty and dehumanization. He writes:

“As a society the American people are being habituated into accepting cruelty on a wide scale. Americans are being taught by Trump and his administration not to see other people as human beings whose lives are as important as their own. Once that line has been crossed – and it is not just Trump and the people around him, but many of Trump’s supporters as well – then we know where that all leads, what the ultimate destination is. There is no mystery about it. We know what happens when a government and its leaders dehumanize large numbers of people.”

Depoliticization and the Authoritarian Turn

Neoliberalism is not only an economic system, it is also an ideological apparatus that relentlessly attempts to structure consciousness, values, desires, and modes of identification in ways that align individuals with its governing structures. Central to this pedagogical project is the attempt to prevent individuals from translating private issues and troubles into broader systemic considerations. By doing this, it becomes difficult for individuals to grasp the historical, social, economic, and political forces at work in shaping a social order as a human activity deeply immersed in specific relations of power. Neoliberalism’s attempt to erase or rewrite historical and social forces makes it difficult for individuals to imagine alternative notions of society, with themselves as collective actors, or view their problems as more than the limitations of faulty character, moral failure, or a problem of personal responsibility. Reducing individuals to isolated, discrete, hermetically-sealed human beings whose lives are shaped only by notions of self-reliance and self-sufficiency is a pedagogical strategy that utterly depoliticizes people, leading them to believe that however a society is shaped, it is part of a natural order. President Trump echoed this “no alternative” narrative when asked about celebrities and rich people having special access to being tested for the coronavirus while few others had access. He replied, “Perhaps that’s been the story of life.”

This individualization of the social with its mounting privatization, gated communities, and social atomization undermines collective action, any viable notion of solidarity, and weakens the notion of global connectivity. The philosopher Byung-Chul Han has rightly argued that contemporary neoliberal society is shaped by a dysfunctional notion of solitude and hermitically-sealed notions of agency, all of which undermine the values and social connections vital to a democracy. He writes:

“Those subject to the neoliberal economy do not constitute a we that is capable of collective action. The mounting egoization and atomization of society is making the space for collective action shrink… The general collapse of the collective and the communal has engulfed it. Solidarity is vanishing. Privatization now reaches into the depths of the soul itself. The erosion of the communal is making all collective efforts more and more unlikely.”

This panoptical nature of hyper-individualism is more aligned with shared fears than shared responsibilities. Under such circumstances, trust and the notion that all life is related become difficult to grasp as the myopic language of private self-interest inures individuals to wider social problems such as extreme inequality. There is no understanding in this discourse of the damage fanatical entrepreneurialism does to our embodied collectivity. Nor is there any value attributed to the important responsibilities, social values, and notion of the common good that exceeds who we are as individuals, or how we have been shaped by diverse social forces in particular ways.

It should be clear that questions of economic and social justice cannot be addressed by a neoliberal pedagogy that enshrines self-interest and privatization while converting every social problem into individualized market solutions or regressive matters of personal responsibility. Under neoliberalism’s disimagination machine, individual responsibility is coupled with an ethos of greed, avarice, and personal gain. One consequence is the tearing up of social solidarities, public values, and an almost pathological disdain for democracy. This radical form of privatization is also a powerful force for the rise of fascist politics because it depoliticizes individuals, immerses them in the logic of social Darwinism, and makes them susceptible to the dehumanization of those considered a threat or disposable.

Just as the spread of the pandemic virus in the United States was not an innocent act of nature, neither is the rise and pervasive grip of inequality. What is clear is that neoliberal support for unbridled individualism has weakened democratic pressures and eroded democracy and equality as governing principles. Moreover, as a mode of public pedagogy, it has undercut social provisions, the social contract, and support for public goods such as education, public health, essential infrastructure, public transportation, and the most basic elements of the welfare state. As a form of pedagogical practice, neoliberalism has morphed into a form of pandemic pedagogy that sacrifices social needs and human life in the name of an economic rationality that values reviving economic growth over human rights. As a lived system of meaning and values, self-reliance and rugged individualism are the only categories available for shaping how individuals view themselves, and their relationship to others and to the planet. The individualization of everyone and the reduction of social problems to private troubles is paralleled by sanctioning a world marked by borders, walls, racism, hate, and a rejection of government intervention in the interest of the common good. Most importantly, neoliberal individualization personalizes power, creating a depoliticized subject whose only obligation as a citizen is defined by consuming and living in a world free from ethical and social responsibilities. In many ways, it does not just empty politics of any substance, it destroys its emancipatory prospects.

The neoliberal strategists use education not only to mask their abuses and the effects of their criminogenic policies, they also – in a time of crisis, when dissatisfaction of the masses might lead to chaos, revolts, and dangerous levels of resistance – move dangerously close to creating the conditions for a fascist politics. The noted theologian Frei Betto is right in stating that under such conditions, “…they cover up the causes of social ills and cover up their effects with ideologies that, by obscuring causes, fuel mood in the face of the effects. That’s why neoliberalism is now showing its authoritarian face – building walls that divide countries and ethnic groups, executive power over legislature and judiciary, disinformation about digital networks, the cult of the homeland, the brazen offensive against human rights.”

Neoliberalism and its regressive notion of individualism and individual responsibility has undermined the belief that human beings both make the world and can change it. The pandemic has ushered in a crisis that undermines that belief and opens the door for rethinking what kind of society and notion of politics will be faithful to the creation of a socialist democracy that speaks to the core values of justice, equality and solidarity. Under such circumstances, private resistance must give way to collective resistance, and personal and political rights must include economic rights. If inequality is to be defeated, the social state must replace the corporate state and social rights must be guaranteed for all. There can be no adequate struggle for economic justice and social equality unless economic inequality on a global level is addressed along with a movement for climate justice, the elimination of systemic racism and a halt to the spiraling militarism that has resulted in endless wars. This can only take place if the anti-democratic ideology of neoliberalism, with its collapse of the public into the private and its institutional structures of domination, are fully addressed and discredited. Étienne Balibar is right in stating that the triumph of neoliberalism has resulted in the “death zones of humanity.” Following Balibar, what must be made clear is that neoliberal capitalism is itself a pandemic and a dangerous harbinger of an updated fascist politics.

### T: Private Sector---1NC

#### Next off is T private sector

#### Private sector means all non-governmental persons or entities, including non-profits

Senate Report 95 (Senate Report. 104-1, “UNFUNDED MANDATE REFORM ACT OF 1995,” <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/104th-congress/senate-report/1> , date accessed 9/10/21)

"Private sector" is defined to cover all persons or entities in the United States except for State, local or tribal governments. It includes individuals, partnerships, associations, corporations, and educational and nonprofit institutions.

#### A topical aff could change a universally-applied standard, like the CWS [Consumer Welfare Standard]

Phillips 18, commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission. (Noah J. November 1, 2018, Before the Federal Trade Commission, “Competition and Consumer Protection in the 21st Century,” <https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/documents/public_events/1415284/ftc_hearings_session_5_transcript_11-1-18_0.pdf>)

Our second topic today is the consumer welfare standard. And I think most folks even out in the public know, this is the standard that we use across the board, mergers and conduct in courts and at agencies, to judge anticompetitive conduct. It is not only a standard that we in the U.S. apply, it is a standard that is used by competition agencies around the world. It is an economically-grounded standard, and it requires that there be harm to consumers for conduct to be condemned. Mere harm to competitors is considered insufficient. So let me repeat that again. There has to be harm to consumers, not just competitors. The reason that is so, the reason harm to competitors is considered insufficient is because sometimes a less-efficient firm losing sales or market share to a cheaper, more innovative or efficient rival, can be and often is consistent with vibrant competition and with outcomes that benefit consumers. Courts and agencies have embraced this standard for decades. Today, there are two very important discussions going on about the consumer welfare standard, and they are happening simultaneously. And I think it is important that we understand that there are two conversations going on. One is a continuing discussion about how we apply the standard, regarding whether enforcement is at the appropriate level, whether it is properly targeted. This is an introspective question on some level, in which scholars, economists, practitioners, and enforcers all ask ourselves, are we bringing the right kinds of cases? Are we using the right kinds of evidence? Should we be doing more or less in certain places? The antitrust bar, the business community, and others benefit from this ongoing and active analysis. The second discussion happening now, and the one on which today’s consumer welfare standard panels will focus, is whether the standard is itself the right metric we ought to use in antitrust enforcement and in antitrust law; some argue that enforcement under the consumer welfare standard has failed because of the law, and accordingly, that we should reform the law.

#### Violation: the aff applies exclusively to conduct in agricultural segment of the private sector.

#### Vote neg:

#### FIRST---limits and ground---the number of potential subsets is infinite---any industry, product, single companies, individuals---undermines clash. Only big affs have link uniqueness.

#### SECOND----precision---our interp has intent to define, exclude and is in legislative context.

### T: Per Se---1NC

#### T Prohibition

#### “Prohibition” requires a declaration of per se illegality

Loevinger 61 (Honorable Lee Loevinger- Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division. “THE RULE OF REASON IN ANTITRUST LAW” , *Section of Antitrust Law* , 1961, Vol. 19, PROCEEDINGS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, AUGUST 7 THROUGH 11, 1961 (1961), pp. 245-251, JSTOR accessed online via KU libraries, date accessed 9/13/21)

Running through the history of antitrust law are two contrapuntal themes: A prohibition of restraint of trade and a principle lately called the "rule of reason" which limits the prohibition. The legal rule against restraint of trade began in the 15th century in cases holding that a contract by which a man agreed not to practice his trade or profession was illegal.1 However, in the course of development of the common law, it became established that agreements which were ancillary to the sale or transfer of a trade or business and which were limited so as to impose a restriction no greater than reasonably necessary to protect the purchaser's interest.2

Thus, when the Sherman Act incorporated the common-law principles on this subject into federal statutory law 3 by adopting the concept of restraint of trade, it presumably imported both the principle that restrictions on competition are illegal and also the principle that in some circumstances a showing of reasonableness will legalize restrictions on competition. Nevertheless, when the question was first presented to the United States Supreme Court under the Sherman Act, it was clearly held (despite later disavowals4 ) that the justification of reasonableness was not available as a defense to a combination which had the effect of restraining trade.' Indeed, it was intimated that the question of reasonableness was not open to the courts in these actions at common law.6 However, when the Court reviewed this matter in Standard Oil Co. v. United States,7 it said in fairly explicit terms both that the Sherman Act prohibited only contracts or acts which unreasonably restrained competition and that the standard of reasonableness had been applied to all restraints of trade at the common law. The Court's assertion is somewhat weakened by the fact that it construed the rule of reason not as applying a standard for judging the character or consequences of the challenged conduct, but as a technique involving the application of human intelligence, or reason, to the problem of making a judgment about whether the conduct does restrain trade.'

#### The aff violates—they create a new legal standard for courts to decide whether a practice is “unreasonable” based on weighing effects—not a declaration of illegality without inquiry

McKibben 85 (Michael D. McKibben-Vanderbilt University Law School, J.D., 1985, Vanderbilt Law Review, Associate Editor; Patrick Wilson Scholar. The Resale Price Maintenance Compromise: A Presumption of Illegality, 38 Vanderbilt Law Review 163 (1985), Available at: <https://scholarship.law.vanderbilt.edu/vlr/vol38/iss1/3> , date accessed 9/13/21)

In United States v. Colgate & Co." the Court developed a major exception to Dr. Miles. The Colgate doctrine allows a weak form of RPM by manufacturers or wholesalers that have attempted unilaterally to set prices.6 Although the Colgate doctrine has lost much of its vitality due to years of restrictive interpretation, in Russell Stover Candies, Inc. v. FTC7 the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit upheld Colgate against a challenge by the Federal Trade Commission. In addition, the Supreme Court, in Monsanto Co. v. Spray-Rite Service Corp.," recently intimated new-found support for the Colgate doctrine and a possible willingness to reconsider the Dr. Miles per se prohibition against RPM.9

The outcome of vertical pricing cases under section 1 has depended upon the perceived effects of RPM on competition. Current RPM decisions, however, rest on the principles of stare decisis and, therefore, do not depend upon political and economic theories that have developed since Dr. Miles.10 Early courts denounced vertical restraints as analogous to horizontal price fixing, which courts have assumed the drafters of the Sherman Act intended to prohibit per se. 11 Later cases, however, illustrate that the analogy between vertical and horizontal trade restrictions is not analytically sound, and the Supreme Court's attempt to maintain the per se approach to RPM has led to serious theoretical and practical problems. 12

This Note explores several problems with recent RPM decisions: (1) the effect of the per se rule on producers' rights to control their marketing strategies; (2) inconsistent use of the plural action requirement as a foil for avoiding or invoking the per se rule; (3) the suppression of benign or procompetitive activities because of the rule; (4) the difficulties with free rider marketing; and (5) the obstacles to advice and planning that recent decisions have created. This Note contends that a new standard, a rebuttable presumption13 against legality, would alleviate most, if not all, problems that the inflexible per se rule causes.

A rebuttable presumption, followed by rule of reason analysis 14 [[BEGIN FOOTNOTE 14]] 14. Under the rule of reason "the factfinder weighs all of the circumstances of a case in deciding whether a restrictive practice should be prohibited as imposing an unreasonable restraint on competition." Sylvania, 433 U.S. at 49. [[END FOOTNOTE 14]] in cases in which the defendant satisfies the threshold inquiry,15 would restore certainty and intellectual honesty to RPM cases. The rebuttable presumption would eliminate the need to reconcile contrary cases and the need to consider issues that parties now must address under the rule of reason. While the rebuttable presumption does not require that courts maintain or reject the Colgate doctrine,16 this Note argues that the Court could retain Colgate but primarily rely upon the guidelines and safeguards of the rebuttable presumption. This new line of inquiry would retain the benefits of the per se rule-efficiency and certainty-and would remain flexible enough to accommodate special cases in which RPM may be beneficial to the market. In many cases, the rebuttable presumption also would save society, courts, and litigants the protracted costs of rule of reason analysis.

Part II of this Note considers major RPM cases since the early 1900s, with special focus on Russell Stover and Filco v. Amana Refrigeration, Inc.,'17 cases which protect the defendant under the Colgate doctrine. Part III analyzes the weaknesses of the per se rule and the benefits that could inure to manufacturers and the marketplace under the rebuttable presumption. Part IV examines the strengths and weaknesses of the rule of reason and offers an improved rule of reason approach as the second part of the rebuttable presumption standard. Finally, Part V outlines a suggested analysis for RPM disputes using a rebuttable presumption of illegality. Part V also considers the effects of the presumption on federal antitrust laws.

II. THE CURRENT CONTROVERSY

A. Minimum Price Restrictions in the Supreme Court

Vertical price restrictions are written or oral directives setting a price above or below which a manufacturer wishes its distributors to sell. If the manufacturer establishes a price below which a distributor should not resell a product, the manufacturer is imposing minimum price RPM. Maximum price RPM-the setting of price ceilings- and minimum RPM are per se violations of section 1 of the Sherman Act."' Nonprice vertical restrictions, however, which include primarily territorial distributorship limitations, generally are reviewed under the rule of reason. 19

1. Dr. Miles: The Per Se Rule

Dr. Miles Medical Co. v. John D. Park & Sons Co.20 is the basis of much of the current academic criticism of the Supreme Court's RPM approach.2 ' The plaintiff Dr. Miles, a medicine manufacturer, required its wholesalers and retailers to adhere to a minimum resale price schedule. The plaintiff also required its wholesalers to maintain control over the retailers' subsequent resale prices. The defendant Park & Sons, a wholesaler that refused to purchase from Dr. Miles under the minimum price contract, bought Dr. Miles' medicines from third parties and resold them below the plaintiff's price schedule. The plaintiff charged the defendant with inducing the plaintiff's distributors to breach their contracts by reselling to a price cutter.22 The Court denied the plaintiff's request for relief and held that the plaintiff's contract provision was void under common law and the Sherman Act. 3

After determining that the agreement between Dr. Miles and its vendees fulfilled the duality requirement of the Sherman Act,24 the Court found that the plaintiff's resale price schedule eliminated competition by controlling the price at which all purchasers received the product.25 The Court refused to accept the defendant's argument that producers of patented products have a right ordinary sellers do not have-the right to dictate the destiny of their products.26 The Court inquired whether the plaintiff had a right to restrain trade. The Court held that generally a right to control alienation does not exist without an agreement.2 7 Applying the common-law rule that contractual restraints on alienation must be reasonable and limited to the necessity of the circumstances, 2 the Court found that Dr. Miles' agreement did not fit any of the common forms of acceptable restraints.29

The Court's final inquiry was whether the benefits that the plaintiff gained from its pricing restrictions were entitled to more protection than the property rights that the defendants had in the medicine.30 The Court's response to this issue forms the heart of the per se rule.31 [[BEGIN FOOTNOTE 31]] 31. Per se rules prohibit certain conduct without inquiry into possible justifications for the conduct. Courts impose per se rules when the interests of judicial economy outweigh other interests. See Note, Fixing the Price Fixing Confusion: A Rule of Reason Approach, 92 YALE L.J. 706, 708 (1983). [[END FOOTNOTE 31]] Although the Court never explicitly condemned all vertical price fixing agreements, it found that the effects of the Dr. Miles scheme were the same as the effects that could result from horizontal price fixing at the dealer level. The Court, therefore, held that both kinds of price fixing were illegal.3 2 The Supreme Court's focus on the effects of the alleged violative activity, without regard to its purposes or benefits, is characteristic of other Supreme Court per se decisions. 3

The breadth of the Dr. Miles decision is still unclear.3 4 A narrow interpretation of the holding is that express contractual provisions restraining resale prices violate the Sherman Act. The decision left open many further questions, the first of which the Court answered by creating the Colgate exception.

2. The Colgate Exception

The Court's 1919 decision in United States v. Colgate & Co.35 is still difficult for courts and commentators to harmonize with the Dr. Miles rule of per se illegality.3 6 In Colgate the prosecution charged the defendant under the Sherman Act 37 with forming an illegal combination to fix resale prices among the wholesalers and retailers of the defendant's soap and toilet products.3 8 Colgate circulated price lists, along with provisions for penalties to distributors that did not adhere to the defendant's price lists. Colgate also engaged in policing activities, such as obtaining information from other distributors concerning noncomplying dealers, and requesting assurances from nonuniform pricers that they would comply with the defendant's guidelines. 39

The trial court sustained the defendant's demurrer 40 and the Supreme Court affirmed on direct appeal. The Court permitted the defendant's pricing structure based on the trial court's finding that Colgate reserved no contractual rights in the goods after their sale to dealers. Colgate could enforce the price restrictions only by later refusing to deal with wholesalers and retailers that breached their contracts.41 According to the Court, because the contracts in Dr. Miles "undertook to prevent dealers from freely exercising the right to sell," Dr. Miles was distinguishable from Colgate.42 The Court then laid out the Colgate doctrine: "In the absence of any purpose to create or maintain a monopoly, the [Sherman Act] does not restrict the long recognized right of a trader or manufacturer engaged in an entirely private business, freely to exercise his own independent discretion as to parties with whom he will deal. 43 If the Court had employed the "effects only" logic that it used in Dr. Miles, Colgate would have been an inconsequential extension of the Dr. Miles progeny. By blending the section 1 duality requirement with common-law business principles, however, the Court created an exception to the per se rule.44

3. Narrowing Colgate

The Court quickly issued three decisions reaffirming the viability of Colgate, but in increasingly narrow circumstances. 45 Less than one year after Colgate, the Court decided United States v. A. Schrader's Son, Inc.46 Schrader's Son was factually similar to Dr. Miles,47 but the district court initially held for the defendant, reasoning that Colgate implicitly had overruled Dr. Miles.48 The Supreme Court reversed, stressing that its intent in Colgate was only to preserve the manufacturer's right to announce its pricing policy and cease to do business with dealers that failed to comply. 49

Based on this narrow interpretation of Colgate, the Court extended the scope of Dr. Miles to implicit agreements that attempt to make resale rates binding, including agreements "implied from a course of dealing or other circumstances." 0 The Court contrasted Colgate's holding with situations in which "the parties are combined through agreements designed to take away dealers' control of their own affairs and thereby destroy competition." 51 This language created a major expansion of the per se rule by shifting the Court's inquiry from "contract" to the less restrictive term "agreement." The Court's characterization of implicit agreements as section 1 violations is the basis of most criticism of the per se rule.52 Schrader's Son did not resolve the open distinction between implicit agreements that derive from dealer acceptance of fixed prices and unilateral declarations of terms that originate from a manufacturer's normal course of dealing.

The Supreme Court was quick to quell rumors of Colgate's early demise. In Frey & Son, Inc. v. Cudahy Packing Co.53 the trial court instructed the jury that the plaintiff could prevail despite the lack of an express or implied agreement or objections to the seller's pricing demands.5 4 The Supreme Court held that the jury instruction was insufficient to establish the defendant's liability under section 1. 55 Despite the Court's inability to draw a clear distinction between Dr. Miles and Colgate, the Court refused to extend the per se rule to prohibit inferential agreements.

#### VOTE NEG---Balancing tests devastate core links, because they allow the practice when it’s beneficial. AND, creates a moving target, because the disallowed behavior is context-dependent.

### Advantage---Cooperation

#### U.S. hegemony is a smokescreen for imperialism---their authors wish away millions of avoidable casualties caused by U.S. interventions to uphold hierarchal domination.

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In that reality, the United States has long been an imperial power with white nationalist aspirations. Given the racialized nature of U.S. imperial expansion, it makes sense that Alexis de Tocqueville predicted, in a chapter entitled “The Three Races of the United States,” that the United States would one day govern “the destinies of half the globe.” In its early days, while still a slave-holding country, the United States asserted its sovereignty through genocide on a continental scale and annexed large portions of northern Mexico. The country went on to overthrow the independent state of Hawaii, occupied the Philippines and Haiti, exerted its regional power throughout Latin America, expanded its international hegemony after World War II, and became what it is today: the world’s foremost military and nuclear power with a $716 billion “defense” budget that exceeds the spending of all other major global powers combined.

“Taking over from the British Empire in the early twentieth-century,” argues James Tully, the United States has used its many military bases located “outside its own borders”—now nearly 800 in over 80 countries— to force open-door economic policies and antidemocratic regimes on states throughout the formerly colonized world. An extremely partial list of sovereign governments that the United States either overthrew or attempted to subvert through military means, assassinations, or election tampering since 1949 includes Syria, Iran, Guatemala, Lebanon, the Congo, Cuba, Chile, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Grenada, Cuba, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Iraq, Yemen, Australia, Greece, Bolivia, and Angola. Such interventionist policies have contributed substantially to today’s inegalitarian world in which an estimated 783 million people live in profound poverty. In sum, for untold millions of humans in the Global South, the seventy years of worldwide order, security, and prosperity that Ikenberry and Deudney associate with Pax Americana has been anything but ordered, secure, or prosperous.

And yet the norm against noticing prevents foreign policy analysis from even acknowledging—let alone grappling with—the relationship between race and imperialism that has characterized U.S. international relations from the country’s earliest days. This regime of politely un-seeing—of deflecting—connections between U.S. foreign policy, race hierarchy, and colonial administration was clearly not in effect when Foreign Affairs was released under its original name: the Journal of Race Development. This began to change, however, in the 1920s. Among other contributing factors, World War I, the rise of anti-colonial revolutions, and the emergence of liberal internationalism as a popular ideology helped convince foreign policy experts in the United States and Europe to adopt a policy language oriented toward “development” rather than imperialism or racial difference. Mainstream international relations scholarship today remains committed to a narrative in which the discipline itself and U.S. foreign policy has always been and remains race blind, concerned solely with the relationship between sovereign states who cooperate, deter, or compete with one another in a global system in which the United States is simply, like Caesar, the “first citizen” (Ikenberry) or “the luckiest great power in modern history” (Walt). For liberals, this involves a studied erasure of the imperial origins of twentieth-century internationalism in the League of Nations’ Mandate system and the complicity of Woodrow Wilson in preserving, as Adom Getachew puts it, “white supremacy on a global scale.” For realists, it requires both forgetting the anti-Enlightenment origins of postwar realist thought and reinserting the “security dilemma” back into history so that, with the help of Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Hobbes, the world can—as Slavoj Žižek says—“become what it always was.”

International relations experts will acknowledge U.S. violence and overreach when necessary, but routinely read the illiberalism of U.S. foreign policy as an exception that is not at all representative, in Anne Marie Slaughter’s words, of “the idea that is America.” Slaughter, with Ikenberry, can consider bad behavior only briefly and only in the service of insisting that what matters most is not what the United States actually does with its power but what it intends to do. Yes, “imperialism, slavery, and racism have marred Western history,” Ikenberry and Deudney argue, but what matters is that liberalism “has always been at the forefront of efforts—both peaceful and militant—to reform and end these practices.” Indeed, even those public intellectuals such as Niall Ferguson and Michael Ignatieff who, after September 11, called for the United States to embrace its status as an imperial power, framed their arguments in deflective, liberal terms. By contrast, because realists project the security dilemma retroactively into history (while also simultaneously excising imperialism) they can only see the U.S. destabilization of Third World economies, assassinations, and secret bombings as tragic necessities (great powers, claims Mearsheimer, “have little choice but to pursue power and to seek to dominate the other states in the system”) or as the result of liberals’ ill-advised desire to force “our” values on other nations. Both of these deflective strategies reinforce the illusion that we live, in Nikhil Pal Singh’s words, in an “American-centered, racially inclusive world, one organized around formally equal and independent nation states” where some states just happen to have more power than others, and where the alternative—Russian or Chinese hegemony—is too frightening even to contemplate.

That deflection would play such an outsized role in supporting the ideological edifice of international relations today is hardly surprising. Turn-of-the-century British liberals who supported their empire also drew upon a variety of different deflective strategies to reconcile the violence and illiberalism of British imperial expansion with the stated liberal goals of the Empire. Such deflection made it impossible for these thinkers—many of whom would go on to work as some of the first international relations scholars in Britain and help found The Royal Institute of International Affairs—to link the problems of empire with the violence and disruption of imperialism.

Similarly, deflection within international relations today obscures the U.S. role in maintaining the profoundly hierarchical, racist, insecure, deeply unjust reality of the current global order. It also makes it impossible to address how U.S. foreign policy (covert and overt) has contributed to the destabilization of that order by creating the circumstances that give rise to “failed states,” “rogue regimes,” and “sponsors of terrorism.” Moreover, it impedes any theorizing about how the widespread appeal of Trump’s xenophobia at home might, in part, be the product of U.S. foreign policy abroad, the bitter fruit of the War on Terror and its equally violent predecessors. In other words, in the grand tradition of liberal empire, U.S. foreign policy deflection actively disrupts the link between cause and effect that an entire science of international relations was created to explain.

#### U.S. hegemony provokes blowback aggression due to status insecurity, sanitizes imperialism, and dooms international cooperation---decline spurs a great power concert that solves war and existential threats.

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Why Liberal Internationalism Will Fail (Again)

But in recent weeks, mainstream US foreign policy experts have provided their own spin in progressive internationalism. Advocates and practitioners of a traditional hegemonic foreign policy have sought to co-opt progressive internationalism in a series of essays which argue for the necessity of American power and global influence. These writers embody the post-Cold War centrist foreign policy coalition of liberal internationalists and neoconservatives. For them, that the greatest threat to the democratic “free” world created by the United States remains the autocratic governance model of Russia and China. While Washington should pursue cooperation on transnational governance issues where possible, they argue it cannot do so at the expense of making security concessions which would reward revisionist behavior by great power rivals. As in the past, American exceptionalism remains the identity narrative justifying a return to US hegemony, with Anglo-American norms serving as the basis for hegemonic socialization and cooperation.

The internationalist disposition is a reminder of why a mere social democratic twist on US hegemony will fail to provide actual security for the United States and its allies. Establishment voices continue to rely on state-centric assumptions about IR and ignore how state identities and interests are a function of their relationship with each other. Or, as Jennifer Mitzen and Michelle Murray might argue, the revisionist intentions of Russia and China are a product of their ontological insecurity. A hegemonic United States defending an Anglo-American order denies them recognition of their own great power identities and their right to participate in all deliberations about global order. From this perspective, we should challenge the implicit assumption made by Anthony Blinken and Robert Kagan that Russia is revisionist by nature. An internationalist perspective suggests that Russia has adopted those intentions in relation to a Wilsonian United States which seeks domination over Moscow and the transformation of its political system. The same is true for China, which rejects being cast as a “responsible stakeholder” by Washington which would eventually accept democracy following its internal transformation by global capitalism. In other words, the very terms of US relations with these states over the past 25 years is the source of their revisionist intentions, and not some essentialized feature of their domestic politics.

Further, a liberal exceptionalist narrative that contrasts “Eastern autocracy” with “Western freedom” masks how the United States has perpetuated its own systems of illiberal dominance throughout its history. Those same structures of oppression are the greatest threat to contemporary US democracy and also serve as glaring evidence of US hypocrisy. In his defense of American exceptionalism, Jake Sullivan represents institutional racism as a bug rather than a feature of the American political system by emphasizing the liberal ideals of the Founders and casting Donald Trump’s white ethnonationalism as an aberration. But this telling of the American story whitewashes the long history of an exclusive, white ethnic US identity dating back to the early 19th Century and its role in generating the modern United States. Scholars of American political development and US history have long demonstrated that institutions of slavery and land conquest constituted US society and made possible its economic prosperity rather than some kind of intrinsic tendency toward freedom.

Fast-forward to the present: liberal exceptionalism further denies how economic globalization made possible the rise of authoritarianism. Nils Gilman and David Klion rightly argue that the kleptocratic alliance between autocrats and oligarchs is the true threat to democracy and rule of law. Their ability to concentrate political and economic power has been enabled by the emergence of an integrated global market that privileges the freedom of capital over the needs of ordinary people, one created by the United States when liberal internationalism went global after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Finally, attempts to revive US hegemony will doom transnational efforts to deal with existential non-state threats. Hegemonists like Thomas Wright argue that Russia and China are the greatest threat to the United States, and that Washington should never make concessions to either power as a means of ensuring cooperation on issues of global governance. However, “ring-fencing” global capitalism and climate change as separate issues will fail to achieve the necessary level of cooperation to cope with these threats. National security policymakers cannot recognize that the greatest dangers faced by US citizens are non-state economic and ecological global processes that shape domestic politics from the inside-out, and not rival sovereigns. Economic destitution to the point of embracing fascist dictators coupled with environmental collapse are near-certain non-state threats which transcend our boundaries – in fact, as a global power, the United States has been complicit in creating them.

The internationalist disposition would suggest that the priorities of US foreign policy must change. Regulating global processes should be the primary objective, and it requires that the United States pursue intense macro-levels of cooperation with all other states, including its rivals, to achieve them. Yet it will be unlikely to do so if it remains wedded to liberal hegemony and consumed by great power competition. Short-term incentives to accumulate resources and power will override the long-term need for global governance. The result will be a world whose people live in precarity, ravaged by climate change, and constantly on the verge of great power war.

From “Disposition” to “Grand Strategy”

The internationalist disposition clearly illustrates why old US strategies are incompatible with the progressive internationalism of the US left. However, contra Colás, progressives should not avoid developing of a positive vision for foreign policy due to the diverse range of radical perspectives. To do so would cede pro-restraint arguments to structural realist and libertarian advocates of offshore balancing who offer no template for global engagement or institutional cooperation. What progressives must do is articulate a grand strategy, or a plan that mobilizes all elements of national power and influence, grounded in a relationalist ontology that combines restraint with internationalism. This strategy must be post-hegemonic (a term even Ikenberry has flirted with), post-statist, and supportive of intense international cooperation based on the diversity of identities and values otherwise ignored by the universalist pretenses of Anglo-American liberalism. If our very existence is mutually dependent on others, then we need a foreign policy based on solidarity in response to collectively experienced threats.

I think there is a strategy consistent with the international disposition: great power concert. A concert strategy requires that all great powers pursue mutual accommodation and recognize each other’s interests as part of a larger commitment to maintain international stability. Patrick Porter and Amitav Acharya argue that a great power concert strategy is the best suited to adapt to the transfer of wealth and power to Asia along with the “multiplex” nature of world politics (not to mention a global perspective on international relations). The emergence of a diverse range of state and non-state actors bound together by extreme interdependence makes it impossible for any one actor, such as the United States, to establish rules for global governance which can mobilize all others. On this basis, a concert strategy would lead the United States to collaborate with others on the basis of mutual co-existence and embrace joint decision-making at the global level for coping with macrostructural processes that threaten all peoples around the world. In this way, a concert strategy is firmly grounded the international disposition and can serve as the realization of progressive internationalism.

Security and The Balance of Power

A concert strategy can do what establishment foreign policy cannot, namely de-escalate great power competition by giving up US hegemony. If adopted, the United States would treat other great powers, like Russia, China, and Iran, as equal partners in the maintenance of global stability and incorporate their interests into regional security agreements. The United States would give up its self-assumed role as an unrivaled global hegemon and seek a balance of power based on mutual respect with other great powers as partners rather than enemies. This kind of international posture would result in a more horizontal great power system, one that Stacie Goddard as identified as being productive of status quo rather than revisionist intentions. It would be compatible with recognition of the great power identities of other states and provide them with ontological security.

#### Promoting U.S. leadership directly furthers imperialist exportation of neoliberalism---that locks the Global South into cycles of debt and austerity, trapping billions in abject poverty.

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Who Is Global Economic Governance For?

From 1981 to 2017, the number of the world’s poor rose by one billion people. This rise in global poverty has been discussed by scholars such as Sanjay Reddy, Camelia Minoiu, Arjun Jayadev, and Rahul Lahoti, in addition to being thoroughly documented in Jason Hickel’s compelling new book The Divide. But it is not a fact that we would never even learn if we relied on numbers produced by the UN or other global bodies. This is because the very same institutions which want to claim the end of poverty have long been responsible for reproducing it. While claiming to prioritize development aid to the Global South, global economic institutions have engineered a world where the net flow of money is from poor to rich countries. For every dollar of aid poor countries receive, they send $24 back to rich countries in net outflows. Poor countries have been “developing” rich ones year after year, not the other way around.

The World Bank and IMF, both of which turned 75 in 2019, are tremendously important to this story. The Bank alone has a staff of 10,587 people. In 2017, it made loans and investments of $59 billion across the world. Since its founding it has lent about $1 trillion. Any debt is always the establishment of a power relationship and this is the case with the Bank as well. Its loans buy it influence over the economic policy of debtor countries, especially since no country is able to borrow from the World Bank without becoming susceptible to IMF conditions on and management of its economic performance. With the Bank as “good cop” and IMF as “bad cop,” we have reached a situation where, according to the UN, the richest fifth of the world’s population earned some 80 times more than the poorest.

One way to understand the power of the Bretton Woods institutions is to juxtapose an early case of their lending with a later one to understand how their power has grown since they were established in July 1944. In 1947, the Bank’s second president, John McCloy, approved a post-war reconstruction loan to France on the condition that it balance its budget, increase taxes, and cut luxury imports under U.S. supervision. France protested this as an infringement of sovereignty but acceded to all the conditions, including implicit ones like the removal of Communist leaders from Cabinet under the orders of the U.S. State Department. By contrast, in 1989 Jordan stopped making payments on its bilateral loans and approached the Bretton Woods institutions to reschedule its debt payments. In return for a five year plan to cut subsidies and privatize public goods, the IMF gave Jordan $125 million and the World Bank gave it $100 million. The price of fuel, bread, rice, milk, and sugar skyrocketed and protests broke out which cost many lives.

We can note four salient changes between 1947 and 1989. First, when the U.S. government and its key allies gathered at the Bretton Woods conference in New Hampshire, their aim was the economic restoration of war-torn Europe. The IMF provided short-term loans to offset balance of payments deficits and the Bank provided long term, lower-interest loans for rebuilding destroyed infrastructure. As a 1979 Senate Committee report readily acknowledges: “No arguments were made that these agencies would have a beneficial impact on economic development and growth in poor countries, and indeed [they] were not originally designed for that purpose.”

Second, in the early years Bretton Woods institutions were very cautious and risk-averse about lending and only lent when they felt assured of full and timely repayment. In contrast, by the 1980s their lending practices were rather profligate. This was because investors’ profits no longer came from the total repayment of debt but rather from the interest accrued during endless debt refinancing.

Third, the early history of Bretton Woods institutions had nothing to do with the thing for which they are now best known: poverty alleviation. Until the 1960s, lending went almost exclusively to capital projects – white elephants like dams and highways which were sure to yield safe returns. By contrast, since the1980s, an increasingly risk-immune World Bank and IMF have lent freely toward (privatizing) social sectors like health and education in addition to more profitable sectors like energy.

Finally, the early Bretton Woods institutions were concerned with keeping government spending up so as to avoid a depression, an agenda which has been totally reversed as the push to reduce all government spending took over in the 1980s.

All these significant changes in how they profit must be understood in context of the Bretton Woods institutions’ remarkable consistency in who they profit and whose interests they serve. As the third president of the World Bank (and former Chase bank executive) Eugene Black openly acknowledged:

Our foreign aid programs constitute a distinct benefit to American business…foreign aid provides a substantial and immediate market for United States goods and services… [it] orients national economies toward a free enterprise system in which United States’ firms can prosper.

The importance of these goals hasn’t changed, only intensified. Today’s Bretton Woods institutions remain committed to opening markets for big U.S. business and to defending U.S. lenders and investors abroad. They also remain tied to U.S. military and strategic interests, rewarding allies and punishing detractors.

The Silent Subprime Crisis: 1968-2020

Profiting off of Third World debt is a relatively new phase in the operations of the World Bank and IMF, and one that merits a closer look. The roots of this crisis, like the roots of the global neoliberal turn, lie in the 1970s. In the U.S., that decade opened in with falling rates of corporate profit, a Treasury strained by an unwinnable war in Vietnam, and intense social upheaval at home. When the OPEC cartel’s oil price hike was added to this explosive mix, things escalated very quickly. As Damien Millet and Eric Toussaint explain in their book Who Owes Who, “From 1973, the increase in oil prices…brought in comfortable revenues to the oil-producing countries which in turn placed them in Western banks. The banks offered to lend these ‘petrodollars’ to the countries of the South, with the incentive of low rates of interest.” Western banks’ investment motives dovetailed with Western governments’ desire to export more of their overproduced goods to the developing world, which it could only afford to buy with debt. Thus began the era of “go go banking,” where banks like Citibank and Chase would fly agents around the world to push loans onto Third World leaders, increasingly without much regard to their ability to repay.

The architect of this early subprime debt market was none other than Robert McNamara, former Ford Motor executive and the Secretary of Defense responsible for the U.S. invasion of Vietnam. Once appointed World Bank president from 1968 to 1981, McNamara was no less war-like in his approach to development lending. As Michael Goldman has shown, in his book Imperial Nature, McNamara was the president responsible for aggressively expanding the Bank’s lending portfolio. He did so ingeniously. McNamara turned to financial markets (e.g. European pension funds) to fund all new lending without requiring any paid-in capital from the U.S. and other economic powers. He managed to do this thanks to the rising hunger of investors for new venues of assured profit, thus insulating the World Bank from U.S. government funding and associated critics who worried about the viability of the Bank’s new “soft” portfolio of Third World poverty alleviation loans. Lending now became less cautious and less restricted to capital heavy projects, spreading to “risky” sectors like agriculture. McNamara expanded the Bank’s personnel by 120% and assessed his staff for promotions based solely on the size and turnover rate of their loan portfolio. As a result of his extraordinary efforts, the Bank granted more loans in his first year term than during its first 22 years combined. Right alongside their private go-go banker counterparts, World Bank staff got busy inventing, justifying, and selling new projects to poor countries.

A deeply indebted Third World thus came into being by the beginning of 1980. While interest rates were low, loan repayment continued. But in the early 1980s the Volcker shock changed everything. Paul Volcker’s tight-fisted monetary policy aimed at reducing inflation at all costs, causing interest rates in the U.S. to soar from 4-5% in 1970s to over 19% in 1981. This not only caused a severe recession at home but had devastating effects abroad. The low-interest loans that McNamara and his banker friends had pushed onto the Global South ballooned to unpayable proportions. Between 1968 and 1982, debts multiplied by a factor of 12, going from $50 billion to $612 billion. Debt stocks quadrupled, going from $400 billion in 1970 to more than $1.6 trillion in 1982. In many developing countries, debt levels rose to over 50% of GDP and to over 80% of tax revenues. In August 1982, Mexico reached the brink of default, precipitating the next and perhaps most deadly phase of the debt crisis.

“If we go back to the 1820s, the 1870s, and the 1930s,” Patrick Bond points out, “it is obvious that the periodic build-up of foreign debt required mass defaults, typically involving a third of all borrowing countries.” Against this backdrop, what happened in the debt crisis of the 1980s was truly extraordinary, as Bond explains:

The World Bank and the IMF have effectively centralized creditor power since the early 1980s. During earlier mass defaults, no such centralizing device existed, so individual sovereign debt-bondholders in London, Paris and New York took the hit. During the 1980s-90s, in contrast, Washington ensured the creditors were repaid, no matter how odious or foolish their loans, and the hit was taken by the people of developing nations.

The IMF did indeed launch a full-blown creditor advocacy campaign. It gave out new loans with which debtor countries could repay their private creditors, always insisting upon continual interest payments. Even speculative private investors, who were often the cause of economic volatility in developing countries, were to be repaid in full. Loans taken out by private entities in developing countries likewise had to be repaid, either by private borrowers or, incredibly, by their governments. Not only did the IMF refinance odious private loans to developing countries, it paved the way for new ones. IMF loans given to defaulting countries often did not cover the entire amount needed, thus merely acting as a “seal of approval,” a sort of insurance policy for additional private loans which were guaranteed repayment at all costs. Twenty-one of the largest U.S. banks took advantage of the free insurance, lending over $5 billion to Brazil and Mexico each to hedge against prior defaults. The World Bank soon joined in the fun of funneling more odious loans into developing countries while extracting interest payments for Western bondholders. Against all this collective action on the part of creditors, it was made very clear that debtors’ demands (or more appropriately, entreaties) would only be entertained on a case by case basis.

But this was not all. Not only did the Bank and IMF bail out private lenders and perpetuate a debt cycle, they also began the draconian Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) under which loan refinancing could only be obtained in exchange for market-fundamentalist reforms. A non-exhaustive list of such reforms includes privatizing basic services & introducing user fees for them; removing subsidies on everyday foodstuffs; removing tariff and customs protections; freezing government employee salaries and cutting down public sector jobs; devaluing currency; creating an export-oriented economy dependent on volatile markets; increasing foreign corporations’ market-shares; liberalizing banking, insurance & even defense sectors; removing labor protections; taxing the poor and middle class, not the rich; keeping high interest rates to attract private capital, impoverish local borrowers, and maintain the value of foreign debt, and more. Additionally, all of these measures were to be adopted without any input from citizens of borrower countries, which amounted to the Bretton Woods institutions undemocratically rewriting legislation, restructuring agencies, and reforming national budgets, all so they could pump out new loans used to repay already-unjust old loans.

Despite all these “adjustments,” which were ostensibly meant to reduce sovereign indebtedness, the debt crisis only got worse. As of 2006, Third World debt stands at $3.2 trillion. By most estimations, the debt has already been repaid several times over. For every $1 owed in 1980, poor countries have repaid $7.5 and still owe $4. Global South countries have paid $4.2 trillion in interest payments since 1980. By 1997, daily debt-service payments reached $717 million. In most indebted countries, up to a third of GDP has been sent off to service debts.

Meanwhile, citizens in over a hundred countries have faced devastating human consequences. The economist Robert Pollin estimates that Global South countries lost some $480 billion in GDP per year from 1980- to 2000 thanks to SAPs. Agrarian studies scholar Raj Patel and sociologist Philip McMichael point out that 146 food riots took place between 1976 and 1982, peaking between 1983 and 1985 as a result of SAPs. As sociologist Sarah Babb notes, between 1988 and 1994 the governments of the poorest countries transferred more than 3000 entities from public to private hands. Anthropologist Jason Hickel points out that the World Bank alone privatized more than $2 trillion of assets in developing countries between 1984 and 2012.

What this means is that many countries now spend more on debt servicing than on providing basic services to citizens. The historian Vijay Prashad notes in his book The Darker Nations that sub-Saharan African nations spent four times more on interest payments than on healthcare, and the New Economy Foundation observes that countries like Lebanon are spending more of their government budgets on debt service than on health and education combined. As a result of this SAPed world, universal basic services have withered away; small farmers and unorganized workers have lost assets, wages, jobs, and access to food and shelter; and already precarious groups like women and minorities are faring worse than ever. While national elites enrich themselves with commissions from selling off state services and corporations get rich from new profit streams, the poor barely survive. From time to time, everyday people rise up in fury and overthrow governments, but the international austerity machine behind it all, and the loans it continues to use as weapons, remain untouched.

What Global Justice Needs to Mean if it’s to be Global

Why does all this matter to a U.S. socialists today? It matters because the Bretton Woods institutions are a machinery of war on the world’s poor and working classes run by U.S. elites. The World Bank and IMF are headquartered in Washington, DC. Their membership includes 189 countries but they practice a “one dollar, one vote” model so the U.S., with the biggest GDP and 15% of votes, retains effective veto power over all decisions. Presidents of the World Bank are always American and Presidents of the IMF are always from Western Europe. The World Bank presidency is a prime example of the revolving door between Bretton Woods institutions and big banks, corporations, and the U.S. military, with presidents almost always coming from long careers in big business, Wall Street, and U.S. security services. As if this were not enough, until 2018 the Bretton Woods institutions enjoyed immunity from all lawsuits under the 1945 International Organizations Act. In 2018 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the World Bank’s private sector arm was not subject to this immunity, but the ramifications for the rest of the Bank and for the IMF are not clear.

By far the most important form of immunity that the World Bank and IMF enjoy is from U.S. voters, on whose behalf they supposedly “develop” poor countries. No Congress or Senate votes are necessary to approve loans backed by these institutions, nor are any votes necessary for imposing austerity measures on other countries. As an arm of the U.S. Treasury Department, Bretton Woods institutions sit safely in the executive branch, insulated from all democratic scrutiny and accountability. Indeed, the Bank’s habit of never having its power questioned is starkly visible in the anecdote below, told by the authors of the book Reinventing the World Bank:

When we contacted the Bank to invite the people we felt could best engage the issues we wanted to examine, we were referred to the Public Relations office, which expressed considerable surprise and dismay that a conference had been organized on the Bank without involving the institution from the start. “It’s like having all your neighbors gather to talk about what’s going on in your house,” a senior staff member in the office complained. “Perhaps so,” we responded, “with the small difference that all your neighbors pay your mortgage.”

No fight for socialism is complete without fighting this shadow government apparatus which has determined the fates of the majority of the world’s people for generations. Nor is this an abstract struggle -many practical measures can be implemented to rein in their power. The U.S. Left must demand that the government bring these institutions under the scrutiny of democratically elected, and especially local, officials in the U.S., and eventually in Global South countries. The institutions, if they are to continue existing, must be thoroughly democratized, with representatives voted in especially by vulnerable constituents from all member countries. All structural adjustment conditionalities must be suspended with immediate effect. All sovereign debts must be taken off bond markets, made untradeable and non-interest bearing, and then cancelled in their entirety.

#### Their scenarios should be presumed false---hegemony good evidence is funded by elite knowledge networks to fabricate an internationalist consensus.

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American elite knowledge networks center on the strategic and heavily interconnected corporate-philanthropic foundation. The liberal Ford and Rockefeller foundations and conservative variants all fund knowledge networks.28 Unburdened by electors or shareholders, these institutions are governed by trustees drawn from corporations, government, corporate media, and elite universities. Their elitist mindsets and ethno-racial and class identities differentiate these trustees from the majority of Americans. We can track the rise of American global hegemony by exploring the increasing significance of foundations and the institutional architecture that owes its origins to concentrated corporate wealth. At home, this comprised a dense network of think tanks, university foreign affairs organizations, area studies, and social-scientific programs, all of which interlinked with practitioners in politics, media, and government. These elite knowledge networks built long-term relationships that created pathways for the international circulation of ideas, people, and money, and usually connected strongly with American organizations like the Institute of Pacific Relations and the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). These knowledge networks’ greatest achievement is the elaboration of a liberal-internationalist elite consensus that rejects isolationism and spans the two main political parties, the media, and attentive publics. With the American state’s full cooperation, such knowledge networks helped to establish the post-1945 liberal international order that included Bretton Woods, the United Nations, the Marshall Plan, and NATO.

Official institutions of the liberal international order included the intertwined spines of the private and state-private institutional architecture that had been established during the Cold War to perform the major functions of US hegemonic knowledge networks. These networks grew deep roots in core Western states and civil societies. Symbiotic with NATO, European unity, and the special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom, such networks provided an international umbrella and developed politically powerful domestic constituencies that were invested in the liberal international order.29

Nevertheless, hegemony studies neglects American ideational-infrastructural power that is operationalized and embedded in influential power-knowledge networks, with linkages that unify private/public domains and international/domestic spheres, and that legitimize domestic vertical power inequality and horizontal inequalities between societies. Those networks are the power technology of the foreign policy establishment.30 Such neglect diminishes our understanding of the forces that perpetuate American hegemony and enable hegemonic elites to block or manage discontent. This article’s neo-Gramscian argument is that, despite crises and challenges that include the disruptive effects of Donald Trump’s presidential campaign and subsequent Twitter-disseminated rhetoric, those networks continue to successfully manage, channel, or block threats to American hegemony. Such networks are likely to remain significant during the Trump presidency, and to constrain attempts to radically alter the liberal international order.

### Advantage---Telecommunications

#### Autonomous vehicles accelerate climate change.

Wilson 21, \*Kea, Streesblog, USA, (June 3rd, 2021, “STUDY: AV Taxis Would Speed Up Climate Change”, https://usa.streetsblog.org/2021/06/03/study-av-taxis-would-speed-up-climate-change/)

Autonomous vehicles may make our skies dirtier, even if they’re shared and electric, a new study finds.

According to a [survey](https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abf6f4) conducted by researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, if an autonomous taxi were made available tomorrow, residents of the Athens of the Midwest would choose it over a bus, bike, or personal car in 31 percent of randomized travel scenarios

Worse, the study found that AVs could tempt erstwhile transit passengers to abandon fixed-route buses or their bikes, even in the [transit-rich](https://www.bizjournals.com/milwaukee/news/2019/09/19/madison-milwaukee-among-nations-best-public.html) and [Platinum Bicycle Friendly](https://madison.com/wsj/lifestyles/recreation/madison-one-of-5-platinum-level-bicycle-friendly-communities/article_bdc92f63-e113-5b98-8391-3450d62e778a.html) community of Madison. When the researchers presented their subjects with a choice between waiting one to five minutes for an AV that cost 85 cents a mile and waiting five to 15 minutes for a bus that cost a flat $2 fare, the respondents were more likely to choose the AV in most situations, even though the shortest possible trip length (three miles) meant the auto-taxi would cost more.

Shifting even a small percentage of trips from bus or bike to (usually) single-occupancy robocar would lead to a 5.7 percent annual rise in greenhouse-gas emissions, according to the researcher’s traffic models. That’s in part because about 43 percent of Wisconsin’s electricity still comes from coal plants (and [many states are even worse](https://www.chooseenergy.com/data-center/electricity-sources-by-state/)). With electricity-intensive EVs demanding more power from the grid, the state might struggle to make an efficient transition to renewable energy, experts say. The effects of “deadheading,” or the time robocars spend driving around empty between fares, also would crank up carbon emissions.

The study builds on broader research about the potential downsides of the AV revolution. Techno-optimists long have argued that electric AVs could reduce traffic deaths and help curb climate change without a substantial rethinking our car-centric transportation framework. Many proponents of self-driving cars assumed that the rise of autonomous vehicles would go hand and hand with the demise of private vehicle ownership, with the convenience and affordability of shared robo-taxis luring drivers away from the expense and hassle of maintaining and storing an automobile.

But even with the costs of car ownership factored in, AV taxis still didn’t beat private vehicle ownership for everyone. The single-occupancy car was the survey respondents’ preferred mode in 32 percent of scenarios — one percent more than self-driving taxis that, in many cases, cost their passengers much less.

Even a partial shift to autonomous e-taxis may be worse than no shift at all. A [recent study](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0968090X16000383) of four of the largest U.S. metro areas found that customers of (for now, human-operated) Ubers and Lyfts added more than twice as many vehicle miles to their local roads than before the advent of ridehail services, in large part because their drivers burn so much gas en route to picking up their next fare, which usually involves just a single passenger. The same study found those VMT impacts would not disappear unless e-taxi routes cut out almost all “deadheading” (which experts think is impossible), and 85 percent of app-taxi passengers shared their rides with two or more other passengers (which the [vast majority](https://www.google.com/search?q=what+percentage+of+uber+rides+are+shared&ei=R_O3YKjoCMr5tAbSwpnYAg&oq=what+percentage+of+uber+rides+are+shared&gs_lcp=Cgdnd3Mtd2l6EAM6BwgAEEcQsANQzx1YwSNgiiRoAXACeACAAa4CiAG1B5IBBzEuMi4xLjGYAQCgAQGqAQdnd3Mtd2l6yAEIwAEB&sclient=gws-wiz&ved=0ahUKEwjop4Hf7fnwAhXKPM0KHVJhBisQ4dUDCA4&uact=5) of app-taxi customers have proved unwilling to do.)

Removing drivers from app taxis would do nothing to reduce the effects of all that added driving, including congestion, greater wear and tear on roads, the proliferation of car-centric community design and, continued (if reduced) traffic violence on roads, at least until autonomous vehicles are perfect at crash avoidance, which they’re [categorically not](https://usa.streetsblog.org/2020/12/15/was-2020-the-year-driverless-cars-became-inevitable/) right now.

The Madison survey is specific to the Badger state, and further research is needed to model the effects of shared AVs in other communities, especially as the country transitions to renewable energy sources. But until then, the study shows that there may be unintended consequences to going all-in on self-driving cars — and that the benefits of the mode can be achieved by another vehicle that you don’t have to drive yourself: the bus

#### Increasing the power consumption of AV’s turns the advantage and is itself reliant on child labour exploitation in the Global South.

Nunes 20, \*Dr. Ashley Nunes is a researcher, consultant and commentator specializing in transportation safety, regulatory policy and workforce productivity; (Ashley, October 7th, 2020, “Why driverless cars have an emissions problem”, https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20201007-can-driverless-cars-tackle-climate-change)

Computers may well be better at making choices that save fuel but there are other factors that can make self-driving vehicles less efficient (Credit: Alamy)

It is easy to see why some see the precision and predictability that comes from handing control of vehicles to algorithms as a solution to not only the safety issues, but environmental problems that road transport faces.

But realising this reality means overcoming numerous challenges. Here are three of them.

Power

Perhaps counter-intuitively, a University of Michigan study in 2018 found the shift towards autonomy could raise (rather than reduce) a vehicle’s energy demands. The increased thirst for power comes – in part – from all the extra hardware self-driving cars need. To navigate their way around our messy, complex world, they bristle with advanced cameras, lasers and other sensors.

While this technology helps keep passengers safe, it also means added weight, which increases the amount of energy needed to move the car. Adding hardware to the car’s exterior (rather than moulding it into the frame) also means it cuts through the air less efficiently.

A related problem is computational capacity. Modern vehicles monitor everything from oil temperature to engine timing to braking action. This entails churning through [gigabytes](https://www.telekom.com/en/company/management-unplugged/francois-fleutiaux/details/vehicle-data-is-more-profitable-than-the-car-itself-516208#:~:text=Today's%20cars%20are%20already%20data,gigabytes%20of%20data%20every%20hour!) of data every hour. That figure is poised to rise dramatically in driverless cars.

The reason? All these extra sensors produce far greater volumes of data, which self-driving algorithms must comb through, combine and act upon. And they must do it quickly and correctly. That requires computing power, but how much is anyone’s guess. Manufacturers have said little about how much extra power driverless vehicles will need to perform all these computational tasks. Nor have they definitively shared how they plan to address that need.

While this technology helps keep passengers safe, it also means added weight, which increases the amount of energy needed to move the car

One solution is to outfit cars with bigger batteries. But that adds weight, which reduces efficiency. Switching from a gasoline-powered engine to one powered by electricity is another solution. The latter is far more efficient at converting energy stored to power at the wheels. But some of the raw minerals for electric cars come from the [Democratic Republic of Congo](https://www.economist.com/business/2018/12/01/can-the-world-produce-enough-cobalt-for-electric-vehicles), a country long dogged by allegations of child labour. Although minerals can be extracted from the sea, this poses political challenges as countries have long bickered over mining rights on the sea floor.

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#### The aff’s “Extinction first” framing is a new link---it willingly sacrifices billions in the Global South at the altar of a miniscule risk of extinction---there’s a reason only white elites like their impact framing.

Torres 21, PhD candidate at Leibniz Universität Hannover. Previously studied at Harvard University and Brandeis University. Author of Morality, Foresight, and Human Flourishing: An Introduction to Existential Risks (Phil, July 28th, “The Dangerous Ideas of ‘Longtermism’ and ‘Existential Risk’,” *Current Affairs*, <https://www.currentaffairs.org/2021/07/the-dangerous-ideas-of-longtermism-and-existential-risk>, Accessed 10-27-2021)

It’s this line of reasoning that leads Bostrom, Greaves, MacAskill, and others to argue that even the tiniest reductions in “existential risk” are morally equivalent to saving the lives of literally billions of living, breathing, actual people. For example, Bostrom writes that if there is “a mere 1 percent chance” that 10^54 conscious beings (most living in computer simulations) come to exist in the future, then “we find that the expected value of reducing existential risk by a mere one billionth of one billionth of one percentage point is worth a hundred billion times as much as a billion human lives.” Greaves and MacAskill echo this idea in a 2021 paper by arguing that “even if there are ‘only’ 1014 lives to come … , a reduction in near-term risk of extinction by one millionth of one percentage point would be equivalent in value to a million lives saved.”

To make this concrete, imagine Greaves and MacAskill in front of two buttons. If pushed, the first would save the lives of 1 million living, breathing, actual people. The second would increase the probability that 10^14 currently unborn people come into existence in the far future by a teeny-tiny amount. Because, on their longtermist view, there is no fundamental moral difference between saving actual people and bringing new people into existence, these options are morally equivalent. In other words, they’d have to flip a coin to decide which button to push. (Would you? I certainly hope not.) In Bostrom’s example, the morally right thing is obviously to sacrifice billions of living human beings for the sake of even tinier reductions in existential risk, assuming a minuscule 1 percent chance of a larger future population: 1054 people.

All of this is to say that even if billions of people were to perish in the coming climate catastrophe, so long as humanity survives with enough of civilization intact to fulfill its supposed “potential,” we shouldn’t be too concerned. In the grand scheme of things, non-runaway climate change will prove to be nothing more than a “mere ripple” —a “small misstep for mankind,” however terrible a “massacre for man” it might otherwise be.

Even worse, since our resources for reducing existential risk are finite, Bostrom argues that we must not “fritter [them] away” on what he describes as “feel-good projects of suboptimal efficacy.” Such projects would include, on this account, not just saving people in the Global South—those most vulnerable, especially women—from the calamities of climate change, but all other non-existential philanthropic causes, too. As the Princeton philosopher Peter Singer writes about Bostrom in his 2015 book on Effective Altruism, “to refer to donating to help the global poor … as a ‘feel-good project’ on which resources are ‘frittered away’ is harsh language.” But it makes perfectly good sense within Bostrom’s longtermist framework, according to which “priority number one, two, three, and four should … be to reduce existential risk.” Everything else is smaller fish not worth frying.

If this sounds appalling, it’s because it is appalling. By reducing morality to an abstract numbers game, and by declaring that what’s most important is fulfilling “our potential” by becoming simulated posthumans among the stars, longtermists not only trivialize past atrocities like WWII (and the Holocaust) but give themselves a “moral excuse” to dismiss or minimize comparable atrocities in the future. This is one reason that I’ve come to see longtermism as an immensely dangerous ideology. It is, indeed, akin to a secular religion built around the worship of “future value,” complete with its own “secularised doctrine of salvation,” as the Future of Humanity Institute historian Thomas Moynihan approvingly writes in his book X-Risk. The popularity of this religion among wealthy people in the West—especially the socioeconomic elite—makes sense because it tells them exactly what they want to hear: not only are you ethically excused from worrying too much about sub-existential threats like non-runaway climate change and global poverty, but you are actually a morally better person for focusing instead on more important things—risk that could permanently destroy “our potential” as a species of Earth-originating intelligent life.

#### 1---Reject evidence from the Breakthrough Institute---it’s a lobbying group not a think tank.

BNI 20, Beyond Nuclear International (“Exposed!” BNI, 9/28/2020, https://beyondnuclearinternational.org/2020/09/28/exposed/, kyujin)

BREAKTHROUGH INSTITUTE

Shellenberger is co-founder of the Breakthrough Institute, a lobbying group masquerading as a “think tank”. The Breakthrough Institute has “a clear history as a contrarian outlet for information on climate change [which] regularly criticises environmental groups”, according to Paul Thacker. Breakthrough has also been described as a “program for hippie-punching your way to fame and fortune.”

Shellenberger co-founded the Breakthrough Institute with Ted Nordhaus, nephew of economist, William Nordhuas. William Nordhaus features in Merchants of Doubt – Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway’s examination of the PR strategies used both by the tobacco and fossil fuel industries. His interventions in the 1990s helped set back essential action on climate change by decades.

Other figures associated with Shellenberger and the Breakthrough Institute include:

* Owen Paterson, one of the UK’s most prominent climate deniers who helped with the UK launch of the group’s Ecomodernist manifesto in 2015.
* Matt Ridley, coal mine owner, once hereditary Conservative Peer and famous climate delayer / ‘lukewarmist’ who spoke at the UK launch event.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### Turns case---AV adoption under neoliberalism ensures worst case environmental outcomes.

Kerlin 17, UC Davis (Driverless cars could be a solution to climate change—but two major things have to happen, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/brand-connect/ucdavis/driverless-cars-could-be-a-solution-to-climate-change/>)

Driverless vehicle use worldwide could lower traffic congestion and emissions contributing to climate change by 50 percent or more in 2050, according to a 2017 report led by global transport expert Lewis Fulton at the Institute of Transportation Studies at UC Davis (ITS-Davis). In an ideal driverless future, parking lots and driveways are converted to housing, cafes, open space and gardens. Roads are safer—robots don’t eat, drink, text or sleep—and seniors, people with disabilities and even children have far greater mobility. Drunk drivers cease to be a problem, and transportation cost is a fraction of what it once was. People can work, sleep or watch a movie while in transit. But for this scenario to work, something major has to happen: Large numbers of people have to give up their cars and start sharing rides. Fulton’s analysis found little societal or environmental benefit from driverless vehicles unless they are both electric and shared. “All the futuristic automotive technology being developed could make our cities more livable and the air more breathable,” Fulton said. “But only if we take sharing seriously.” That’s because cars would become a service rather than something people own. Pooling services and app-based, ride-sharing companies could expand to accommodate multiple riders in one vehicle, whether a car, van, small shuttle or bus. These services eventually would become driverless. Dan Sperling, director of the Institute of Transportation Studies at UC Davis, checks out an autonomous, electric bus with Freddie Dabney of First Transit, at Bishop Ranch business park in San Ramon, Calif. The shuttle is part of a pilot program, which will eventually ferry employees along designated routes in the business park. Photo credit: Joe Proudman Steering in the right direction Experts at ITS-Davis are working with auto manufacturers, policymakers, ride-sharing providers and others worldwide to provide guidance on how governments and communities can reap the benefits and avoid the pitfalls of driverless cars. Ride-sharing company Lyft expects driverless vehicles to account for most of its rides within five years. Some transportation experts are more conservative, estimating that widespread adoption of sit-back-and-take-a-nap driverless vehicles will likely take another 20 to 40 years. But most agree it’s a matter of when, not if. “A future with driverless cars is inevitable because it will be cheap, safe and people will want it,” said ITS-Davis director Dan Sperling. “Most of the technology is already here. Now we want to make sure, before we get too far, that these driverless cars are powered by electricity and used for pooling services, not individually owned.” In 2016, ITS-Davis launched its “3 Revolutions” policy initiative, which lays the scientific foundation for a future with driverless vehicles embracing all of the characteristics—driverless, electric and shared mobility—needed for the greatest environmental and public benefit. Freddie Dabney, of First Transit, unplugs an autonomous, electric bus before taking Dan Sperling, director of the Institute of Transportation Studies at UC Davis, for a ride at Bishop Ranch business park in San Ramon, Calif. Sperling cites in his forthcoming book, “3 Revolutions: Steering Automated, Shared and Electric Vehicles to a Better Future,” that in order for autonomous vehicles to have a positive impact on climate change, they also need to be electric. Photo credit: Joe Proudman The nightmare If these three revolutions do not happen concurrently, pollution and traffic are expected to get worse with driverless cars. Without pooling, the UC Davis report estimates vehicle use would increase 15 to 20 percent by 2050, turning the dream into a nightmare. In this scenario, sprawl would continue to grow as people seek more affordable housing in the suburbs or countryside, since they’ll be able to work or sleep in the car on their commute. They may give up public transportation in favor of ride-hailing—a trend already starting in places like New York City and San Francisco, according to a recent study by former UC Davis transportation researcher Regina Clewlow. Carbon dioxide emissions will increase if the vehicles are not electric. And emissions growth may be heightened by personally owned “zombie” cars roaming city streets as their owners work, eat or play and avoid the hassle and expense of urban parking. “Left to the market and individual choice, the likely outcome is more vehicles, more driving and a slow transition to electric cars,” Sperling wrote in the book “3 Revolutions: Steering Automated, Shared and Electric Vehicles to a Better Future,” which publishes in March 2018.

#### Global inequality is increasing---structural adjustment policies and net outflows have reversed progress and stagnated growth.

Hickel et al. 18, Jason Hickel: Anthropologist, author, and fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. He serves on the Labour Party Task Force on International Development and works as Policy Director for The Rules collective. Nima Shirazi: Editor at Muftah, a digital foreign affairs magazine, and co-host of the media criticism podcast, Citations Needed. Adam Johnson: Host, The Appeal podcast. Media analyst at FAIR.org and host of the Citations Needed podcast (November 28th, “Episode 58: The Neoliberal Optimism Industry,” *Citations Needed*, https://citationsneeded.medium.com/episode-58-the-neoliberal-optimism-industry-and-development-shaming-the-global-south-cf399e88510e, Accessed 09-25-2021)

Nima: Can you dig a little deeper into, based on your work Jason, how the terms “development” and “growth” are really, not only misunderstood, but often deliberately misrepresented both in a political context and also throughout the media, like who do these misperceptions benefit?

Jason Hickel: So I think that there’s a narrative out there that poor countries are basically effectively catching up to rich countries, right? Because we know that, there’s China and they’re becoming a powerful player in the world stage and so on. And we’re seeing people lift out of poverty in China and India also, you know, a booming tech industry and whatnot. So clearly, you know, the gap between the rich and the poor on the global stage is shrinking. This is the dominant narrative we have. And unfortunately it’s simply not true. There are, in fact, was a period when that gap was shrinking, in the immediate postcolonial decades in the 1960s and the 1970s when newly independent governments were rolling out progressive economic reforms using Keynesian policy, protecting their economies with tariffs, using subsidies to promote infant industry developments, etcetera, etcetera. But, you know, and using land reform and labor laws to improve wages and so on. But these policies turned out to be a threat to Global North investors. Which, during the colonial years had enjoyed really easy access to cheap labor and raw materials and so on in those countries. And that was being cut off. And so they responded during the 1980s and 1990s by rolling back those progressive policies through structural adjustments imposed by the World Bank and the IMF, right? Which basically forced Global South countries to privatize public assets, to get rid of tariff barriers and subsidies, to cut spending on education and healthcare. Like all of the crucial elements necessary for real developments were basically denied to Global South countries. The vast majority of them at least. So that’s not true of East Asia and in China, and as a consequence, that region of the world did remarkably well, but what we see in the rest of the world is that the per capita income gap between the Global North and the Global South has tripled since 1960 in real terms and shows no sign of slowing down. I mean, there’s basically been, on per capita level, virtually stagnation in the Global South since the 1980s. And that’s, you know, that’s really not part of our narrative and that’s something that is a structural consequence of the way that the economy was organized during those decades.

Nima: Yeah. I think that actually leads into something that I’ve been so fascinated about while reading your work, which is that the conception that wealthy countries, countries that have historically colonized most of the world are now in a position to give back, right? To, to help out through aid or debt relief or whatever poorer countries in the Global South. So can you tell us how that view of things, that colonialism is a thing of the past that there’s no more extraction or exploitation, but now rather resources are flowing North to South from rich to poor, can you tell us how that might not exactly be true?

Jason Hickel: The dominant narrative development is that rich countries became rich kind of by their own hard work, their good institutions, their scientific inventions and so on, and poor countries are poor and remain poor because they have whatever bad governance or corruption, or maybe they’re lazy or have backwards cultural values in the more racist sense of the narrative, etcetera. But the idea is that rich countries, because they have this surplus, they’re able to sort of reach across the divide and give generously of their surplus to help poor countries up the development ladder. What I argue is that this narrative gets virtually everything about the story wrong, right? First of all, the determinants of success and failure in various countries around the world can’t be entirely attributed to only internal conditions, right? We live in a global economic system. We have done since at least the past 500 years since the onset of colonialism, and so we have to think about how the rules of that economy, of that global economic system affect the outcomes that we see around the world, right? You know, of course, that’s very easy to see during the colonial period, during the structural adjustment period in the 1980s and 1990s as well. And we can see it very clearly now in the way that capital flows around the world, right? And so if we look at total flows of money around the world right now, between the Global North and the Global South, we see something quite remarkable. This is using 2012 data, which is the last data that we have on this. But in 2012, developing countries received a total of $2 trillion US dollars in total inflows from the Global North, right? That includes aid, foreign investments, loans, remittances, everything, every bit of money, which is a lot, but in the same year, some $5 trillion flowed the other direction from South to North. So in that year there were $3 trillion in net outflows from South to North, so the South is in fact a net creditor to the North rather than the other way around. So we might be able to say that it’s, in fact, the Global South that’s developing the North rather than the North developing the South. And that really does flip the aid narrative on its head. And if we compare those outflows to aid, what we see is that for every dollar of aid that the South receives from the North, they lose $24 in net outflows, which is a tremendous reversal of the way we normally think about the situation. There’s lots of ways we can see this kind of reverse flow happening that are important to pay attention to. So one of course is the most obvious one, which is, you know, interest payments on exportable debts, which in and of itself outstrips the global aid budget, you know, almost twice over. But then we also have profit repatriation for multinational companies from host countries back to where they’re listed, which is about $500 billion per year. Sometimes even outstrips foreign direct investment flows themselves, but probably the biggest single cause of this in that outflow situation is illicit financial flows, which are largely through, you know, for the sake of tax evasion by multinational companies who are using basically tax havens and secrecy jurisdictions which are almost entirely in Global North countries controlled by Global North governments in order to secret money out of developing countries into Western bank accounts.

#### 2---Coordinated strikes solve---they disrupt global supply chains that are key to capitalism.

Fox-Hodess 21, Sociologist and cofounder of the International Labour and Logistics Research Network (Katy, June 16th, “Logistics Workers Make Global Capitalism — and They Can Break It, Too,” *Jacobin Magazine*, <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2021/06/logistics-industry-capitalism-unions>, Accessed 11-08-2021)

The logistics industry is key to the global circulation of goods under capitalism. Workers have immense power within it to grind that circulation to a halt — if they can get organized.

Over the past several decades, capitalism has broken up the production process into individual steps carried out in separate work sites scattered across the globe. As a result, logistics, the systems that organize the physical movement of goods through space and time, has become more central to global capitalism than ever, and that gives workers in the logistics sector — including ports, rail, trucking, and other industries — tremendous potential leverage over the capitalist class. Any attempt to think strategically about strengthening working-class power must therefore grapple with the sector and how it works.

#### Not too late.

Dunne 20, MA from City, University of London (Daisy, April 9th, “Deep emissions cuts this decade could prevent ‘abrupt ecological collapse,’” *Eco-Business*, <https://www.eco-business.com/news/deep-emissions-cuts-this-decade-could-prevent-abrupt-ecological-collapse/>, Accessed 11-07-2021)

‘Not too late’

The research finds that, under a very high emissions scenario, ecosystems could be exposed to intolerably high temperatures as early as this decade. However, this does not mean it is too late to act, Pigot tells Carbon Brief:

“Our results show very clearly that it is not too late to act and the benefits of acting now will be massive and will accumulate over time. By holding warming below 2C, we can effectively ‘flatten the curve’ of how climate risks to biodiversity accumulates over time, delaying the exposure of the most at-risk species by many decades and averting exposure entirely for many thousands of species.”

The findings are “very strong and convincing” says Peter Soroye, a PhD candidate in biology from the University of Ottawa, Canada, who recently published a study on projected bumblebee declines worldwide. He tells Carbon Brief:

“One of the critical things that this and other large-scale studies on climate change-related biodiversity impacts show is the positive effect of reducing carbon emissions on future biodiversity. Work like this demonstrates that while future climate change will modify ecosystems around the globe – overwhelmingly for the worse – we can mitigate many of these impacts by rapidly reducing our carbon emissions.”

#### Socialist degrowth solves climate best.

Molyneux 19, is an editor of Irish Marxist Review and a supporter of People Before Profit (John, October 1st, “Socialism is the only realistic solution to climate change,” *Climate and Capitalism*, <https://climateandcapitalism.com/2019/10/01/why-socialism-is-the-only-realistic-solution-to-climate-change/>, Accessed 08-28-2021)

A lot has been written, including by myself, on why capitalism, by its very nature, cannot tackle or stop climate change. The purpose of this article is not to repeat those arguments but to make the positive case for socialism as necessary to deal with this existential crisis for humanity.

By socialism I mean simply the combination of two things: public ownership and democratic control of production and society.

By public ownership I mean not the elimination of personal private property or the nationalization of every small business and corner shop but of the main banks, corporations, industries, services and utilities. For example, public ownership of bus and transport networks, of the health service, of one main state bank and one main state insurance company, of social housing, of waste management, of water, electricity, gas, wind and solar power production, of Larry Goodman’s ABF Food Group, of Denis O’Brien’s Communicorp and so on.

By democratic control I mean that each major workplace — each hospital, factory, train station, school, university, construction company etc. — should be run by the elected and re-callable representatives of its workforce, within the context of a democratic plan for the economy and society as a whole. That would need to be proposed by government based on and accountable to democratically elected popular assemblies.

Without large scale public ownership, capitalism and the laws of the capitalist market will continue to dominate and this will have disastrous consequences for the environment as it has done already. Without democratic control you have not got socialism but state capitalism[1] with a new ruling class of state bureaucrats which, as has been seen in Stalinist Russia and in China, also has terrible ecological consequences because it subordinates the needs of the people and nature to accumulation for accumulation’s sake in competition with other states.

Only through socialism will it be possible to generate both the political will at the top and the genuine popular support and collaboration to achieve the immense coordinated transformation of the national and international economy necessary in the current emergency. Only public ownership and democratic planning can coordinate the establishment and expansion of free public transport, the urgent transition to renewal energy, the mass retrofitting of homes and a vast program of aforestation and rewilding.

A Just Transition

Most of the climate and environmental movement support the idea of a just transition but only socialism with its commitment to ending class privilege and inequality can actually deliver this. In any society where there are billionaires alongside homeless people, and immense divisions between rich countries and poor countries as a result of imperialism and globalized capitalism, all attempts at transition to ending carbon emissions, even where they are made, will inevitably be structured and blighted by this inequality. The rich will look to protect themselves and their life styles in gated communities in the uplands while trying to shift the burden of paying for the transition onto ordinary people.

Take the example of transport. If, as is absolutely essential, we get people out of the private car and onto free public transport, what will be the consequences of this? Under capitalism it will mean the bosses of the giant auto companies (Volkswagen, Toyota, General Motors etc) will see which way the wind is blowing, loot their own companies and put the proceeds in their Swiss bank accounts, while throwing their hundreds of thousands of workers on the scrap heap. Under socialism the auto industry CEOs and big shareholders could be relieved of their ill-gotten gains while the rundown of the industry is managed in a way that retrains and re-employs the workers in socially useful work, e.g. building wind turbines or buses.

The same applies to flying. If air travel were to be reduced, as it must be to save the planet,[2] under capitalism this would most likely be done by a price mechanism so that executives would continue to jet round the world to their conferences while ordinary people had to give up their holidays to Spain and the Greek Islands. That in turn would mean redundancy for airline workers and crisis in the Spanish and Greek tourist industry. Again only socialist planning could solve this.

And it would be the same for the utterly deadly coal industry. When Margaret Thatcher destroyed the British coal industry in 1984-5 she did it for entirely capitalist ‘economic’ reasons — there wasn’t an ounce of environmentalism in it — but the effect on mining communities and villages was devastating; many have still not recovered. Avoiding such communal destruction on a vastly greater scale requires socialist planning.

Thinking Globally

Climate justice on a global scale is totally unthinkable without socialism. Five hundred years ago the different continents and regions of the world were roughly at the same level of economic development; for example China was every bit as economically advanced as Europe and India was seen as a rich country. Centuries of capitalism, slavery and imperialism, with the latter growing out of the former, created an immensely uneven world; industrial production, wealth and power became concentrated in the so-called advanced ‘West’ — essentially Europe and North America—with poverty, starvation and lack of industrial development concentrated in Asia, Africa and Latin America, now usually called the Global South.

This pattern has changed somewhat in recent decades with massive capitalist development in China and other parts of South and East Asia but it is still a massive reality across much of the world. Historically and still today the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America have contributed least to climate change but will be hugely disproportionately affected by it. For example a 1.5-2 C global temperature increase will be a death sentence for much of Africa because it will destroy their agriculture; melting Himalayan glaciers and rising sea levels will utterly devastate the deeply impoverished Bangladesh.

This cannot be challenged or dealt with without socialist redistribution of wealth and socialist planning internationally. Only socialist internationalism based on the common interests of the world’s working people could achieve such international cooperation;

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any capitalist option, no matter how ‘green’ its intentions, would degenerate into national and international rivalries which would destroy any coherent international planning.

Then there is the question of overall economic growth. There is a growing view in the environmental movement that the idea of continuous economic growth is completely unsustainable. Greta Thunberg, in her speech to the UN, spoke of “fairy tales of eternal economic growth.”

But under capitalism stagnation or, even more so, de-growth is an immediate crisis, a recession when it is short and a ‘great depression’ when it is extended, spelling mass unemployment, poverty and austerity (with the risk of fascism thrown in). This is because capitalism has a drive to growth built into its very fabric. Achieving a non-growth economy (measured in terms of GDP) or, should it prove essential, a de-growth in certain areas would also only be possible on the basis of socialist planning combined with the popular consent that would come from mass involvement in the democratic planning process.

# 1NR

## Coop

### AT: Heg Multilateralism

#### U.S. unipolarity harms the rules-based order BUT the transition will be peaceful.

Glaser 12, Director of Foreign Policy Studies at the Cato Institute (John, April 17th, “American Decline: What the Foreign Policy Elite Really Fear,” *Anti-War Blog*, <https://www.antiwar.com/blog/2012/04/17/american-decline-what-the-foreign-policy-elite-really-fear/>, Accessed 10-20-2021)

There is a fixation in elite foreign policy circles these days to speculate on the impending decline of America’s global economic and military hegemony and to lament that decline as the dangerous end to international order. Without global American dominance, goes the thinking, lawless competition and chaos will rule.

Former Carter administration national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski’s latest book Strategic Vision goes through this lament. He worries that, absent U.S. hegemony, regional powers will be less restrained. Russia will bully tiny Caucasian states like Georgia; China will bully Taiwan; North Korea will threaten South Korea; diminished unilateral support for Israel would destabilize the Middle East; et cetera.

Thomas P.M. Barnett in World Politics Review takes a look at Ian Bremmer’s forthcoming book Every Nation for Itself, another lament of American decline. Post-hegemony, states will be “superseded by a generalized anarchy” in “an era [that] begets a ‘free for all'” and witnesses Asia’s rise, or even more ominously, China’s rise. Bremmer fears a world without the “global leadership” of America to “keep the peace.”

Indeed, this is the most interesting insight I drew from Bremmer’s book: The real danger of a G-Zero world is not the accelerated decline of the West but the unbridled — and unpoliced — appetites of the East. As Bremmer points out repeatedly, Western states need not fear a “world of regions,” his term for an era of pronounced regionalism. By and large, their national structures are more than robust for that scenario. But if it’s regionalism run amuck, the clash of civilizations most unlikely to unfold is not East versus West or West versus South, but East versus South — without a West as referee.

To buy into this is to have very little ability to self-criticize. This line of thinking assumes that the West, and America specifically, has acted like an impartial referee over the international system, which is really an absurd suggestion. What people like Brzezinski and Bremmer and Barnett really fear is not that the Benevolent Empire and the “global order” it preserves will be no more. Rather, the fear is that the selfish, unscrupulous, hypocritical, coercive disposition of other states will prevail instead of the U.S. government’s selfish, unscrupulous, hypocritical, coercive behavior. Other states will get to do the horrible things that only we’ve been able to do for decades.

Overthrowing governments that threaten the state’s supremacy, supporting the world’s worst dictators, committing the supreme international crime of unprovoked war, military bases spanning the globe…these things will no longer be solely American prerogatives.

“The concern over “’decline,'” writes Nikolas Gvosdev, ” is not that the U.S. is about to stop being a superpower; it is that future likely adversaries are not going to be the pushovers the U.S. has gotten used to for the past 20 years.” Daniel Larison comments:

What doesn’t make much sense about “anti-declinist” fearmongering along these lines is that relative decline isn’t something that the U.S. can avoid by making certain policy choices rather than others. It’s certainly possible to sap and exhaust U.S. resources in the fruitless quest to reclaim an unsustainable position. We have spent the last decade doing just that.

The U.S. can react to a multipolar world by demonizing and vilifying other major powers and by punishing them when they fail to fall in line on every international issue, which seems to be the preferred response of the most vocal “anti-declinist” presidential candidate, or it can attempt to find common interests with these other powers. The latter seems advisable, not least because a multipolar world is one in which the demands on and costs to the U.S. are fewer.

### AT: Pursuit Inevitable

#### 3---There’s a unique opening for reversing primacy now.

Brown 20, policy associate at Ploughshares Fund, a global security foundation. (Zack, 10-31-2020, "The Myth of American Primacy", *National Interest*, https://nationalinterest.org/blog/skeptics/myth-american-primacy-171760)

Wertheim acknowledged that stepping back from our commitment to primacy won’t be easy—nor should it happen overnight. But he does see an opening for change. A big part of it will depend on whether Americans believe that primacy—perhaps necessary in the twentieth century—still pays in the twenty-first.

Increasingly, he said, they’re deciding that it doesn’t.

“There’s a core security argument that has failed the American people: that globe-spanning dominance makes us safe,” Wertheim explained. “It makes us less safe. It creates enemies, antagonisms, and leaves us helpless against the threats of the twenty-first century, as we see in the midst of this pandemic.”

“So, I would wager that the vast majority of Americans think that whatever possible good the United States might do projecting its armed forces permanently around the globe, it’s just outweighed by our urgent needs at home.”

#### 4---Pursuit isn’t inevitable---public beliefs are malleable and shifting.

Fettweis 20, Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University. (Christopher J., 6-3-2020, "Delusions of Danger: Geopolitical Fear and Indispensability in U.S. Foreign Policy", *A Dangerous World? Threat Perception and U.S. National Security*, https://www.cato.org/publications/publications/delusions-danger-geopolitical-fear-indispensability-us-foreign-policy)

Nearly immune, however, is not immune. Even the most deeply held beliefs find it difficult to survive sustained, long‐​term assaults of contradictory information. Psychologists who have studied evolution in beliefs report that despite occasional epiphanies that instantly change minds, like that of Saul on the road to Damascus, generally speaking the process is very gradual, and sometimes imperceptible.53 Individuals often recognize that a change in their beliefs has occurred after the fact, and they resist admitting that their minds are evolving while the process is under way. There are examples of gradual, even generational evolution of beliefs that can give hope to those seeking to expunge fear and indispensability from U.S. foreign policy.

“Social Darwinism,” for instance, poisoned international politics for decades. The belief that humanity was split into a number of distinct “races” in a perpetual existential struggle where only the fittest survive shaped the worldview of generations of leaders.54 Social Darwinism helped justify any number of pathological policies, from imperialism to the Holocaust, but over time, it collapsed under the weight of rational counterargument and evidence. The identification of DNA and the understanding of the genome allowed science to put social Darwinism and its cousins, eugenics and phrenology, to rest once and for all.55 Previously, internalized beliefs about the inevitability of competition between races were slowly changed by the onslaught of evidence and reason, and the understanding that differences among peoples were cultural rather than genetic. The edifice did not collapse all at once or with equal speed everywhere, but over time arguments based on the foundation of social Darwinism stopped winning popular debates on that “battlefield of beliefs,” and foreign policy behavior changed. Precedent, then, exists for evolution in fundamental beliefs, enough for one to hope that a similar process could eventually change popular perceptions toward modern, counterproductive irrationalities.

Precedent does not supply the only encouragement. Changing the dominant U.S. foreign policy belief system is perhaps not as daunting a challenge as it may at first seem, for a number of reasons. First, as already discussed, only a small number of opinions would have to be altered to have a significant effect. As nice as it is to imagine that the United States runs a democratic foreign policy, in reality not all opinions are equally important. Altering the beliefs of the masses may be quite difficult, but it is those of the elite that are decisive in foreign policy; affecting elites, if only because they are fewer in number, might not prove to be an insurmountable task. As influential as NSC 68 was, for instance, it was an internal document read only by senior government officials, and it remained classified until 1975. The various incarnations of the Committee on Present Danger concentrated their efforts solely on the upper echelons of the foreign policy community, and they were quite successful in affecting foreign policy debate and practice. Success in minimizing pathological foreign policy behavior can occur long before majorities alter their beliefs.

Second, there is reason to believe that foreign policy beliefs are not as entrenched as some others. Many modern American politicians — to say nothing of the people they lead — know very little about foreign policy. The U.S. Congress is a wasteland of parochialism, where members can even be punished for appearing to know too much about the rest of the world.56 Those at the top of the executive branch have been little better. The past three U.S. presidents had no background in foreign affairs before coming into office. Bill Clinton even managed to turn his opponent’s foreign policy expertise into a liability in 1992, claiming that it demonstrated that the elder Bush did not pay adequate attention to domestic concerns. Eight years later, voters were unfazed about George W. Bush’s disinterest in the outside world, as manifest in a record of foreign travel stunningly low for a child of privilege, inability to name leaders of key countries, and devotion of only three pages in his campaign memoir to foreign affairs.57 Although Barack Obama spent large portions of his life abroad, he had no direct foreign policy experience before 2008, and his 2012 opponent had even less. So although 21st-century U.S. presidents have some predetermined beliefs about foreign policy, their beliefs are probably more malleable than those of presidents who have come to office more seasoned in matters of state. Some of the most important, influential minds may not prove to be those most resistant to change.

A third reason for hope can be found in the early indications from the changeover in generations. Generally speaking, young people are more susceptible to the possibility of change, whereas senior members of any generation are much less likely to admit that their long‐​held theories might be wrong. That is particularly true for senior scholars, as Thomas Kuhn has pointed out in his study of paradigms, because they rarely prove eager to adjust the belief systems that have served them well for so long.58 Junior members of any field are much more likely to adopt new theories and beliefs, because they are not as invested in old ways, and they may gain a certain bit of pleasure in tearing down the old shibboleths.59 Public‐​opinion polling has suggested that the youngest generation of adults, the so‐​called millennials, is less concerned about terrorism and less supportive of an activist foreign policy than are its predecessors. Those between the ages of 18 and 29 are half as likely to be concerned about Islamic fundamentalism as those over 60.60 They also appear to be less patriotic.61 It is often said that racism is going away one funeral at a time; perhaps, too, generational change is necessary to relieve some of the pathological popular pressures in the arena of U.S. foreign policy debate.

Finally, it is worth emphasizing that the target of this work is the marketplace of ideas, not the beliefs of every individual who contributes to it. The United States does not always act pathologically, after all. Rational forces are present alongside pathological ones in all foreign policy discussions, and they often win the battle over the direction of policy. It will not require a complete ideological revolution for the United States to minimize the irrational beliefs that plague its foreign policy behavior. Planting the seeds of doubt in influential minds, seeds that can germinate and grow over time, may well prove to be enough to tilt the balance of national debate toward reason. The task of inspiring gradual improvement in U.S. foreign policy performance, therefore, may not be as daunting as it at first seems. In the long run, there is hope, even if few minds will change any time soon.

Thomas Jefferson once wrote, “If we think [the people are] not enlightened enough to exercise control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform that discretion.“62 One of the crucial tasks facing policymakers must be to inform the general public, however slowly and indirectly, of the evidence that might force its members to reexamine their foreign policy beliefs. Because an informed public is one of the central sine qua nons of a healthy, functioning democracy, U.S. leaders ought to repeat the facts about the decline of warfare — and of the real risks associated with terrorism — as many times as necessary for them to become accepted.63 Although simply correcting misinformation will not alter beliefs immediately, over time the constituency for reason will grow.64

Though beliefs are exceptionally slow to change, they eventually do. Few people still believe that the earth is at the center of the universe, for instance, or that insults to honor must be answered by a duel to the death. Assuming for a moment that the current pacific trends in international politics turn out to have staying power, empirical realities will eventually trump pathological geopolitical fear. Even the most deeply held collective beliefs find it hard to persist forever in the face of a sustained onslaught of countervailing evidence. Over time — and perhaps with the change of generations — pure reason can win the battle of beliefs, even if its victory is never certain.

### Methodology Indicts

#### All of their LIO good authors are funded by weapons contractors:

#### 1---1AC Jain is from the Atlantic Council---funded by weapons contractors, NATO, and big oil.

Shirazi & Johnson 20, Nima Shirazi: Editor at Muftah, a digital foreign affairs magazine, and co-host of the media criticism podcast, Citations Needed. Adam Johnson: Host, The Appeal podcast. Media analyst at FAIR.org and host of the Citations Needed podcast (September 9th, “Episode 117: The Always ‘Lagging’ U.S. War Machine,” *Citations Needed*, <https://citationsneeded.medium.com/episode-117-the-sl-lagging-u-s-war-machine-52b8960aedc3>, Accessed 09-23-2021)

CNBC, the next year, the headline read, “The US is falling behind China in crucial race for AI dominance.” This was written by Frederick Kempe, President and CEO of the Atlantic Council who was the main source of the previous article we mentioned. The Atlantic Council, of course their major funders are, aside from oil companies and US and state governments are very much weapons contractors. Major donors include Lockheed Martin, Boeing, BAE Systems, Raytheon, Palantir, as well as direct financing from NATO itself.

#### 2---1AC Baird, 2AC Posen, Brooks, and Drezner are all CFR members---that’s an exclusive club of Wall Street cronies designed to uphold the imperial war machine.

Shoup 21, California author and activist. He is the author of five books, including Wall Street’s Think Tank: The Council on Foreign Relations and the Empire of Neoliberal Geopolitics 1976–2019 (Monthly Review Press, 2019) (Laurence, The Council on Foreign Relations, the Biden Team, and Key Policy Outcomes, *The Monthly Review*, Volume 73, Number 1, Available Online at: https://monthlyreview.org/2021/05/01/the-council-on-foreign-relations-the-biden-team-and-key-policy-outcomes/)

Think tanks: The function of think tanks (together with the mainstream media) is advance planning, setting agendas, and creating consensus, with the resulting climate of opinion favoring certain government policies. They also propose specific policies and select and train people to carry them out. There are numerous think tanks in the United States, but three are the most central for the ruling class: the CFR, the Carnegie Endowment, and the Brookings Institution. Of these, the most important U.S. policy think tank, which has helped set grand strategy for the country for one hundred years, is the CFR, dubbed “Wall Street’s Think Tank.” Founded a century ago, the CFR is the high-command plutocratic body promoting U.S. imperialism. It is the world’s most powerful private organization, the central think tank of U.S. monopoly-finance capital. It is also a membership organization and the ultimate networking, socializing, agenda-setting, strategic-planning, and consensus-forming organization of the dominant sector of the U.S. capitalist class.

The CFR’s activities help unite the capitalist class into not just a class in itself, but also a class for itself. From its beginnings, it has been a behind-the-scenes organization and network led by well-connected financial capitalists of New York’s Wall Street. These capitalists are assisted by their expert allies in the professional class, especially from leading U.S. universities, but also from the nonprofit, government, law, and media sectors of society. From its founding, the Council has promoted an imperialistic conception of the capitalist class-based “national interest” of the United States, promoting a hegemonic “primacy” of the United States both regionally and globally. It has been very successful in its aims, setting agendas and policy as well as putting thousands of its members and leaders into high office.1

The CFR is funded and led by members of the old plutocracy. For example, David Rockefeller was the CFR’s chair for fifteen years and has been its leading financial donor historically. No less than seventeen Biden team members (out of thirty total, or 56.7 percent) are members of, have close family ties to, or are otherwise connected to the CFR (see box on page 3). These include: vice president Kamala Harris; secretary of state Antony Blinken; secretary of the treasury Janet Yellen; secretary of defense Lloyd Austin; CIA head William J. Burns; national security advisor Jake Sullivan; secretary of agriculture Thomas Vilsack; secretary of commerce Gina Raimondo; secretary of homeland security Alejandro Mayorkas; chief of staff Ron Klain; climate envoy John Kerry; domestic council chief Susan Rice; Indo-Pacific coordinator Kurt M. Campbell; ambassador to the United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield; chief of Council of Economic Advisers Cecilia Rouse; director of science and technology Eric S. Lander; and counselor Jeffery Zients.2 All have at least a minimum level of commitment to the CFR, in the sense of having the necessary connections, making the effort needed to become a member, and paying expensive annual dues. Several of this group are especially close to the Council. For example, Blinken is not only a CFR member, but his wife, father, and uncle are also members. Since 2004, Blinken has also often donated to the Council’s annual fund drive. Kerry, a Boston Brahman member of the old money plutocracy whose family wealth exceeds a billion dollars, has at least four other family members in the CFR. Rouse has been a director of the Council since 2018. Vilsack was the cochair of a CFR independent task force study group in 2007. Many have spoken at CFR meetings, such as Mayorkas in June 2011.

Vice President Harris and Chief of Staff Klain are the only ones of the seventeen listed in the box on page 3 who are not members but are tied to the CFR by family. Harris’s sister Maya, who was her campaign manager, has been a Council member since 2013. Klain’s wife, Monica Media, was elected to CFR membership in 2016.3

Although not currently a CFR member, National Security Advisor Sullivan also has close ties to the Council. In recent years, he has written no less than five articles for the CFR’s in-house journal Foreign Affairs and spoken at the CFR’s New York headquarters.

### AT: Retrenchment Bad

#### First warrant is alliances---retrenchment doesn’t sacrifice them.

Krebs & Spindel 19, \*Ronald R. Krebs is a professor in the liberal arts and professor of political science at the University of Minnesota, \*\*Jennifer Spindel is an assistant professor of international security at the University of Oklahoma and a fellow at the Dickey Center at Dartmouth. (10-30-2019, “Trump’s mismanagement of the withdrawal from Syria hurt alliances — not the withdrawal itself”, *Washington Post*, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/10/30/trumps-mismanagement-withdrawal-syria-hurt-alliances-not-withdrawal-itself/)

Those who chase credibility end up with none Allies live in constant fear of abandonment. Smaller allies often worry that when push comes to shove, their great-power patron may not come to their aid. They understand that allies share some, but not all, interests and that the alliance “halo” is often quite limited. With good reason, the Kurds care less for Trump’s fulsome tweets than for his deeds. How can nervous allies be reassured? During the Cold War, scholars and policymakers argued that the United States could bolster its credibility with adversaries and allies by consistently embracing hard-line policies and displaying strength. Limited military interventions, especially in far-off locales in defense of secondary priorities, would be particularly effective in reassuring nervous allies. If a major power was willing to expend significant resources in places of trivial value, it would surely honor its commitments to allies in locations of far greater strategic interest. This logic led, among others, to the U.S. intervention in Vietnam and the Soviet War in Afghanistan — now generally seen as tragedies for all involved. Such arguments did not die with the end of the Cold War. President Barack Obama was pilloried by critics across the political spectrum in 2013 when he shied away from launching a bombing raid in response to the Syrian government’s use of chemical weapons. They subsequently accused him of thereby emboldening the Russians — contributing in early 2014 to Russia’s annexation of Crimea and its covert intervention in Ukraine and in fall 2015 to its overt intervention in Syria. His about-face, they contended, had frightened traditional regional allies, notably the Israelis and Saudis, who began to consider other patrons and arms suppliers. Trump’s sudden announcement, for the second time, that U.S. forces would be withdrawn from Syria has reportedly worried U.S. allies even beyond the Middle East. Yet this logic is a recipe for never-ending interventions and ever-expanding commitments, which will eventually undermine alliance credibility. If states can never walk back existing commitments, they will be stretched so thin that others must doubt their will and capacity to fulfill their core alliance commitments. Credibility is a greedy master that no state can unthinkingly serve. Those who chase credibility as a means to national security — by embracing uncompromising policies, steadfastly upholding all commitments, and refusing to retrench — find themselves without either credibility or security. Pulling back need not undermine alliances. The Vietnam War was precisely the kind of high-cost intervention that should have powerfully signaled U.S. resolve and reassured its allies around the world. In fact, we find, the war made America’s allies outside the region more nervous than ever that the United States might renege on its commitments. When the United States finally pulled out of Vietnam, withdrawing with little honor, its allies cheered. Our research suggests that, if handled properly, withdrawals from existing commitments can hearten allies. However, this requires publicly drawing clear distinctions between core and peripheral interests, employing a considered policy review process, and working to minimize negative policy externalities—none of which Trump did in suddenly announcing, via tweet, on Oct. 7 that “it is time for us to get out of these ridiculous Endless Wars, many of them tribal, and bring our soldiers home …” The muddle of public statements from U.S. officials that followed over the next two weeks only compounded the issue.

#### Second warrant is retrenchment bad for deterrence---primacy causes revisionism---status denial and lock-in.

Green 20, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Cincinnati. (Brendan, 5-6-2020, "Security Threats in Contemporary World Politics: Potential Hegemons, Partnerships, and Primacy", Published in *A Dangerous World? Threat Perception and U.S. National Security*, https://www.cato.org/publications/publications/security-threats-contemporary-world-politics-potential-hegemons#dangers-american-alliances)

Those dangers are particularly evident when states seek positional goods, such as status or prestige, that tend to be zero‐​sum. For instance, Wohlforth argues that status is connected to material capabilities and that “dissatisfaction [with status] arises not from dominance itself, but from dominance that appears to rest on ambiguous foundations.”28 Multipolar environments, he argues, cause status dissatisfaction because there are multiple indexes of capability (e.g., military, naval, economic) across which states compare themselves, all of which provide different assessments of status. An illustrative example is the Crimean War, where Russia pursued status goals against an overwhelming coalition whose members themselves had no security concerns. Wohlforth argues that Russia’s power on land and its ambiguity about Britain’s economic power led Russia to pursue a higher rank than it could secure with its capabilities.

Applying those arguments to East Asia should give us pause. Though Wohlforth argues that unipolarity should produce an unambiguous status hierarchy, East Asia looks similar to the Crimean example. Using Wohlforth’s metrics, China has the largest ground force in the world and the ability to rapidly augment it. That point of comparison could be relevant for potential flash points such as the Korean Peninsula. The Chinese navy is no match for its American counterpart in the open ocean, but it is growing and modernizing and would likely be operating close to its own coasts in a potential clash. Economic measures throw the problem into bold relief. Using an index of energy consumption and iron and steel production, Britain was 13.5 times more powerful than Russia at the time of the Crimean War. China’s GDP is roughly half of America’s now and is projected to overtake Washington in the next couple of decades.29 Tsarist Russia had not undergone the Industrial Revolution and misunderstood its economic implications. By contrast, Chinese growth is well understood and is the most salient feature of contemporary East Asian politics. There seems ample cause for the Chinese to experience status dissatisfaction across a number of metrics, which could be very difficult to manage through American commitments in the region.

Offensive realist revisionists pose a similar problem. Offensive realism predicts a bleak world of relentless security competition because of its focus on uncertainty. States cannot reliably predict one another’s intentions—a very difficult task in the present, and an impossible one any distance into the future. “In a world where great powers have the capability to attack one another and might have the motive to do so,” John Mearsheimer argues, states “must at least be suspicious of other states and reluctant to trust them.” The result is that “each state tends to see itself as vulnerable and alone, and therefore it aims to provide for its own survival.” The only reliable provision for security is more power.30 Unfortunately, that conclusion means that “alliances are only temporary marriages of convenience: today’s alliance partner might be tomorrow’s enemy,” and vice versa. Offensive realist predictions are, therefore, trouble for primacy. Friends and foes will be looking to take advantage of one another, and they will not be prone to regarding the commitments the United States made a long time ago as especially relevant to the present. Indeed, “great powers are also sometimes unsure about the resolve of opposing states as well as allies.” That uncertainty leads to calculated risks by aggressors and allies who begin to take security measures as though the United States may not intervene. Furthermore, because “fighting wars is a complicated business in which it is often difficult to predict outcomes,” revisionists of all stripes have incentives toward innovation and clever strategies. Fait accompli tactics that quickly revise the status quo and then dare others to push for reversal, or new military technology and doctrines that give revisionists hopes of a quick victory, are likely to be common in an offensive realist world. American commitments will be of questionable value for deterrence or reassurance under those circumstances.31

Nuno Monteiro has recently laid out the problematic relationship between offensive realist assumptions and American strategy. He argues that primacy—which he calls a strategy of “defensive dominance”— tends to create extremely dedicated minor power revisionists, for two reasons. First, primacy is a strategy of locking in the status quo through formal or informal commitments to regional actors. A favorable status quo for major regional powers will often come at the expense of local minor powers, which may be inclined to try to reverse it: for both security reasons and the non‐​security reasons noted earlier, a unipolar world will reduce the “value of peace” for some countries.

#### BUT, retrenchment doesn’t sacrifice deterrence.

MacDonald & Parent 18, \*PhD, Associate Professor of Political Science at Wellesley College. \*\*PhD, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. (Paul K. and Joseph M., “Twilight of the Titans: Great Power Decline and Retrenchment”, pg. 34, Published by *Cornell University Press*)

Fourth and most important, declining powers can redistribute resources to bolster deterrence at select strongpoints. If retrenchment were simply a negative process, then declining powers would do nothing but retreat. Yet declining powers often use retrenchment to shuffle resources amongst commitments, placing priority on defending vital interests. The underlying strategy here is strongpoint defense. 37 Rather than fritter away forces maintaining a sprawling and fragile perimeter, great powers can focus on protecting crucial commitments closer to home. When capabilities are concentrated, a great power will be able to respond to potential provocations from a position of strength. Furthermore, because a great power is focused on core interests, the credibility of its security guarantees will be amplified: adversaries will understand which interests a declining power values and be more likely to believe it will pay the price to defend them. Cutting the number of commitments also simplifies the strategic challenge facing declining powers: they have fewer potential adversaries to monitor, can more easily shift resources from one brushfi re to another, and can more rapidly capitalize on fl uid situations and adversaries’ missteps. Retrenchment is a Fabian strategy designed to outlast rising challengers.

### AT: Stats

#### 2NC answers it---the ‘long peace’ is wrong. And, stats go neg---no leadership impact.

Fettweis 20, Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University. (Christopher J., 6-3-2020, "Delusions of Danger: Geopolitical Fear and Indispensability in U.S. Foreign Policy", *A Dangerous World? Threat Perception and U.S. National Security*, <https://www.cato.org/publications/publications/delusions-danger-geopolitical-fear-indispensability-us-foreign-policy>)

Like many believers, proponents of hegemonic stability theory base their view on faith alone.41 There is precious little evidence to suggest that the United States is responsible for the pacific trends that have swept across the system. In fact, the world remained equally peaceful, relatively speaking, while the United States cut its forces throughout the 1990s, as well as while it doubled its military spending in the first decade of the new century.42 Complex statistical methods should not be needed to demonstrate that levels of U.S. military spending have been essentially unrelated to global stability.

Hegemonic stability theory’s flaws go way beyond the absence of simple correlations to support them, however. The theory’s supporters have never been able to explain adequately how precisely 5 percent of the world’s population could force peace on the other 95 percent, unless, of course, the rest of the world was simply not intent on fighting. Most states are quite free to go to war without U.S. involvement but choose not to. The United States can be counted on, especially after Iraq, to steer well clear of most civil wars and ethnic conflicts. It took years, hundreds of thousands of casualties, and the use of chemical weapons to spur even limited interest in the events in Syria, for example; surely internal violence in, say, most of Africa would be unlikely to attract serious attention of the world’s policeman, much less intervention. The continent is, nevertheless, more peaceful today than at any other time in its history, something for which U.S. hegemony cannot take credit.43 Stability exists today in many such places to which U.S. hegemony simply does not extend.

Overall, proponents of the stabilizing power of U.S. hegemony should keep in mind one of the most basic observations from cognitive psychology: rarely are our actions as important to others’ calculations as we perceive them to be.44 The so‐​called egocentric bias, which is essentially ubiquitous in human interaction, suggests that although it may be natural for U.S. policymakers to interpret their role as crucial in the maintenance of world peace, they are almost certainly overestimating their own importance. Washington is probably not as central to the myriad decisions in foreign capitals that help maintain international stability as it thinks it is.

The indispensability fallacy owes its existence to a couple of factors. First, although all people like to bask in the reflected glory of their country’s (or culture’s) unique, nonpareil stature, Americans have long been exceptional in their exceptionalism.45 The short history of the United States, which can easily be read as an almost uninterrupted and certainly unlikely story of success, has led to a (perhaps natural) belief that it is morally, culturally, and politically superior to other, lesser countries. It is no coincidence that the exceptional state would be called on by fate to maintain peace and justice in the world.

Americans have always combined that feeling of divine providence with a sense of mission to spread their ideals around the world and battle evil wherever it lurks. It is that sense of destiny, of being the object of history’s call, that most obviously separates the United States from other countries. Only an American president would claim that by entering World War I, “America had the infinite privilege of fulfilling her destiny and saving the world.“46

Although many states are motivated by humanitarian causes, no other seems to consider promoting its values to be a national duty in quite the same way that Americans do. “I believe that God wants everybody to be free,” said George W. Bush in 2004. “That’s what I believe. And that’s one part of my foreign policy.“47 When Madeleine Albright called the United States the “indispensable nation,” she was reflecting a traditional, deeply held belief of the American people.48 Exceptional nations, like exceptional people, have an obligation to assist the merely average.

Many of the factors that contribute to geopolitical fear — Manichaeism, religiosity, various vested interests, and neoconservatism — also help explain American exceptionalism and the indispensability fallacy. And unipolarity makes hegemonic delusions possible. With the great power of the United States comes a sense of great responsibility: to serve and protect humanity, to drive history in positive directions. More than any other single factor, the people of the United States tend to believe that they are indispensable because they are powerful, and power tends to blind states to their limitations. “Wealth shapes our international behavior and our image,” observed Derek Leebaert. “It brings with it the freedom to make wide‐​ranging choices well beyond common sense.“49 It is quite likely that the world does not need the United States to enforce peace. In fact, if virtually any of the overlapping and mutually reinforcing explanations for the current stability are correct, the trends in international security may well prove difficult to reverse. None of the contributing factors that are commonly suggested (economic development, complex interdependence, nuclear weapons, international institutions, democracy, shifting global norms on war) seem poised to disappear any time soon.50 The world will probably continue its peaceful ways for the near future, at the very least, no matter what the United States chooses to do or not do. As Robert Jervis concluded while pondering the likely effects of U.S. restraint on decisions made in foreign capitals, “It is very unlikely that pulling off the American security blanket would lead to thoughts of war.“51 The United States will remain fundamentally safe no matter what it does — in other words, despite widespread beliefs in its inherent indispensability to the contrary.

## Telecommunications

### 1NR---AV’s Turn

#### Prefer our evidence---theirs is spectacular headlines peddled by auto companies.

Hawkins 21, \*Andrew is a transportation reporter at The Verge, He covers ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft, public transit, policy, infrastructure, autonomous vehicles, electric bikes, and the physical act of moving through space and time; (August 21st, 2021, “Electric robotaxis may not be the climate solution we were led to believe”, https://www.theverge.com/2021/8/30/22648218/electric-robotaxi-climate-change-emissions-harvard-study)

For years, we’ve been told that electric autonomous taxis can help fight climate change by reducing air pollution. But new research from Harvard Law School suggests these supposedly “zero emissions” vehicles could actually exacerbate many of the problems we are facing today.

[A new study led by Ashley Nunes](https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ac1bd9/pdf), a fellow at the Labor and Worklife Program at Harvard Law School, concluded that fleets of electric autonomous taxis could “dramatically increase energy consumption and emissions that contribute to climate change — not reduce them.”

“While electric vehicles themselves have lower emissions than traditional gasoline-powered ones, our work shows that deploying electric robocabs en masse on America’s streets could actually increase the number of trips, miles driven, and overall emissions,” Nunes said in a release.

“Our work shows that deploying electric robocabs en masse on America’s streets could actually increase the number of trips, miles driven, and overall emissions”

Transportation is one of the main contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, with the most significant share coming from light-duty vehicles, personal cars, vans, trucks, and SUVs. Replacing some of those trips with electric autonomous vehicles operating as part of a ride-hailing fleet could help offset some of those emissions.

But by studying data from San Francisco, Nunes’ team found that “ubiquitous electric robocabs might erase those energy savings” by increasing demand for rides while also decreasing ride-pooling or carpooling, largely due to their public perception as easy, cheap, and eco-friendly. In other words, more people would be using these cars to get around who might not have otherwise have done so, thanks to their availability.

“Our work showed that transportation emissions are likely to rise due to the initiation of car trips that — in the absence of electric robocabs — would not be completed, and an increase in the number of Americans who choose to give up sharing rides in favor of using electric robocabs for single occupant trips,” says Nunes.

“Transportation emissions are likely to rise due to the initiation of car trips that — in the absence of electric robocabs — would not be completed”

The study cast doubt on assertions from the AV industry that the advent of electric autonomous vehicles would be a net positive for the environment. Kyle Vogt, co-founder, president, and chief technology officer at Cruise, said as much during an event hosted by the National Federation of the Blind back in 2019.

“I know AVs will change the way we live and move: they’ll save lives, improve accessibility, reduce emissions and air pollution, and give people back the most important resources: their time and their freedom to go where they want to go when they want to go,” Vogt said, [according to the transcript](https://nfb.org/images/nfb/publications/bm/bm19/bm1909/bm190906.htm).

Cruise often touts its commitment to an all-electric fleet — the company only uses battery-powered Chevy Bolts provided by its financial backer, General Motors — as a key factor that distinguishes it from other AV operators. Most other self-driving car companies use a mix of gas-powered, hybrid, and electric vehicles to comprise their fleets.

The media has also helped push the idea that electric robotaxis would counteract the effects of climate change, with overly speculative headlines like “[How self-driving cars could reduce emissions, eliminate parking spots, and add $1.3 trillion to the US economy](https://venturebeat.com/2019/04/26/ai-weekly-how-self-driving-cars-could-reduce-emissions-eliminate-parking-spots-and-add-1-3-trillion-to-the-u-s-economy/)” and “[Driverless cars could be a solution to climate change — but two major things have to happen](https://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/brand-connect/ucdavis/driverless-cars-could-be-a-solution-to-climate-change/).”

Some AV operators are aware of the conundrum that could arise from the spread of electric robotaxis. Cruise, for example, is [building a purpose-built autonomous vehicle](https://www.theverge.com/2020/1/21/21075977/cruise-driverless-car-gm-no-steering-wheel-pedals-ev-exclusive-first-look) designed primarily for shared rides. “It’s designed to be comfortable if it’s shared, but if it’s just you, you’ve got so much space in here you can really like stretch out,” Vogt told The Verge in 2019.

Promoting shared rides would go a long way toward improving the climate profile of autonomous vehicles in the future, the Harvard team concluded. Rather than handing out tax breaks to people who buy EVs, policymakers should consider financial incentives or discounts for people willing to carpool.

Promoting shared rides would go a long way toward improving the climate profile of autonomous vehicles in the future

Electric robotaxis would have to be more than “50 percent cleaner than today’s electric cars to reduce emissions, given their anticipated increase in trips,” they said. Cleaning up the electrical grid by eliminating the use of coal and polluting energy sources is another solution.

Of course, eliminating the need for car trips altogether by promoting the use of mass transit — or for shorter trips, walking and biking — is the best way to reduce an individual’s overall vehicle miles traveled.

Nunes’ study is the latest to poke holes in “zero emissions” claims by the tech and auto industry. A University of Michigan study in 2018 found the shift toward autonomy could [raise (rather than reduce) a vehicle’s energy demands](https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.est.7b04576). [Another research paper](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11116-018-9937-9) looked at the behavior of households that were offered a free chauffeur service for 60 hours over a seven-day period, [akin to a ride-hailing service](https://www.theverge.com/2019/8/6/20756945/uber-lyft-tnc-vmt-traffic-congestion-study-fehr-peers) or a future driverless car. The study participants’ vehicle miles traveled rose by about 80 percent.

#### Dramatically increasing emissions.

Cameron Roberts 20, Researcher in Sustainable Transportation, Carleton University, (https://theconversation.com/self-driving-cars-will-not-fix-our-transportation-woes-127920)

More roads, more cars

[Futurama, a General Motors-sponsored diorama at the 1939 New York World’s Fair](https://www.wired.com/2010/04/gallery-1939-worlds-fair/), made a similar promise: fast and efficient highways would make traffic congestion and accidents a thing of the past.

Once these highways were actually built, however, [induced demand](https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2018/09/citylab-university-induced-demand/569455/) quickly clogged them up, as people took advantage of the new roads to make new trips that they didn’t make before.

Autonomous vehicles risk a more dangerous version of the same phenomenon. Not only will efficient autonomous highways [tempt people](https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2018.1525197) to [drive further](https://doi.org/10.1080/15472450.2017.1291351), but the ability to work — or even sleep — while travelling will make [people think](https://psrc.github.io/attachments/2014/TRB-2015-Automated-Vehicles-Rev2.pdf) much [less of a two-hour commute](https://higherlogicdownload.s3.amazonaws.com/AUVSI/3a47c2f1-97a8-4fb7-8a39-56cba0733145/UploadedImages/documents/pdfs/7-16-14%20AVS%20presentations/kenLaberteaux.pdf).

Cars might also become less energy-efficient as they’re modified to meet the demands of users. Passengers may run them at higher speeds because they’re safer, which consumes more energy due to aerodynamic resistance. [Car manufacturers](https://www.treehugger.com/urban-design/honda-iemobi-mobile-autonomous-living-room-and-future-self-driving-cars.html) may also begin to design [larger vehicles](https://home.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/pdf/2013/10/self-driving-cars-are-we-ready.pdf) to accommodate mobile offices and bedrooms.

This might be mitigated somewhat by electric vehicles, but that electricity may still come from fossil fuels. Plus, bigger vehicles with bigger batteries will produce more carbon emissions as a [byproduct of their construction](https://www.alternativesjournal.ca/energy-and-resources/your-electric-car-really-green).

These processes could, theoretically, be carbon-neutral, but that may not occur quickly enough. The safe bet is to reduce the number of kilometres travelled, rather than increasing them.

There’s also [the threat](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2019.02.012) of [an empty](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2015.12.001) [vehicle travelling many kilometres](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11116-018-9937-9). Why search for a parking spot when you could send your car home?

Scholars who have used computer models and other techniques to predict the environmental impact of autonomous vehicles have found the mass use of private self-driving cars could [lead to increases](https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy17osti/67216.pdf) in carbon emissions of up to [200 per cent](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2015.12.001).