# DA – Info Warfare – CPWW – Michigan Summer Debate Institutes 2022

## Notes

#### Shout out to Samuel P. for putting this together all himself!

#### Any questions or concerns can be emailed to walratca@umich.edu

## Neg

### 1NC – Uniqueness CP

#### Text: The United States federal government should substantially decrease counter-information-warfare cyberspace initiatives with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

### 1NC – Disinformation DA

#### Anti-information campaigns post-Ukraine against Russia and China are devastating for free speech---also turns the AFF because it makes it impossible to gain clear insights on the situation in Russia

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In the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Russia has excluded media outlets based in the U.S. and allied countries. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Radio Free Europe, Deutsche Welle, BBC, and other news sources are no longer legally available there. A self-imposed *digital iron curtain* has descended across Europe, enforced in part by the new draconian Russian law criminalizing the distribution of “false information” about the Ukraine conflict.

But the closing of the information space has not been one-sided. The European Union has banned Russian state media in Europe and U.S. companies have made it more difficult to access these media outlets in the U.S., thereby reducing the range of information sources available to the public here in the West.

In my view, these voluntary and legal exclusions of Russian state media are unnecessary and harmful attempts to mobilize society for the wartime emergency in Ukraine. Such restrictions should be ended as soon as possible and not reimposed or extended to other state-backed media, except perhaps under the gravest circumstances of actual war and blatantly unjustified aggression. These exclusions limit the view of the world available to the U.S. public and policymakers, and, by a well-understood and predictable process, they lead to the demonizing and silencing of valuable internal critics whose insights could help to improve the effectiveness of foreign and domestic policy. It would be a mistake to continue down such a dangerous and counterproductive path.

THE NEW U.S. RESTRICTIONS

In the wake of Russia’s brutal invasion of Ukraine, several U.S. companies banned Russian state media from their systems. Apple removed the RT News app from its app store. YouTube blocked the RT news channel. DirecTV dropped RT America, which led the English-language 24-hour Russian news channel based in the U.S. to shutter its operations.

Senator Mark Warner sent a public letter to tech company CEOs urging them “to prevent misuse of their platforms by Russia and Russia-linked entities.” But the companies were free to ignore such policymaker pressure—and some did. Facebook still allows RT to function on its U.S. platform while continuing to label it as “Russia state-controlled media.” Twitter also permits RT on its platform, with a warning that the account is “Russia state-affiliated media.” Moreover, the RT website is still easily accessible from any computer or mobile device in the United States.

The result of this private sector management of their own systems is that people in the U.S. interested in getting Russia’s perspective on the current Ukraine crisis, or anything else, have a number of more cumbersome—but still relatively easy—ways to access it.

THE EUROPEAN OVERREACTION

In contrast, the European Union reacted much more forcefully. On March 2, the Council of Europe issued an amendment to its 2014 package of Russia sanctions banning the Russian state media outlets RT and Sputnik in Europe.

This ban is extraordinarily sweeping, applying to “transmission or distribution by any means such as cable, satellite, IP-TV, internet service providers, internet video-sharing platforms or applications, whether new or pre-installed.” In a follow-up clarification, European Union officials said that the order applies to search results and to posts from individuals who “reproduce” content from RT or Sputnik on any social media platform.

Part of the stated basis for blocking Russian state media organizations is that they are state-controlled and engage in propaganda to further Russian foreign policy aims. But these organizations have always been state-controlled and have always echoed Russian government propaganda. The new element is the emergency of the Ukraine war, where Russian propaganda could aid its war effort by undermining the domestic will to fight in Europe and Ukraine. This suggests that the legal ban on RT makes sense only as a huge exception to a background policy of openness.

European officials should make it clear that its legal interdiction of Russian state media is a rare exception, justified in their view only by the extreme circumstances of undeniable aggression and actual war in Ukraine. In a move in this direction, an unnamed EU official said, “This is not a normal situation, and that’s what makes this case so entirely different from any other restriction on freedom of information.” To be clear, I think the European ban is an overreaction even in wartime circumstances, but now that it is done, it is vital to cabin it and prevent it from becoming a precedent for further legal media bans.

But there is a risk that Europe will expand on its exclusionary approach instead of treating it as a unique measure justified, if at all, only by rare wartime circumstances. The EU’s top diplomat Josep Borrell and the European Parliament are considering a new mechanism that would allow the EU to sanction government-backed disinformation actors. MEP Sandra Kalniete, who is leading this effort, suggested it would target “Russia, China, and other authoritarian regimes…” This appears to be an alarming move to institutionalize a system to exclude all state media of foreign adversaries from Europe’s information space.

THE DANGER AHEAD FOR THE U.S.

In 2020, Laura Rosenberger, now with the National Security Council (formerly, director of the Alliance for Securing Democracy and a senior fellow at The German Marshall Fund) urged the U.S. to “work systematically with the private sector and civil society” to meet the challenge of information competition with Russia and China.

Refining the system of public-private coordination on national security issues, as Rosenberger suggests, is a worthwhile initiative. But extending it to include coordination between national security agencies and private media and tech companies aimed at delinking the U.S. from hostile state media sources would pose great dangers for an open society.

An embargo on information sources under the control of foreign adversaries—even if arranged through a shared understanding with national security agencies rather than through compulsion—would create and maintain damaging information black holes. It might even be unconstitutional state action. It would certainly limit knowledge of global developments at a crucial time when the U.S. public and policymakers need the clearest possible picture of the rest of the world, including Russia and China. And this includes understanding how these countries see themselves, how they view the U.S and its allies, and their vision of their own place in the international community. Seeing them only through the filter of domestic media is almost certainly a recipe for misunderstanding and ill-informed decisions.

Shutting out state media from foreign adversaries also makes it easier to treat domestic critics of U.S. policy as agents of a hostile power who are amplifying the enemy’s talking points. If it is legitimate to silence state media as agents of foreign propaganda because of what they say, commentators and policymakers are likely to think that it must be legitimate to label anyone who says the same thing as also an agent of a foreign power.

But this is a mistake. Internal critics should be encouraged to engage in constructive, fact-based criticisms of U.S. policies both here and abroad. These criticisms will often resemble criticisms by foreign adversaries since these adversaries are adept at pinpointing the weaknesses of the U.S system. But it is vital not to repeat the redbaiting mistakes of the first Cold War by silencing or discounting analyses and proposals from internal critics because of this similarity.

The example of international relations scholar John Mearsheimer illustrates the risks. He is perhaps the foremost exponent of the idea that the U.S. policy of NATO expansion contributed significantly to the current crisis in Ukraine. While his view has not been censored in the West, the warning signs of redbaiting are beginning. Respected commentator Adam Tooze describes how the Pulitzer-prize-winning historian Anne Appelbaum accused Mearsheimer of providing a narrative useful to the Kremlin, and how students at Mearsheimer’s employer—the University of Chicago—published a letter accusing him of being on the Russian payroll.

Mearsheimer is so well established that these minor incidents will not tarnish his reputation. Indeed, he is enjoying a rare moment of internet fame, as his 2015 YouTube speech about Ukraine has received 24 million views to date. While he is not at all a victim of oppression or exclusion, other less-established critics might not be so resilient. These examples illustrate a dangerous tendency that policymakers and commentators alike should reject: a style of debate and discussion that, while not at all the same as government suppression of speech, creates an atmosphere of fear that can silence the expression of views at variance with government policy. This dangerous tendency is made to seem legitimate by a coordinated policy of exclusion of foreign state media.

For generations, U.S. communications policy has been premised on the idea, articulated in the Supreme Court’s 1945 Associated Press decision, that “the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public.” Rather than organized suppression and redbaiting, this policy of transparency, openness, and the free flow of information continues to be the best weapon in the U.S. struggle against foreign adversaries.

#### Free speech is key to broader human rights, democracy, and development---censorship only increases the risk of disinformation

OHCHR 7/8 (\*article references Irene Khan, Bangladeshi lawyer appointed as of August 2020 to be the United Nations Special Rapporteur for freedom of expression and opinion, the first woman appointed to this mandate. She previously served as the seventh Secretary General of Amnesty International\*; "UN expert warns of dangerous decline in media freedom", United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, 7-8-2022, https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2022/07/un-expert-warns-dangerous-decline-media-freedom, DOA: 7-8-2022)//sposten

Reporters getting killed while chasing a story. Online attacks against women journalists, including death and rape threats. Targeted electronic surveillance to intimidate and silence investigative journalism.

This is the dangerous reality for many journalists around the world as media freedom and safety have diminished in the digital age with a grave impact on human rights, democracy and development, a UN expert warned.

“The decline of media freedom and the rise in threats to the safety of journalists is a worldwide trend, most sharply evident in backsliding democracies and recalcitrant totalitarian States,” said Irene Khan, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression. “The consequences for human rights, democracy, public participation and development are worrying.”

In a report to the Human Rights Council, Khan said digital technology has opened great opportunities for journalists and media freedom, including ground-breaking investigative reporting, cross-border collaboration, fact-checking with audiences, and access to treasure troves of data and sources.

However, Khan pointed out the digital age also poses serious challenges and threats. As examples, she cited online and offline attacks and killing of journalists with impunity; criminalisation and harassment of journalists; and the erosion of independence, freedom and the plurality of voices and opinions in state and corporate media, including digital companies.

“Silencing journalists by killing them is the most egregious form of censorship,” Khan said, urging the Council to consider measures to address impunity, including an international taskforce on the prevention, investigation and prosecution of attacks against journalists.

She cited a database site compiled by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that reported that 455 journalists had been killed while doing their jobs between 2016–2021. In more than eight out of ten cases, the perpetrators have not been brought to justice.

Online attacks against women journalists

The report draws special attention to online attacks against women journalists, which are often vicious, coordinated and highly sexualized, and target women from religious and ethnic minorities or gender non-conforming people.

“Such violence inflicts very real psychological injury, chills public interest journalism, kills women’s careers and deprives society of important voices and perspectives,” the report says.

“A free, independent and diverse media fulfils society’s right to know, as well as journalists’ right to seek, receive and impart information.”

- IRENE KHAN, UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF OPINION AND EXPRESSION

The old practice of abusing laws – from libel laws to anti-terrorism legislation -- to punish journalists and suppress media freedom has been revived by some States with a new ferocity, the report adds.

Khan cited the case of Philippine Nobel Peace Prize winner Maria Ressa, who has faced an onslaught of legal actions in the Philippines for her critical reporting of former president Rodrigo Duterte.

Erosion of independence and pluralism

Khan also pointed to the erosion of independence, pluralism and economic viability of media in the digital age.

In a number of countries, including in Central and Eastern Europe, there is a creeping trend towards State control over public media and in favouring privately-owned media that serves the political or economic interests of those in power.

Khan also said media viability is a matter of human rights, not just a question of economics. The collapse of the advertising-based news media business model in the digital age has led to staff cutbacks and closures of news outlet in many countries. While some national and international news providers and niche news producers are managing through subscriptions, paywalls, reader contributions and subsidies, many others could face a media extinction.

“In a world where disinformation increasingly masquerades as news and authoritarian and populist leaders attack journalists and media outlets to sow public distrust, critical independent journalism produced in the public interest is essential. Its absence or decline in many countries represents a major assault on media freedom,” the report warns.

#### Human rights are key to address a continuum of existential threats

Robinson 21 (Mary Robinson, **former president** of Ireland and former **UN high commissioner for human rights**, is Chair of The Elders and Chair of the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre’s Advisory Board; "A Human-Rights Approach to Global Challenges", 7-13-2021, Project Syndicate, https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/human-rights-approach-to-tackling-covid19-and-climate-change-by-mary-robinson-2021-07, DOA: 7-8-2022)//sposten

The world will neither rebuild from the pandemic, nor have any chance of tackling wider existential threats such as climate change, until leaders once more instill a sense of hope in political and civic life. Fortunately, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights offers a roadmap to help humanity chart a path forward.

DUBLIN – The COVID-19 pandemic has recast the world for millions of people. Or, more correctly, the pandemic has exposed and aggravated deep inequalities of race, gender, and class across societies, and highlighted the inability of many political systems to respond in ways that protect individual human rights and dignity. The world will neither rebuild from this crisis, nor have any chance of tackling wider existential threats such as climate change, until we can once more instill a sense of hope in political and civic life.

Fortunately, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a roadmap already exists to help humanity chart a path forward. The declaration, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, is as relevant today as it was amid the physical and moral devastation caused by World War II.

Article 1 of the declaration states an abiding truth with resounding clarity: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” To realize this vision today, *we must push leaders* to go beyond warm words and commit to meaningful, feasible, and measurable actions. In particular, they need to ensure equitable global distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and provide adequate financial support to countries most vulnerable to the ravages of climate change.

For starters, high-income countries must take steps to achieve the Gavi COVAX Advance Market Commitment target of providing at least one billion vaccine doses to the world’s poorest countries no later than September 1, 2021, and more than two billion doses by mid-2022.

It is both morally unjust and – in health and economic terms – myopic for rich countries to hoard COVID-19 vaccines for their own populations. The longer the coronavirus persists and mutates in poorer countries with fewer resources, the further away humanity as a whole will be from fully vanquishing the threat to lives and livelihoods.

In the same spirit, G7 and G20 leaders should support calls at the World Health Organization and the World Trade Organization for voluntary licensing and technology transfer for production of vaccines. Failing that, they should back an immediate waiver of certain intellectual-property rights under WTO rules – a move that US President Joe Biden recently supported.

Sadly, at their recent summit in the United Kingdom, G7 leaders failed to show an understanding of the scale of their responsibility to address the inequalities exacerbated by the pandemic. More broadly, COVID-19 has exposed the shortcomings of narrow nationalism and populist policies that disdain scientific evidence and empathy. No country, regardless of its power or size, can tackle the public-health threat effectively on its own.

It is essential that leaders learn from their mistakes and heed the recommendations of the expert Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response. Only properly financed, integrated, and organized health systems will be able to withstand future pandemics and health emergencies.

As matters stand, however, the rich world’s failures in tackling COVID-19 have increased the trust deficit between the Global North and South. This in turn will make it more difficult to reach an agreement at the next critical international diplomatic gathering: the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow in November.

All countries need to ratchet up their near-term emissions-reduction targets ahead of COP26, and we are still waiting for the major emitters to do so. In addition, rich countries must rebuild trust by showing how they will increase their climate finance contributions – including a greater share for adaptation – to deliver the long-pledged $100 billion per year to help developing countries combat global warming and its effects.

Two common threads run through the shared challenges we face in defending human rights, overcoming the pandemic, and tackling the climate crisis: the need for vigilance against complacency, and the responsibility to act for the greater good. In these testing times, we can all draw inspiration from a leader who never wavered in his commitment to human rights and justice: Nelson Mandela.

It is a historical irony that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in the same year that South Africa established its apartheid regime. But Mandela immediately saw the declaration’s power and potential. Speaking in 1997 as president of South Africa, he reflected that, “For all the opponents of this pernicious system, the simple and noble words of the Universal Declaration were a sudden ray of hope at one of our darkest moments.”

Today more than ever, we need to rediscover and reassert the declaration’s principles of solidarity and common endeavor that Mandela so powerfully articulated throughout his life. Our task now is not to “build back better,” because we cannot build back from a status quo ante that produced inequitable and dysfunctional systems. Rather, we must “build forward better,” marshaling our efforts with hope, discipline, and determination to build a sustainable, peaceful, and just world for future generations.

### 2NC – UQ

#### Europe’s a double-turn on free speech---language vagueness, exceptions, and President Macron

Hilu 22 (Charles Hilu; "Don’t Listen to Europe on Free Speech", 6-23-2022, National Review, https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/dont-listen-to-europe-on-free-speech/, DOA: 7-9-2022)//sposten

Yesterday, vice president of the European Commission for Values and Transparency Věra Jourová addressed the E.U.–U.S. Defense and Future Forum in Washington, D.C. “Do not throw away your shot, and help us protect democracy from the risk coming from both the online and offline world,” she urged attendees. She implored Americans to take actions similar to those of the E.U. against “information manipulation.”

Anyone who heard what Jourová had to say should be dubious. Most countries in the European Union do not share the same commitment to free speech, whether online or offline, and we in the United States should not be taking advice from people who do not hold the right as highly as we do.

Jourová’s comments come in the wake of the E.U.’s adoption of a Strengthened Code of Practice on Disinformation, which will “be a more efficient instrument in fighting disinformation” online. What is “disinformation,” according to the code? The E.U. uses it as a catch-all term for “false or misleading information” spread either knowingly or unknowingly. Like other measures of this type, the definition is dangerously vague. Most of our social-media elites view the belief that “men can not become women” as false or misleading.

The code does include the caveat that regulatory efforts “should strictly respect freedom of expression and include safeguards that prevent their misuse.” One such misuse would be “the censoring of critical, satirical, dissenting, or shocking speech.” Still, it makes a sharp distinction between legitimate political speech and impermissible speech, and Europe and America disagree on where to draw that line.

We can see an example in the speech laws of Jourová’s home country, the Czech Republic. Like many countries in Europe, Czech law guarantees a right to freedom of expression but then waters it down with exceptions. Czechs may not instigate “hatred towards any nation, race, ethnic group, religion, class or another group of people.” Notice the language; it does not prohibit specifically violence, but all hatred.

This standard is expectedly un-American. Hating anyone, especially for immutable characteristics is immoral and unadvisable, but it is a person’s right. This is the moral imperative for protecting hateful speech, but there is also a practical one. Allowing explicitly racist speech – “black and white people are not equal to each other ”– buffers legitimate speech on race issues – “America is not systemically racist – that some may falsely consider to be hateful.

If we move a few miles to the West, we see similarly poor standards. “Freedom of expression has its limits,” said German then-chancellor Angela Merkel in a 2019 speech. “Those limits begin where hatred is spread. They begin where the dignity of other people is violated.” During her term as chancellor, Merkel had enormous influence over the rest of the E.U., and America should look at the confederacy’s speech recommendations with skepticism when its former de facto leader holds these standards of speech.

The new person to hold that much influence over the E.U. will likely be newly reelected French president Emmanuel Macron, who is no defender of free speech, either. Like other countries, France says that it guarantees its citizens rights to free speech. Unlike the other countries, however, instead of limiting or qualifying the right, it just unapologetically infringes on it. Most conspicuous is its ban on religious symbols in public buildings such as schools and courtrooms, which often affects Muslim women who wear hijabs. One of America’s great virtues is its defense of the rights of both political and religious minorities, something sorely lacking across the Atlantic.

America is exceptional in many ways, not least among them in its commitment to the protection of First-Amendment rights. For that reason, we should be incredibly skeptical when bureaucrats who do not share our values want to preach to us about controlling them.

### 2NC – Link

#### US and European anti-disinformation campaigns are racist and inadvertently censor unaffiliated Russians---makes it even more difficult to challenge Russia’s regime---the AFF is a *Cold War* remnant

NCAC 3/8 (Ncac Editor; "Free Speech and the War in Ukraine", 3/8/2022, National Coalition Against Censorship, https://ncac.org/news/free-speech-and-the-war-in-ukraine, DOA: 7-9-2022)//sposten

Cultural institutions in the US and Europe have the right, of course, to express their symbolic opposition to the war by blacklisting Russian artists. However, they must consider the full implications. Today’s cultural institutions are full of artists and performers from countries across the globe. Should all these artists be held responsible for the misdeeds of their political leaders? Should they be asked to publicly condemn these leaders when doing so puts them and members of their family at risk of retaliation by their governments? Banning Russian artists based on their political views or, worse, solely because of their nationality, while welcoming artists from China and other repressive regimes undermines any moral high ground an institution can claim.

The people of a nation are not identical with its leadership and should not be equated with it. On the contrary, they can be allies in opposing a repressive regime from within. Among the Russian artists blacklisted today are people who have been critical of the war.

US institutions have so far limited their action to artists who refuse to condemn the regime, the more restrained path still fraught with questions likely to haunt these institutions for a long time. Blacklisting artists based solely on their political views is a tactic associated with the Cold War and the McCarthy era. That era also demanded “loyalty oaths” – similar to current demands on artists to denounce the Putin regime or be canceled. Only this time artists are also asked to face risks in their home country by making such denunciations.

There are better ways for cultural institutions in Western democracies to get involved in the current political crisis. Rather than banning artists associated with Putin, they should support dissident cultural workers within Russia, as well as Ukrainian artists and institutions, by highlighting their work and offering them platforms to amplify their voices. If, after 30 years of open global cultural exchange, an iron curtain falls again, art and cultural institutions should not be complicit.

#### Europe’s “anti-disinformation” campaigns spill over into destroying free speech worldwide

Tuccille 22 (J.D. Tuccille; "Europe Escalates the Threat to Online Free Speech", 4-29-2022, Reason, https://reason.com/2022/04/29/europe-escalates-the-threat-to-online-free-speech/, DOA: 7-16-2022)//sposten

It's easy to overstate, but attitudes towards freedom of action differ in the United States and the European Union. Americans tend to believe that people have a right to make their own decisions and are better trusted to do so than coercive governments; Europeans place more faith in the state, allowing room for personal choice only after officialdom installs guardrails and files away sharp edges. Yes, that exaggerates the case and there are plenty of dissenters under both systems, but it captures the treatment of speech and online conduct in the EU's new Digital Services Act.

"Today's agreement on the Digital Services Act is historic, both in terms of speed and of substance," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen commented on April 23. "The DSA will upgrade the ground-rules for all online services in the EU. It will ensure that the online environment remains a safe space, safeguarding freedom of expression and opportunities for digital businesses. It gives practical effect to the principle that what is illegal offline, should be illegal online. The greater the size, the greater the responsibilities of online platforms."

There's a lot in the proposed law, as you would expect of wide-ranging legislation paired with a companion bill addressing digital markets. The overall tone is of micromanagement of online spaces with dire consequences for platforms that fail to protect users from "illegal and harmful content" as defined by the government. Those who violate the rules by, for example, repeatedly failing to scrub forbidden material in timely fashion, face massive fines or expulsion from the EU market. Of course, no matter official assurances, speech hemmed in by *red tape* and subject to official oversight in monitored spaces isn't especially "free" at all, which is a contradiction recognized by critics.

"The DSA does not strike the right balance between countering genuine online harms and safeguarding free speech," Jacob Mchangama, the executive director of Copenhagen-based human-rights think tank Justitia, warns in Foreign Policy. "It will most likely result in a shrinking space for online expression, as social media companies are incentivized to delete massive amounts of perfectly legal content."

Mchangama is the author of the recently published Free Speech: A History From Socrates to Social Media, which Katrina Gulliver reviewed for the May issue of Reason. He's familiar with differing attitudes towards speech around the world. In particular, he understands that the American approach leaves speakers more room, while the European approach favors those who impose constraints.

"While free speech is protected by both the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights, these legal instruments offer governments much greater leeway than the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution when it comes to defining categories, such as hate speech, that can be regulated," he adds in the Foreign Policy piece. "Nor does European law provide as robust protection against intermediary liability as Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which shields U.S. online platforms from liability for most user-generated content."

But the danger isn't just to Europeans who voice edgy opinions or manage online forums; it's to the whole world through the *"Brussels Effect."* That is, it's easier for large platforms like Facebook to apply Europe's tight rules to *everybody* than it is for them to vary rules by country, which is complicated and risks the wrath of EU regulators when speech inevitably bleeds across digital borders.

Of course, some people hope that the Digital Services Act becomes a global standard. Just as Mchangama is a European who sees free speech as a right that favors the powerless over those in authority, there are American fans of the EU approach who want officialdom to exercise more control.

Reacting to the announced sale of Twitter to Elon Musk, The New Yorker's John Cassidy objects that "Musk seems intent on taking Twitter back to the not at all distant era when social media was a free-for-all." He sniffily dismisses that prospect as unacceptable. For proper regulation of speech, he suggests "the E.U. has just provided a road map for how it could be done: by putting the onus on social-media companies to monitor and remove harmful content, and hit them with big fines if they don't."

"Musk would surely object to the U.S. adopting a regulatory system like the one that the Europeans are drawing up, but that's too bad. The health of the Internet—and, most important, democracy—is too significant to leave to one man, no matter how rich he is."

But, as the Competitive Enterprise Institute's Clyde Wayne Crews Jr. warned in 2019, "the dangers of social media company, legislative and 'watchdog'-backed mandates to censor speech and otherwise regulate 'harmful content' are themselves the harms facing the Internet of today and the splinternet of tomorrow. Some authoritarian-minded interventionists seek a pre-ordained deplatforming of unpopular ideas and controversial debate and even pretend they protect democracy."

Such restrictions put the definition of "harmful" in the hands of self-serving political operatives and favor large established and, yes, rich companies, for whom compliance is easier, over smaller firms.

"Social media giants and international governments engaging in censorious consultative alliances and frameworks incorporating politically derived norms threaten free expression even in the U.S.," Crews added.

Justitia made a similar point about Germany's censorious 2017 NetzDG law. "In under a year, the number of countries copy-pasting the NetzDG matrix to provide cover and legitimacy for digital censorship and repression has almost doubled to a total of 25," the think tank noted. The German law inspired copycat "measures to combat vaguely defined categories of hate speech and fake news by placing responsibility on the social media platforms for user content."

Beyond the framework of individual rights, the practical argument for free speech is that the powers-that-be can't be trusted to distinguish "good" speech from "bad speech" and to ban only that which is harmful. As Justitia emphasizes, that has already happened with NetzDG. There's no reason to expect a less authoritarian outcome from the Digital Services Act which borrows much from the German law.

Mchangama proposes using human-rights law as a benchmark for speech regulation, though he concedes that it's "not a panacea." More promising is his suggestion for "distributed content moderation" including "voluntary filters that individual users could apply at will." People could decide for themselves what is "harmful" and block or engage as they pleased. That might satisfy everybody except those most invested in controlling others.

Fans of regulated speech always seem to envision the regulators as sharing their own sensibilities in the exercise of censorship powers; they never imagine themselves being muzzled. But the "free for all" to which they object means freedom for them as much as for everybody else, and if they get what they want they may come to miss it as much as the rest of us.

### 2NC – Democracy Impact

#### Free speech is key to democracy---especially, in war-time

Stone 09 (Geoffrey R. Stone, **Edward H. Levi Distinguished Service Professor** at the **U**niversity **of Chicago**, law clerk to Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan, Jr., President’s Review Group on Intelligence and Communications Technologies, which evaluated the government’s foreign intelligence surveillance programs, Fellow of the **American Academy of Arts and Sciences**, a member of the **America Law Institute**, the **National Advisory Council** of the American Civil Liberties Union, a member of the **American Philosophical Society**, and he has served as Chair of the Board of both the **American Constitution Society** and the Chicago Children’s Choir; “Free Speech and National Security,” UChicago Law School, <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2975&context=journal_articles>, 2009)//sposten

I. SPEECH THAT CRITICIZES THE GOVERNMENT

The paradigm violation of the First Amendment is a law forbidding citizens to criticize public officials and policies. In the entire history of the United States, the national government has never attempted to punish criticism of government officials or policies, except in times of war. This makes clear that, in order to understand free speech, one must understand free speech in wartime. War excites great passions. Thousands, perhaps millions, of lives may be at risk. The nation itself may be at peril. If ever there is a time to pull out all the stops, it is surely in wartime. In war, the government may conscript soldiers, commandeer property, control prices, ration food, raise taxes, and freeze wages. May it also limit the freedom of speech? It is often said that dissent in wartime is disloyal. This claim puzzles civil libertarians, who see a clear distinction. In their view, dissent in wartime can be the highest form of patriotism. Whether, when, for how long, and on what terms to fight a war are among the most profound decisions a nation encounters. A democratic society must debate those issues. Dissent that questions the conduct and morality of a war is, on this view, the very essence of responsible and courageous citizenship.

#### Democracy solves extinction

Carla Zoe Cremer & Luke Kemp 21, The Future of Humanity Institute, Oxford. Centre for the Study of Existential Risk, Cambridge. "Democratising Risk: In Search of a Methodology to Study Existential Risk" <https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/2201/2201.11214.pdf> //pipk

There is an intimate and neglected relationship between existential risk and democracy. Democracy must be central to efforts to prevent and mitigate catastrophic risks. It is also an antidote to many of the problems manifest in the TUA. Do those who study the future of humanity have good grounds to ignore the visions, desires, and values of the very people whose future they are trying to protect? Choosing which risks to take must be a democratic endeavour.

We understand democracy here in accordance with Landemore as the rule of the cognitively diverse many who are entitled to equal decision-making power and partake in a democratic procedure that includes both a deliberative element and one of preference aggregation (such as majority voting)45,115. Decision-making procedures are not either democratic or non- democratic, but instead lie on a spectrum. They can be more or less democratic, inclusive, and diverse.

We posit three reasons for why we should democratise research and decision-making in existential risk: the nature of collective decision-making about human futures, the superiority of democratic reason, and democratic fail-safe mechanisms.

Avoiding human extinction, or crafting a desirable long-term future, is a communal project. Scholars of existential risk who take an interest in the future of Homo sapiens are choosing to consider the species in its entirety. If certain views are excluded, the arguments for doing so must be compelling.

Democracy will improve our judgments in both the governance and the study of existential risks. Asking how our actions today influence the long-term future is one of the most difficult intellectual tasks to unravel, and if there is a right path, democratic procedures will have the best shot at finding it. Hong and Page116,117 demonstrate both theoretically and computationally that a diverse group of problem-solving agents will show greater accuracy than a less diverse group, even if the individual members of the diverse group were each less accurate. Accuracy gains from diversity trump gains from improving individual accuracy. Landemore115, builds on this work to advance a probabilistic argument that inclusive democracies will, in expectation, make epistemically superior choices to oligarchies or even the wise few. This is supported by promising results in inclusive, deliberative democratic experiments from around the world 118. In the long run, democracies should commit fewer mistakes than alternative decision-making procedures. If this is true, it should improve the accuracy of research efforts and decision-making. We are more likely to make accurate predictions about the mechanisms of extinction, probable futures, and risk prevention if the field invites cognitive diversity, builds flat institutional structures, and avoids conflicts of interest.

Thereare many ways to consider the interests of the many. Democratic assemblies could allow global citizens to deliberate about the futures they prefer, citizens could be surveyed, and the field of ERS itself could be diversified. At the moment, the field is, as many academic disciplines are, unrepresentative of humanity at large and variably homogenous in respect to income, class, ideology, age, ethnicity, gender, nationality, religion, and professional background. The latter issue is particularly true of existential risk, which, despite being an inherently interdisciplinary endeavour, is at the highest levels dominated by analytic moral philosophers. We need to be vigilant to what perspectives are not represented in the study of existential risk. An awareness of bias will go some way towards mitigating its negative effects. To get close to replicating the cognitive diversity found among humans, we must begin by inviting different thinkers with different values and beliefs into the field.

Democracies can limit harms. Any approach to mitigating existential threats could create response risks, and the TUA seems particularly vulnerable to this. Despite good intentions and curiosity-driven research, it could justify violence, dangerous technological developments, or drastically constrain freedom in favour of (perceived) security. If we hope to explore ideas but minimise harms, democracies can be used to moderate the measures taken in response to harmful ideas. It seems, for example, vanishingly unlikely that a diverse group of thinkers or even ordinary citizens would entertain the idea of sacrificing 1 billion living, breathing beings for an infinitesimal improvement in reaching an intergalactic techno-utopia. In contrast, the TUA could recommend this trade-off.

The democratic constraint of extreme measures may simply be a form of collective selfinterest. Voters are unlikely to tolerate global catastrophic risks (GCRs), which incur the death of a sizeable portion of the electorate, if they know they themselves could be affected. We expect that scholars who do not support sacrificing current lives in the name of abstract calculations, but would still like to explore the use of expected value theory in existential risk, will be in support of democratic fail-safe mechanisms.

Empirically, this fail-safe mechanism seems to work. Even deeply imperfect democracies, like the ones we inhabit now, often avert detrimental outcomes. Democracies prevent famines 119 (although not malnutrition)120. They make war — a significant driver of GCRs — less likely 121. The inclusion of diverse preferences in democracies, such as those achieved through women’s suffrage, further decreases the likelihood of violent conflict 122. Citizens often show a significant risk aversion in comparison to their government. While surveys are notoriously difficult to collect and interpret, existing data suggest that the public has little support for nuclear weapons use 123–125, but strong support for action against climate catastrophe 126–128. We can further show that when citizens deliberately engage with the subject at hand, their concern and readiness for action often increases 118. For example, citizen assemblies on climate change have recommended widespread policy-changes across sectors, amendments to incentive structures and laws against ecocide to reach emissions targets 129. Indeed, many lament that when it comes to genetically modified organisms and nuclear power, citizens are far too riskaverse130 . The problem is not that the public is riddled with cognitive biases that make them unconcerned about global catastrophes.

Democratic debate cannot be an afterthought. Navigating humanity through crises will involve many value-laden decisions under deep uncertainty. Democratic procedures can deal with such hard choices. Greater cognitive diversity should be represented amongst scholars of ERS. Recommendations on policies that would reduce risk should be passed through deliberative assemblies and await the approval of a wider pool of ordinary citizens, as they will be the ones who will bear this risk. A homogenous group of experts attempting to directly influence powerful decision-makers is not a fair or safe way of traversing the precipice.

## Aff Answers

### 2AC – Aff Solves

#### Any information from Russia still leads to inaction---triggers our impacts and means they cannot solve

Grimes 22 (David Robert Grimes, scientist and author of Good Thinking: Why Flawed Logic Puts Us All at Risk and How Critical Thinking Can Save the World (The Experiment). His work focuses on health disinformation and conspiracy theory, and he is an international advocate for the public understanding of science. He is a recipient of the Nature/Sense about **Science Maddox Prize**, and a fellow of the **Committee for Skeptical Inquiry**; "Russian Misinformation Seeks to Confound, Not Convince: Rather than take a side, these campaigns create decision paralysis that leads to inaction", 3-28-2022, Scientific American, https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/russian-misinformation-seeks-to-confound-not-convince/, DOA: 7-16-2022)//sposten

As war envelops Ukraine, Russian sources have strived to create a miasma of disinformation about the invasion. Among ample efforts to distort reality, the Russian Ministry of Defense asserted recently that U.S.-backed labs in Ukraine have been developing bioweapons. Outlandish as this falsehood may be, Fox’s Tucker Carlson gave it credence by arguing that the U.S. government’s response was a “cover-up.”

As the Russia-Ukraine war intensifies, so too will the flow of disinformation. This is an age-old strategy Russia has long history of employing, and a playbook that others, most notably anti-vaccine activists, have borrowed from liberally. Yet, rather than focusing effort on convincing people of a falsehood, the Russian strategy takes a tack reminiscent of a strategy long employed by the tobacco industry: to sow so much doubt about what is true that it sends people into decision paralysis. Faced with a cacophony of wild and conflicting claims, people do nothing, unsure of what is right.

Despite constituting only a small part of our media diet, disinformation campaigns, in our digital world, can be devastatingly effective. We are intrinsically biased towards information that is emotionally visceral. We afford more weight to content that frightens or outrages us, with the ability to induce anger serving as the single greatest predictor of whether content goes viral. This propels the most visceral, divisive narratives to the forefront of discourse, creating a sound and fury of passionately debated claims and counter claims. In that atmosphere, it becomes increasingly difficult to ascertain what to believe, and easy to abandon the task of discerning the truth.

If we are not to fall victim to such rank dishonesty, it is crucial now that we question our sources more carefully than ever before.

Indecision and distraction have long been central to Russia’s dezinformatsiya (disinformation) policy, a term Stalin himself is credited with coining. While an ancient concept, Russia had by the imperial age mastered dark obfuscation techniques refined for the era of mass communication. By the dawn of the Soviet empire, they realized this potential on an industrial scale, establishing the world's first office dedicated to disinformation in 1923. In the 1960s, the KGB covertly sponsored American fringe groups, amplifying conspiratorial narratives about everything from the assassination of president John F. Kennedy to water fluoridation.

The goal, as KGB Major General Oleg Kalugin elucidated in 1998, was “not intelligence collection, but subversion: active measures to weaken the West, to drive wedges in the Western community alliances of all sorts, particularly NATO, to sow discord among allies, to weaken the United States in the eyes of the people of Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America....”. Operation INFEKTION, a mid-1980s clandestine effort to spread the myth that AIDS was a CIA-designed bioweapon, was but one infamous exemplar. While utterly fictious, it resonated with communities ravaged by HIV and neglected by the callous indifference of the Reagan administration. Despite Russian intelligence taking responsibility for this lie in 1992, the legacy of AIDS denialism persists to this day worldwide.

During the Cold War, the doctrine of “active measures” was the beating heart of Soviet intelligence. This philosophy of political and information warfare had wide remit, including front groups, media manipulation, counterfeiting, infiltrating peace groups and even the occasional assassination.

And in our media-saturated era, Russia has been, by far, disinformation’s most enthusiastic user. Take the 2016 U.S. presidential election and the contentious Brexit referendum; Russia appears to have influenced both via lies and distortions.

But disinformation is not solely confined to geopolitics. By summer 2020, the European Commission identified a concerted Russian drive to propagate COVID disinformation worldwide. From the outset of the pandemic, Kremlin-backed troll farms pushed the narrative that COVID was an engineered bioweapon, peddling the explosive fiction that 5G radio frequencies caused the virus—a lie that resulted in dozens of arson attacks on cell towers worldwide.

There is a dark irony in the observation that conspiracy-minded people can be weaponized in plots to which they’re entirely oblivious. The enduring popularity of the virus-as-a-bioweapon mantra is a stark reminder that in the age of social media, such manipulation has become ever easier and more effective. Perhaps the most odious example of this is the cynical rise of anti-vaccine propaganda.

The sheer efficacy of vaccination is scientifically incontrovertible, and after clean water, immunization is the most life-saving intervention in human history. Despite this, the last decade has witnessed precipitous drops in vaccine confidence worldwide. The renaissance of once-virtually-conquered diseases prompted the WHO to declare vaccine hesitancy a top-10 threat to public health in 2019.

Vaccine hesitancy is a spectrum rather than a simple binary, and exposure to anti-vaccine conspiracy theories *nudges* recipients towards rejection. But critically, many who decline vaccination are not dyed-in-the-wool anti-vaccine zealots, but simply scared by what they have heard, unsure what to believe. Our tendency towards the illusory truth effect exacerbates this inertia, as the mere repetition of a fiction is enough to prime us to accept it, even if we know it to be false on an intellectual level. While Russia has often amplified anti-vaccine conspiracy theories to increase tensions, the anti-vaccine movements exist independently of these efforts, and are masters at sowing the seeds of doubt with torrents of conflicting and emotive claims.

This illustrates the grim reality that disinformation has no need for consistency and zero commitment to objective reality; claims are frequently contradictory, arguing both sides of the coin in exaggerated and divisive ways. This “Russian firehose” model of propaganda is high-output, contradictory and multichannel. The stream encourages us to sleepwalk into apathy, distrustful of everything. This renders us supremely malleable, and dangerously disengaged.

When it comes to vaccination, concerned parents often opt to stay with the devil they know, delaying or even rejecting vaccination rather than sifting through the symphony of conflicting claims to which they’re subjected. Similarly, the outpouring of fictions about Ukraine, its president, Volodymyr Zelensky, and the war is designed to overwhelm our capacity to analyze, inducing us to implicitly accept uncertainty over aggressor and aggrieved—a manufactured doubt benefitting Russia and other nations.

Conviction is not the chief goal of disinformation; instilling doubt is. This is why anti-vaccine activists have been so successful online, and why Russian troll-farms push ample resources into hawking lies virtually everywhere. The ubiquity of these fictions gives them an implicit veneer of legitimacy, fueling polarization and distrust.

This is the strategy Putin continues to pursue; already Russian propaganda has tried to paint Ukraine (or NATO / America) as aggressors with staged disinformation. This has been rendered less effective by the Biden administration’s creative approach of releasing intelligence prior to the operation. Across social media, Russian front organizations still try to induce doubt, efforts that will only intensify as the war wages on. Truth, the old adage insists, is the first casualty of war.

#### Open-source intel solves---only a risk of decreasing misinformation since the truth is *already there*

Glover 22 (Claudia Glover; "Open-source intelligence key to fighting Russian disinformation during Ukraine war", 6-7-2022, Tech Monitor, https://techmonitor.ai/technology/emerging-technology/open-source-intelligence-ukraine-war, DOA: 7-16-2022)//sposten

Open source intelligence can be vital in the fight against disinformation, according to a study released today which assesses the impact of novel and emerging technologies on the spread of false information during the Ukraine war. While open data can be harnessed positively to fight disinformation, those deploying it must also be aware of the risks, security experts say.

The report, entitled ‘The Information Battlefield: Disinformation, declassification and deepfakes‘ was released today to mark the launch of the Centre for Emerging Technology and Security (CfETS), a new research centre at the Alan Turing Institute for artificial intelligence which aims to boost the UK’s security by giving policy makers better information about emerging technologies.

CfETS will aim to take an ‘innovative approach’ in a bid to help ‘maintain the UK as a leading voice in international security’.

“The launch of this centre comes at a crucial time – technology is advancing at an increasingly rapid rate and emerging technologies present both opportunities and threats to UK national security,” said Sir Adrian Smith, director of The Alan Turing Institute. “Our centre will bring together defence and security expertise from around the world to ensure that policymakers have access to the highest quality analysis and research. It will provide us with new opportunities to keep the UK safe.”

Open source intelligence and the war in Ukraine

The inaugural report from CfETS looks at the role of disinformation used by Russia during the war in Ukraine, and how emerging technologies have helped and hindered its spread. Russia has used well-established tactics to try and influence both Russian and Ukrainian citizens, spreading disinformation through social media using misleading posts and videos.

Open source intelligence (OSINT), publicly available data which can be analysed by professionals and citizens alike, has played a significant role in countering these false statements. “Data about this conflict have been more accessible to western audiences than ever before,” explain the authors. “Commercial satellite imagery showed Russia’s military build up around Ukraine’s borders in the weeks preceding the invasion.”

They cite the example of Nasa’s Fire Information for Resource Management System, which uses satellite imagery to detect active fires. It showed in near real-time the location of heat spots indicative of Russian attacks, at a time when the Russian government was denying the war and blaming attacks on Ukrainian terrorist groups.

“I think open source intelligence is one of the biggest thorns in the Russian side,” says Alexi Drew, senior analyst in defence, security and infrastructure at thinktank RAND Europe. “Particularly in the way that we’ve adapted to debunking and pre-emptively engaging with some of the false narratives that Russia has tried to set loose on the international stage.”

This effort has been encouraged by Western intelligence agencies declassifying and releasing sensitive material into the public domain, the report says. “By outlining Russia’s plans for invasion and revealing Russia’s attempts at falsifying a pretext for action, these declassifications have helped to counter Russia’s disinformation among Western audiences,” it says.

### 2AC – AT: Europe Free Speech Bad

#### Europe’s free speech measures are good, and the US has to change its policies---prefer evidence from social media insiders

Haugen 22 (Frances Haugen, former Facebook product manager who focused on combating misinformation and espionage; "Europe Is Making Social Media Better Without Curtailing Free Speech. The U.S. Should, Too", 4-28-2022, New York Times, https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/28/opinion/social-media-facebook-transparency.html, DOA: 7-16-2022)//sposten

Elon Musk’s deal to take Twitter private, which has spurred questions about power, censorship and safety for the future of the platform, happened just days after the European Union reached a landmark agreement to make social media less toxic for users. The new E.U. standards, and the ethic of transparency on which they are based, will for the first time pull back the curtain on the algorithms that choose what we see and when we see it in our feeds.

In Europe’s case, the dryly named Digital Services Act is the most significant piece of social media legislation in history. It goes to the heart of what I’ve tried to do as a whistle-blower who worked inside Facebook: make social media far better without impinging on free speech. Today, Facebook’s poorly implemented content moderation strategies leave those most at risk of real-world violence unprotected and consistently succeed at only one thing: angering everyone.

Last October, I came forward with a simple message: Facebook knew it was cutting corners to make more money, and the public was paying the price. In over 20,000 pages of documents that I disclosed to the Securities and Exchange Commission and to Congress, the public learned what Facebook already knew — its products were spurring hate and division, leading teenagers into rabbit holes of self-harm and anorexia, leaving millions of users without basic safety systems for hate speech or violence incitement and, at times, were even used to sell humans across the platform.

Global companies had chosen profit-maximizing strategies at the expense of the public interest before. We’ve seen it with pollution in the chemical industry, environmental damage in natural resource extraction and predatory mortgages in financial services.

What distinguishes the bad practices of these other industries from Big Tech is simple — there are laws holding them accountable. That’s what government is intended to do in democratic capitalism: use the law to steer the market back into alignment with the public interest. When concentrated monopolistic power privileges the few over the many and distorts how the free market operates, this kind of correction is vital.

How the new European law is carried out will be just as important as passing it. It is a broad and comprehensive set of rules and standards, not unlike food safety standards for cleanliness and allergen labeling. But what is also remarkable about it is that it focuses on oversight of the design and implementation of systems (like how algorithms behave) rather than determining what is good or bad speech.

The law requires that Facebook and other large social platforms be transparent about what content is being amplified and shared virally across the platform. And it must apply consumer protections to features that, among other things, spy on users, addict kids or weaken public safety. With transparency finally required, it will be easier for European regulators and civil society to verify that companies are following the rules.

These rules are like systems in the United States that compel pharmaceutical companies to keep drugs safe and to allow the Food and Drug Administration to independently verify the results. Most people aren’t aware of them, but we’re all glad they are there.

The new requirement for access to data will allow independent research into the impact of social media products on public health and welfare. For example, Facebook, Instagram and others will have to open up the black box of which pages, posts and videos get the most likes and shares — shining light on the outcomes of the algorithms.

This will allow thousands more people, not just those who work at these companies, to address the complex problems of how information markets change social outcomes. As an algorithmic specialist and data scientist, I’m most excited by this. No longer will we depend on taking the companies’ word for it when they say they are trying to fix a safety problem. Democratic and investor accountability and oversight of big companies boils down to whether we can accurately diagnose the problems their products are causing, devise solutions and verify that the industry is actually following through with them. The era of “just trust us” is over.

Why did this happen in Europe? Why not right here in America, which birthed these incredible technologies? Europe knows Facebook’s censorship strategies fail societies where many languages are spoken because they require censorship systems to be built one language at a time. Only the strategy of focusing on product safety works equitably in every language, even less-spoken ones.

Europe is approving changes Congress has been trying to secure — with a slate of bipartisan bills — for several years. But, in the United States, Facebook’s and Instagram’s owner, Meta, invests heavily in lobbyists and communications specialists in response to concerns about hate speech, conspiracy theories and misinformation.

The industry has falsely framed the way forward as a choice between free speech and safety. Meta claims it would love for everyone to be safe, but that safety would come at the cost of free speech. The documents in my disclosures paint a different picture: Meta knows that the product choices it’s made give the most reach to the most divisive and extreme ideas, and it knows how to unwind those choices to prioritize having human judgment direct our attention instead of just computers. Ideas include cracking down on robots that amplify disinformation, requiring users to click a link before resharing it, or helping more intentionally drive the distribution of information by having users copy/paste content shared outside friends of friends. These are product choices that can reduce hate speech, harmful content and misinformation.

So why hasn’t Facebook fully implemented them? These changes add friction and slightly delay the spread of content, which also means slightly slowing down the growth of Facebook’s profits. Facebook’s laser focus on quarterly returns has stolen an opportunity to build for long-term success; we’re more likely to be using Facebook 10 years from now if it’s safe and enjoyable to use. Arguing over censorship works only to further Facebook’s self-interest — while also wrapping our friends, neighbors and legislators into angry knots that are impossible to untie.

### 2AC – AT: HR Impact

#### Human rights frameworks are extremely complex and difficult to execute

Vandenhole and Gready 14 (Wouter Vandenhole, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Antwerp, Belgium; Paul Gready, Professor, Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of New York, USA; “Failures and Successes of Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development: Towards a Change Perspective,” Nordic Journal of Human Rights, <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280217460_Failures_and_Successes_of_Human_Rights-Based_Approaches_to_Development_Towards_a_Change_Perspective>, October 2014)//sposten

III. HRBADs and Organisational Change Logically preceding a solid understanding of the complexity of social change is the need to better understand what it takes for an organisation to introduce an HRBAD with a view to bring about social change successfully in the first place. Both in change theory and organisations theory, it has been emphasised that views on change and on how organisations change are very often based on implicit assumptions. Both sets of theories also point out the complexity of (organisational) change, and the existence of many different and often competing approaches or “schools”, with some emphasising structural constraints (i.e. constraints based on durable social structures) and others individual agency. Both dimensions are important and often operate in tandem.33 Moreover, a distinction is to be made between formal structure and actual day-to-day activities, for the assumption that organisations function according to formal blueprints is not supported by empirical research,34 hence the emphasis again on the need for much more empirical work. In the case example of UNICEF that follows, we look in particular into internal reflection and planning, and leadership and true believers as explanatory entry points for the (lack of) organisational change accompanying the introduction of an HRBAD. In addition to these drivers of change, we shall pay attention to the spoilers of change, such as lack of capacity or staff turnover, and to the tension between HRBAD and RBM. Attempts at introducing HRBAD by the UN at the country level by states and by non-governmental organisations seem to show similar trends at first sight, though much more research is needed before firm conclusions can be reached.