### 1AC: Plan

#### Plan – The People’s Republic of China ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike.

#### That solves worker liberation, labor reforms, and re-establishes credible Collective Bargaining in China – establishing legal protection for Labor Unions reduces overall labor-related discontent.

Dongfang 11 Han Dongfang 4-6-2011 "Liberate China's Workers" <https://archive.md/7RvDG#selection-307.0-316.0> (director of China Labour Bulletin, a nongovernmental organization that defends the rights of workers in China.)//Elmer

HONG KONG — **There is no legal right to strike in China**, but there are strikes every day. Factory workers, hotel employees, teachers and taxi drivers regularly withdraw their labor and demand a better deal from their employer. Strikes are often successful, and these days strike leaders hardly ever get put in prison. It may seem ironic that workers in a nominally Communist country don’t have the right to strike, and that workers are apparently willing to defy the Communist Party by going out on strike. But China effectively abandoned Communism and embraced capitalism many years ago. And in a capitalist economy, strikes are a fact of life. Chinese scholars, government **officials** and even some businessmen have long recognized this fact and have **called for the** **restoration of the right to strike**, **which was removed from the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China in 1982**. **Deng Xiaoping feared that the economic reforms he was introducing would lead to labor unrest.** Although Deng and his successors were able to quiet labor unrest and strike action for a while, the trend over the last five years or so has been clear. As the business leader Zeng Qinghong noted recently, the number of strikes is increasing every year. Mr. Zeng, who is head of the Guangzhou Automobile Co., reported that in just two months last summer, there were more than 20 strikes in the automotive industry in the Pearl River Delta alone, and that new strikes were occurring all the time. Mr. Zeng suggested in a submission to this year’s National People’s Congress, China’s annual legislature, that the right to strike should be restored because it was a basic right of workers in a market economy and a natural adjunct to the right to work. I agree with Mr. Zeng on this point and would like to take his argument one step further. The **right to strike** **is** clearly important, but the most vital and fundamental right of workers is **the right to collective bargaining**. After all, **why do workers go out on strike**? Very simply, they go on strike **for higher pay and better working conditions**. **The strike is not an end in itself but is part of a bargaining process.** And **if the collective bargaining process were more effective**, in many cases, **workers would not need to go out on strike at all**. If you talk to factory workers, most will tell you they would rather not go on strike if they can avoid it. Indeed, most only go on strike because they have no alternative. **China’s workers want and need an alternative**. They want **a system** in **which they can raise their demands** for higher pay and discuss those demands **in** peaceful, **equal and constructive negotiations** with management. **If workers can achieve their goals through peaceful collective bargaining, in the long run there will be fewer strikes**, workers will be better paid and labor relations will be vastly improved. We also have to be aware that if the right to strike is reinstated in the Constitution in isolation — without the right to collective bargaining — there would be a danger that the right of workers to go on strike might actually be eroded. Just look at the right to stage a public demonstration. Chinese citizens do have the constitutional right to demonstrate but in reality they have to apply to the police for permission, and of course very few of those applications are granted. Likewise, if workers have to apply to the authorities before they can go on strike, the right to strike will become meaningless. Moreover, the number of strikes would not be reduced because workers would continue to go out on strike regardless and labor relations will deteriorate even further. On the other hand, if the **right to strike** is framed in a way that **can** **liberate workers** and **encourage** **and empower them to engage in collective bargaining**, **safe** **in the knowledge that they have a powerful weapon that can be deployed if necessary, labor relations will be enhanced** and the number of strikes might actually decrease. There is a saying in China that “you should not only focus on your head when you have headache because the real reason for the headache could be your foot.” As Mr. Zeng noted, the rapidly increasing number of strikes in China has become a major headache, not only for business but for the government as well. If the government wants to reduce the number of strikes in China, it needs to take a holistic approach and address the root cause of the problem — the absence of an effective collective bargaining system in which democratically elected workers’ representatives can negotiate better pay and conditions with their employer. If such a system can be implemented in China it would obviously benefit workers but it would also **benefit employers** like Mr. Zeng who are **concerned** **about** **high worker turnover and the loss of production through strike action.** Crucially, it is also in the interest of the Chinese government to introduce collective bargaining. The authorities may be nervous about handing power to the workers but they should bear in mind that by doing so they would aid the development of more harmonious labor relations, which could lead to the Communist Party’s goal of creating a more prosperous, stable and harmonious society.

### 1AC: Soft Power Advantage

#### Lack of Chinese Right to Strike devastates Collective Bargaining – undermines any legal leverage for Strikes.

Friedman 17 Eli Friedman 4-20-2017 "Collective Bargaining in China is Dead: The Situation is Excellent" <https://www.chinoiresie.info/collective-bargaining-in-china-is-dead-the-situation-is-excellent/> (Assistant Professor of International and Comparative Labour at Cornell University)//Elmer

For many years reform-oriented labour activists and scholars working in China have seen **collective bargaining** as the **cure for** the **country’s severe labour problems**. The logic underlying this was often unstated, but straightforward: collective bargaining was crucial for twentieth century labour movements in capitalist countries in giving workers a voice and creating a more equitable social distribution of wealth. With growing levels of labour unrest in China over the past twenty years, collective bargaining seemed like a logical next step. Hopeful reformers—both within the official unions as well as labour NGO activists and academics—envisioned rationalised, legalised bargaining between labour and capital as a central pillar in the construction of a more just workplace and society. The **challenges to institutionalising** a robust **collective bargaining** system **in** the People’s Republic of **China** (PRC) **have** always **been profound**. **Fundamental** to labour relations theory **is** that collective bargaining rights must be accompanied by the **right to strike** and freedom of association—**capital** **has no reason to take workers seriously without labour possessing some coercive power**. But independent unions have long been an anathema to the Communist Party. From the Lai Ruoyu debacle of the 1950s to the crushing of the Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation in 1989, the Party has made it clear time and again that independent worker organisations are forbidden. Although workers have never enjoyed the right to strike in practice, the right was formally included in the Chinese constitutions of 1975 and 1978. It **was Deng Xiaoping who removed it from the constitution just as private capital began pouring into China in the early 1980**s. Working Within the System Nonetheless, with no signs of articulated worker movements since 1989, many well-intentioned people thought it was worth trying to advance worker rights within the system. Especially from the mid 2000s on, academics (myself included) launched research projects, NGOs held training sessions, and foreign unions engaged with the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU). Many assumed that the state would eventually decide that worker insurgency was exacting too high a cost, and that serious labour reforms were therefore necessary. And indeed, beginning in the late 2000s the ACFTU made collective negotiations (xieshang)—rather than the more antagonistic sounding ‘bargaining’ (tanpan)—a high priority, investing time and resources into expanding the coverage of collective contracts. At its best, **collective bargaining in China** **has been woefully inadequate**. The state and the ACFTU have been very cautious about controlling workers’ aspirations, and have insisted on the fundamental harmony of interests between labour and capital. Experiments with bargaining have been almost **exclusively restricted to single enterprises**, thereby preventing workers from constituting cross-workplace ties. The overwhelming majority of collective contracts are **formulaic**: **actual bargaining rarely occurs**, and **enforcement is** largely **non-existent**. The few shining examples where employers have made real compromises during collective bargaining have followed autonomously organised wildcat strikes. The best-known case is the 2010 strike from a Honda transmission plant in Guangdong province, which resulted in major wage gains as well as an (ultimately unsuccessful) effort to reform the enterprise union. It is not coincidental that substantive worker-led bargaining is much more likely in Japanese or American firms, where the state must be cautious not to inflame patriotic sentiments. State-sanctioned economic nationalism is a shaky foundation for a robust collective bargaining system. The Death of Collective Bargaining under Xi Even these timid efforts have been smothered in recent years, as the central government has turned in a markedly anti-worker direction under Xi Jinping. There was a brief moment in 2010 when discussion about the right to strike emerged from hushed whispers into the public discourse. But this opening was ephemeral, and union reformers in Guangdong who had pushed gentle reforms in the mid-late 2000s were replaced with typical Party apparatchiks. The country’s pre-eminent centre for labour studies at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou was shuttered. The academic study of employment has now been left almost entirely to business schools, as the government has stymied further expansion of labour relations programs. Labour NGOs in Guangzhou were subjected to a brutal crackdown in December 2015, with the government specifically targeting those groups that had been helping workers to engage in collective negotiations to resolve strikes. And the ACFTU has seemingly given up on advancing collective negotiations altogether. The Chairman of the ACFTU Li Jianguo does not even mention the term in his speeches anymore. Under the ‘work developments’ section of the ACFTU’s website, a lonely single report on collective contracts for the entirety of 2016 is a stark indication that the union has almost totally forsaken this agenda. Collective bargaining is not dead in the sense that it will disappear from China’s labour-capital relations. It is almost certain that official unions will continue to pursue bargaining in its current vacuous, bureaucratic, and worker-exclusionary form. Collective contracts will continue to be signed, tabulated, and then hidden from view from workers. Somewhat less pessimistically, workers will continue to force management to bargain with the collective via wildcat strikes. This latter form will still be an important means by which workers can attempt to ensure their most basic rights, and these efforts are absolutely worth supporting. But collective bargaining is dead as a political aim. It is not going to be the cornerstone of twentieth century-style class compromise in China, it is not generative of worker power, and it certainly does not herald broader social transformation. To the extent that legal bargaining does develop, it will be as a mechanism for the state to deprive workers of autonomous power. What then might Chinese workers and allied intellectuals and activists aim for? At the risk of stating the obvious, **the working class needs more power**. The question is, how to foster proletarian power in the face of a highly competent authoritarian state that views organised workers as an existential threat? In the absence of independent organisations, the only option is an intensification of already widespread worker insurgency. The more wildcat strikes, mass direct action, and worker riots, the more the state and capital will be forced to take worker grievances seriously. Of course such forms of collective action come at great risk for workers, and many have already paid a high price. In any particular case, the risks may certainly outweigh the benefits. But in the aggregate, expansive unrest is just what the working class needs. With the institutions firmly oriented towards advancing the inter-related goals of state domination and exploitation by capital, disruption on a large scale is the only chance workers have of forcing change. Ungovernability will be the necessary prelude to any institutional reform worthy of the name.

#### Any credible union power is under-cut by detentions of labor activists.

Merkley and McGovern 13 Jeff Merkley and James McGovern 12-20-2013 "Detention of Labor Representative Highlights Challenges for Collective Bargaining in China" <https://www.cecc.gov/publications/commission-analysis/detention-of-labor-representative-highlights-challenges-for> (Representative and Co-Chair of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China)//Elmer

**Authorities** in Shenzhen city, Guangdong province, **detained** migrant worker and **labor representative** Wu Guijun in May 2013 reportedly **for participating in a peaceful labor protest**. Prior to his detention, Wu was one of seven elected labor representatives involved in collective bargaining with his employer. Labor advocates have condemned Wu’s detention and expressed concern that he has been held for an extended period of time without being formally indicted. Wu’s case **illustrates** the **challenges** **Chinese workers face engaging in collective bargaining** to resolve workplace grievances. On May 23, 2013, public security officials in Bao’an district, Shenzhen city, Guangdong province, detained migrant worker Wu Guijun, after he reportedly participated in a local Bao’an labor protest.[1] Employed at the Diweixin manufacturing factory (“Diweixin”) in Bao’an, Wu was one of seven elected labor representatives negotiating with factory management on a resolution to a near month-long labor dispute. Workers staged a public protest after management failed to agree to collective bargaining demands, including worker compensation for a proposed factory closure. As a result of the protest, authorities **detained** a number of protesters, including Wu. According to his lawyer, Wu now faces possible criminal prosecution **for** “gathering a crowd to **disrupt social order**,” a crime punishable by three to seven years’ imprisonment under Article 290 of the PRC Criminal Law.[2] Background on Wu’s Case In early May 2013, workers at Diweixin, a Hong Kong-owned factory, initiated a strike in response to management plans to close and relocate manufacturing operations from Shenzhen to Huizhou municipality, Guangdong.[3] Seeking severance compensation in connection with the factory’s closure, workers elected Wu, along with six others, to advance their demands in collective negotiations with factory management. According to multiple reports, management repeatedly refused to cooperate with the representatives for more than two weeks of collective negotiations, reportedly offering at one point to provide workers with compensation below the legal minimum required by law.[4] In an attempt to pressure local authorities to intervene in the dispute, 300 workers marched on May 23 to the Shenzhen municipal government.[5] Local public security reportedly intervened in the march, detaining as many as 200 workers, including Wu. Authorities released a majority of those detained the following day and others in the succeeding weeks, but authorities continued to detain Wu, eventually placing him under criminal detention.[6] Labor advocates have expressed concern that authorities have held Wu for an extended period of time without being indicted.[7] In October 2013, procuratorate officials returned Wu’s case to public security officials for additional investigation.[8] According to Wu’s lawyer, the Bao’an district procuratorate twice rejected indicting Wu—apparently on the charge of “gathering a crowd to disrupt social order”—due to insufficient evidence.[9] Reactions to Wu’s Detention Fellow workers, academics, and labor advocates have criticized Wu’s detention. On September 27, 2013, 32 Chinese and international labor organizations cosigned a petition expressing concern that the collective actions taken by Diweixin workers resulted in detentions and the potential criminal prosecution of Wu, despite protections provided under the PRC Constitution guaranteeing freedom of assembly.[10] Signatories stressed that “Wu and other **worker leaders** were **alone in their struggle** without receiving support from the trade union,” and called on authorities to “**defend the worker’s right to strike**” and release Wu. In a September 11, 2013, open letter to the Shenzhen Federation of Trade Unions, Wu’s coworkers called his **detention** a “**bad precedent**” that would **cause** “**workers striking in the future [to face] the risk of prosecution.”**[11] According to the letter, such a situation would “**intensify social contradictions and influence social harmony**.” Workers urged the Shenzhen Federation of Trade Unions to fulfill its “core responsibility” to protect workers’ rights and to pressure local authorities to release Wu. Continued Challenges for Collective Bargaining Wu’s case illustrates the continued challenges Chinese workers face pursuing collective bargaining to resolve workplace grievances. The Commission’s 2013 Annual Report noted that demographic and economic shifts have provided workers with greater bargaining power in the workplace, increasing their determination to redress grievances and press for better pay and working conditions.[12] While the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU)—China’s sole official trade union under the direction of the Chinese Communist Party—has promoted collective contract and wage bargaining to address workers’ grievances and maintain “harmonious” labor relations, a general lack of autonomy and genuine worker representation in enterprise-level unions continues to limit ACFTU-led collective bargaining.[13] According to Wan Xiangdong, a professor and deputy director of the labor research and service center at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangdong, **government** and local trade union **officials** **continue to approach labor disputes through the perspective of maintaining social stability** and protecting against economic losses, **which places workers at a marked disadvantage**.[14] Wu’s case also highlights the risk workers face by engaging in collective bargaining without trade unions. A December 7, 2012, China Labour Bulletin report, indicated that labor representatives “have suffered reprisals after taking part in collective bargaining with management,” including forced resignations, firings, and detention.[15] The report notes that despite some successful cases of worker-led collective bargaining, a **lack** **of** “any **clear defined legal protection**” for labor representatives **makes them susceptible to retaliation**, necessitating “protection from both the law and a fully functioning trade union.” As a member of the International Labor Organization (ILO), China is obligated to respect, promote, and realize the principles of freedom of association and the “effective recognition” of the right to collective bargaining.[16]

#### The Right to Strike re-balances China’s Economy.

Roberts 10 Dexter Roberts 8-5-2010 "Is the Right to Strike Coming to China" <https://archive.md/hjNI7> (Editor at Bloomberg)//Elmer

The name gives no hint of the revolutionary changes afoot for mainland workers. Yet the **proposed Regulations** on the Democratic Management of Enterprises, now being debated by the Guangdong Provincial People's Congress, **could give Chinese labor the ultimate**—and until now taboo—**bargaining tool**: **an officially sanctioned right to strike**. "This has been a no-go area in China for decades," says Robin Munro, deputy director at the Hong Kong-based China Labour Bulletin. All **Chinese workers** belong to one **union**, but it **wields little power**. "This is the first time ever Chinese authorities have said it is O.K. to strike." The draft law could take effect by this fall in Guangdong, the industrialized coastal province where Honda (HMC) workers in June illegally and successfully struck for higher wages. The proposed law is seen by many activists and researchers as a trial balloon before a possible national rollout. The rules: If one-fifth or more of a company's staff demands collective bargaining, then management must discuss workers' grievances. Before talks begin, the union must elect local worker representatives. Until now, union reps came from management ranks. The next section of the proposed law ventures into even more radical territory. For six decades, picketing and disrupting production have been illegal and subject to harsh punishment. Under the Guangdong proposal, as long as workers first try negotiating and refrain from violence, they're allowed to strike. Though the draft could still get watered down, the fact that officials are even considering legalizing strikes signals a sea change. The party's moves are an attempt to recognize—and regulate—what is already happening. "Every month there are hundreds of strikes," says Chang Kai, a labor relations professor at Renmin University of China who advised the Honda workers. "What the government is concerned about is whether it can control these strikes or not." **Formalizing workers' rights** **could** also advance **China's goal of rebalancing the economy**. "There is a **new emphasis on how to reduce the wage gap** **and get consumers to spend more**," says Chang-Hee Lee, an industrial relations expert at the International Labour Organization's Beijing office. "This is **not** very **easy** to accomplish **unless** **workers have more bargaining power**." The bottom line: A proposed law being debated in Guangdong could greatly strengthen the bargaining power of Chinese workers.

#### Enhanced Unions and Labor Reforms key to sustained Chinese Economic Growth.

Haack 21 Michael Haack 2-13-2021 "Could Biden Make US-China Trade Better for Workers?" <https://thediplomat.com/2021/02/could-biden-make-us-china-trade-better-for-workers/> (Michael Haack currently a contractor with the China Labor Translation Project, a project of the Chinese Progressive Association. He previously worked with industrial workers in southern China. Michael holds master’s degrees from SOAS, University of London and American University)//Elmer

Meanwhile, **even as China grows, its wealth** **remains** largely **with companies and the government**. **Individual households capture only around 40 percent** of China’s GDP compared to around 70 percent in the United States. **Inequality has soared**. China’s official **Gini coefficient is at 0.47 (independent analyses put the number considerably higher) compared to 0.39 in the U.S**. “**Chinese workers** are **underpaid** and overtaxed, so they **can’t** afford to **spend as much** on goods and services,” said Mathew Klein of Barron’s. “The result is that Chinese businesses systematically generate a **surplus** of goods that gets **dumped** **on the rest of the world**, which in turn **leads to** some combination of **deindustrialization and rising indebtedness**.” Concern for the United States’ industrial capacity has led populists to rally for “decoupling.” For its part, China would also prefer to not rely on the United States for consumers and technology. In a recent speech to Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) CEO Dialogues, Xi Jinping was clear that “making **domestic consumption** the **main driver of** its **growth**” is the priority for China. While parties on both sides have called for a distancing, the counties’ asset-holding elites have become further entwined. Promising a fairer deal with China, former U.S. President Donald Trump launched a tariff war in 2018, which reached a partial resolution with the Phase One deal on January 15, 2020. The deal dovetailed with China’s domestic efforts to remove barriers on financial services and strengthen intellectual property rights. On April 1, 2020 China removed the caps on foreign ownership of financial services, letting U.S. firms soak up more of the profits from their operations in China. The Wall Street giants were quick to respond. Within days, JP Morgan committed $1 billion to buy the other 49 percent of its joint venture in China. Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley soon followed. This just added to the steady increase in U.S. investment into China over the last two decades. Additionally, $2.2 trillion worth of Chinese companies are capitalized on U.S. markets. These financial entanglements indicate that distancing can only lead to a “messy divorce,” according to Raghuram Rajan of the University of Chicago. “They are tied together in so many ways – trade, investment, tourism, student and academic exchanges – as well as distrustful on so many issues,” Rajan said. “Looks like a bad marriage to me, and they need to figure out how they work out their differences.” Since a total decoupling is not in the cards, could the Biden administration’s approach to the U.S.-China relationship bear fruit for workers when one considers that any worker related demand is likely to have to be balanced against the interests of the financial sector? Policy Opportunities Since the 1990s even when labor provisions were secured in trade agreements, there was little hope of enforcement. Though 14 U.S. free trade agreements have labor provisions, only seven complaints have ever been submitted and only one resolved. This, however, may be changing. “Trump’s ham-fisted, clumsy, cynical, ignorant, desire to approach trade from a different angle did allow for greater attention to issues like labor rights than anyone thought was possible,” said Trevor Sutton from the Center for American Progress. When the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), a.k.a. NAFTA 2.0, was signed at the end of January, 2020 the list of people that celebrated it included Donald Trump’s brash conservative trade representative, Robert Lighthizer; AFL-CIO president Richard Trumka; and a folk singer named Ryan Harvey, who cut his teeth protesting the evils of capitalism before joining Global Trade Watch. In order to be in compliance, the Mexican Congress had to pass a new labor law. Employers in Mexico can be brought to a court chaired by the U.S. trade representative (USTR) and secretary of labor for violating their workers’ right to form a union. If the dispute is unable to be resolved bilaterally, then the United States may directly sanction the Mexican company for violating workers’ right to organize. The new NAFTA also mandates that 40-45 percent of car components be made by a worker earning at least $16 per hour, or be subject to tariffs. The USMCA will rely on activists to bring cases, something that has caused many to question its applicability in authoritarian contexts. The recent experience of Vietnam and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), however, may be more analogous to what could be possible with China. While the TPP was being negotiated, Vietnam’s manufacturing sector was experiencing a long wave of wildcat strikes. Many reformers believed the answer was to give workers a legal avenue to organize and collectively bargain. The TPP negotiations were able to provide cover for the reformers in this system and nudge the skeptics to reform Vietnam’s labor laws. Though the labor agreement fell apart when the United States pulled out of the TPP, Vietnam has recently legalized “worker representative organizations at the enterprise level,” said Joe Buckley of Vietnam Labor Update. It has also signed on to certain International Labor Organization (ILO) collective bargaining conventions that strengthen workers’ right to organize, a first for the one party “socialist” state. A Worker-First Approach to China Like Vietnam, China’s industrial sector faced a wave of strikes in the 2000s and 2010s. In China, just as in Vietnam, reformers in the country’s single party-controlled union federation began to experiment with collective bargaining, especially in the manufacturing hub of Guangdong province. Talk about instituting a “right to strike” emerged amidst a strike wave in 2010. Then came 2013. Xi Jinping took the reins of the Communist Party and set out to remake China and the **crackdowns began**. **Labor NGOs**, labor studies professors, progressive labor lawyers, and even Marxist students have been **shut down**, arrested or otherwise silenced. “Although China enacted a series of **pro-worker laws** in the late 2000s, many of these provisions **are poorly implemented**,” said Eli Friedman, professor at Cornell University (Disclosure: Eli Friedman is one of the author’s supervisors at the China Labor Translation Project). “As has been the case in countless other countries, **China would** likely **experience reduced inequality and greater domestic consumption** **if independent trade unions were allowed to flourish** — thus advancing their own stated policy aims.”

#### China’s Economy is hosed and threatened by rampant Inequality gaps that devastate consumption.

Bloomberg 21 1-19-2021 "China’s Wide Income Gap Undercut Spending as Growth Recovers" <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-01-18/china-s-strong-growth-masks-unbalanced-recovery-as-incomes-lag> //Elmer

**China’s** successful control of Covid-19 made it the only major economy to have grown last year, but wide **income inequality** **and** still **weak consumer spending** **reflects** an **unbalanced recovery**. Here’s a deeper look at some of the data published alongside the gross domestic product report this week: Income Gap Official figures released on Monday which showed that the economy’s growth rate surpassed pre-pandemic levels in the last quarter also revealed that the **richest 20%** of Chinese **had** an average **disposable income** of **more than** 80,000 yuan ($12,000) last year, **10.2 times** **what** the **poorest 20% earn**. The multiple in the U.S. is about 8.4 and closer to 5 in Western European countries such as Germany and France, according to data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. By this measure, China’s inequality levels are comparable with Mexico, where the top 20% earn 10.4 times the bottom 20%. President **Xi** Jinping has **flagged** the country’s **unequal income distribution as a threat to its future growth**, with officials considering more redistributive policies to encourage household spending. While inequality didn’t surge in China due to the pandemic, the data showed officials have made little headway in reducing it, with the income gap remaining largely stable since 2015. Weak Consumption The full-year 2020 data also showed that even though China’s suppression of the virus allowed normal economic activities to resume by the second half of the year, growth in household spending has yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. **China’s per-capita consumption**, after adjusting for inflation, **dropped 4%** in 2020. That’s comparable with forecasts for U.S. personal consumption spending, which is projected to have fallen 3.8% in 2020, according to a Bloomberg survey. Retail sales declined 3.9% in 2020 from the previous year, a steeper fall than in developed economies such as the U.S., where government payments to workers stuck at home and unemployed supported spending on consumer goods. In common with other economies, China’s spending on services suffered more than spending on goods due to closures and fear of the virus, with an almost 17% drop in spending at restaurants last year.

#### That’s critical for Soft Power Projection BUT authoritarianism regarding activists puts efforts on the brink – re-establishing credibility of governance is important.

Albert 18 Eleanor Albert 2-9-2018 "China’s Big Bet on Soft Power" <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-big-bet-soft-power> (a third-year PhD student concentrating in international relations and comparative politics)//Elmer

**China is** a powerful international actor as the **world’s** most populous country and its **second-largest economy**. The country also invests significantly in modernizing its military. With signs that the United States will retreat from a leadership role under the Trump administration, **China** has **positioned itself as a champion of globalization and economic integration**, perhaps **signaling** a **desire to step in as a greater** international **leader**. It is doing this **by doubling down on soft power**, a measure of a country’s international attractiveness and its ability to influence other countries and publics. But what exactly are China’s means of exerting influence? In the last decade, the Chinese government has committed to boosting its appeal abroad. Beijing has been developing an international media network and establishing cultural study centers around the world. While debate abounds over whether promoting China’s traditions, values, language, and culture can win it more friends, vast funds are backing programs to enhance the country’s image. Despite its efforts, China has yet to see a significant return on its investment. When did China start investing in soft power? Chinese officials and academics expressed the importance of China’s culture in the 1990s and early 2000s, but soft power was explicitly referenced in national government policy for the first time at the Seventeenth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 2007. Former Chinese President Hu Jintao said, “The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation will definitely be accompanied by the thriving of Chinese culture.” This formulation, tying culture to the country’s place on the world’s stage, echoed other core principles from Chinese leadership, such as China’s “peaceful rise” and its vision of a “harmonious society.” These ideas intended to counter narratives from the West that China’s emergence was a threat to the existing international order. Hu’s successor, Xi Jinping, said in 2014, “We should increase China’s soft power, give a good Chinese narrative, and better communicate China’s message to the world,” calling for a stronger national effort to link China’s popularity and likeability to its meteoric rise. Soft power, a term coined by Harvard University scholar Joseph S. Nye Jr. in 1990, is the means by which a country gets other countries to “want what it wants.” Nye emphasized that **a country’s perceived legitimacy**, attractiveness of ideology and culture, and societal norms **play** an **important role in shaping international politics.** Under Xi’s leadership, China has pushed the notions of the “Chinese Dream” and “China Model” without providing clear definitions. The funds China steers toward its soft power campaign are hard to pinpoint due to the country’s limited transparency but experts place estimates in the billions of dollars. U.S. sinologist David Shambaugh of George Washington University says that China spends approximately $10 billion a year. What are its **soft power tools**? China is attempting to export **its approach to development**, which has lifted hundreds of millions of its people **out of poverty**. The Belt and Road Initiative, or BRI, described by leaders as a vehicle for soft power, calls for spurring regional connectivity. It seeks to bring together the Silk Road Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road through a vast network of railways, roads, pipelines, ports, and telecommunications infrastructure that will promote economic integration from China, through Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, to Europe and beyond. To finance a share of these international projects, China contributed $50 billion [PDF] to the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank upon its founding, half of the bank’s initial capital. Beijing also pledged $40 billion for its Silk Road Fund, $25 billion for the Maritime Silk Road, and another $41 billion to the New Development Bank (established by BRICS states: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). Separately, Beijing has also implemented aid programs that do not conform to international development assistance standards: its aid typically focuses on South-South partnerships in the developing world; comes without conditionality; is predominantly bilateral; and includes not only grants and interest-free and concessional loans, but also other forms of official government funding. A number of training programs have supported public health, agriculture, and governance. Chinese aid programs, though growing, are a fraction of what large donors like the United States, European Union institutions, and Japan offer. Beijing’s leaders have also turned to more traditional tools of soft power: promoting Chinese language, educational exchanges, media expansion, and pop culture icons. Confucius institutes: China opened the first Confucius Institute in 2004 in Seoul, South Korea. As of January 2018, there were more than five hundred institutes scattered around the world. The centers, nonprofit organizations affiliated with China’s ministry of education, provide Mandarin language courses, cooking and calligraphy classes, and celebrations for Chinese national holidays. The institutes echo cultural associations like the United Kingdom’s British Councils, France’s Alliance Française, Germany’s Goethe Institute, and Spain’s Cervantes Institute. The Confucius Institute partners with universities, typically with a minimum of $100,000 in annual support for programming, while Confucius Classrooms are established with primary and secondary institutions. Educational exchanges: China has become a top destination for international students. It ranked third among the world’s most popular study destinations in 2017, according to the Institute of International Education. The majority of international students pursue self-funded courses of study; however, the China Scholarship Council provides student financial aid to not only Chinese students going abroad, but also to foreigners coming to China. More than 440,000 international students from 205 countries studied in China in 2016. They came primarily from South Korea, the United States, Thailand, Pakistan, and India, based on statistics from the China Scholarship Council, which is affiliated with the Ministry of Education. Still, only two of the country’s esteemed schools are ranked among the world’s top fifty higher educational institutions: Peking University and Tsinghua University. The image of Chinese schools suffers from a combination of skepticism over educational quality and pedagogic methods that often emphasize rote memorization over independent thought development as well as concern over censorship by academics and university leadership of topics particularly relating to individual freedoms and democracy, and Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang, to avoid crackdown from the party. International media: Beijing has thrown its weight behind its foreign language news outlets to establish greater control over narratives about China. This allows Beijing to reach a broader audience for not only high-profile summits between Chinese leaders and their foreign counterparts but also for China’s more underreported activities around the world. The government’s primary news agency, Xinhua, has grown to 170 foreign bureaus and has plans to reach 200 by 2020. China Daily and the Global Times publish English language editions available worldwide. CCTV, the state television broadcasting news service, rebranded itself as China Global Television Network in December 2016 and broadcasts six channels, two in English and others in Arabic, French, Russian, and Spanish, with reporting teams in more than seventy countries. China Radio International broadcasts 392 hours of programming a day in thirty-eight languages from twenty-seven overseas bureaus. The media firm covertly runs a network of more than thirty radio stations in fourteen countries through front companies to mask its influence, according to a November 2015 Reuters investigation. Chinese diaspora communities, which total approximately fifty million people and are primarily in Southeast Asia, are just as much a target audience for China’s media expansion as foreigners. Chinese athletic performances are a projection of power as well. Hosting the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing put the country on display. China took home seventy-one medals at the 2016 summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro compared to thirty-two in the 1984 Los Angeles games. In addition, Chinese firms have courted Hollywood’s film industry, though there are signs of this interest cooling off. Dalian Wanda, one of the world’s largest media companies, closed a series of deals in 2016 with U.S. film studios and cinema chains, including a partnership with Sony Pictures and the acquisition of Legendary Entertainment, the production house behind hits like “Godzilla,” “Jurassic World,” and “Interstellar.” U.S. studios look to China for much-needed investment and an entry into China’s desirable movie market. By the end of 2017, a handful of deals between Chinese firms and Hollywood studios have been scrapped—a trend that experts say indicates China may slow its investments in the American film industry. Still, Chinese firms are seizing on the opportunity to have a more direct hand in shaping China’s external image and U.S. producers have grown wary of making films that cast China in a negative light, primarily out of a desire to tap into Chinese distribution markets. Though China’s film industry may be internationalizing and diversifying, Chinese films still have limited distribution and box office success in external markets, raising questions about the broad appeal of such cultural products. Does China convey soft power through unofficial channels? China also wields soft power through other societal and cultural channels, including literature, art, film, music, scholars, and sports figures. Celebrities like film director Zhang Yimou, actor Jackie Chan, pianist Lang Lang, professional athletes Yao Ming and Li Na, ballet dancer Tan Yuanyuan, and pop singer Jane Zhang are unofficial cultural ambassadors. Pandas, too, have become a cultural icon and zoo exchanges with the animals dubbed “panda diplomacy.” Some cultural figures, like artist Ai Weiwei, have powerful platforms and are often critical of government policies. Other rising musical icons, like the Higher Brothers, a hip-hop group hailing from the capital of Sichuan province, are gaining a following far from China, despite the Chinese government’s recent ban of hip-hop culture and actors with tattoos from media appearances. Is its soft power effective? Soft power by nature is difficult to measure. In the case of the ambitious BRI, **China’s neighbors and partners** have so far **responded by taking a cautious approach** [PDF]. Many business and government leaders view BRI as an economic opportunity to stimulate growth across Asia and beyond; the continent’s infrastructure needs are expected to exceed $1.5 trillion a year to sustain development through 2030, according to a 2017 Asian Development Bank report. Economic wellbeing is a powerful incentive for countries desperate for development, but Chinese financing and construction does not translate directly into Beijing’s ability to exert influence in recipient countries. For example, local communities in South and Southeast Asian countries like Myanmar and Sri Lanka have expressed resentment toward China’s growing presence; even in Pakistan where the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has been broadly endorsed, some lawmakers fear that such projects may jeopardize national interests. In spite of the risks, **regional actors are** often **induced by short-term** **economic benefits** needed to fuel growth, though they **remain guarded about bending to Beijing’s strategic preferences**. While there are few quantifiable metrics to gauge influence, experts often refer to public opinion polls that assess global perceptions of China. By these benchmarks, China’s efforts seem to have had little effect in boosting its favorability. In Africa, opinion poll respondents typically hold more favorable views of China than in other parts of the world, according to surveys conducted by Pew Research Center and Afrobarometer [PDF], a Pan-African research network. Countries like Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, and Niger have some of the highest views of China’s influence, often ranging above 75 percent. In Latin and South American nations, the majority of respondents often view China favorably, but the margins are less substantial. For example, Chile and Peru held positive views with 66 percent and 60 percent of respondents seeing China favorably in 2015, while Argentine and Mexican respondents stood at 53 percent and 47 percent, respectively. Countries that have held highly positive views of China over time include Pakistan and Russia. Other neighbors hold more varied perceptions. On average, 64 percent of Indonesian respondents viewed China favorably between 2005 and 2015. Over the same period, opinions of China in Japan dropped significantly. In western democratic countries like Germany and the United States, a clear trend has emerged: despite the government’s efforts, favorable opinions of China have declined since 2011. What are the limitations of China’s soft power? China’s soaring economy has elevated the country as a model to be emulated, but there are multiple strains that threaten to undermine its image. Environmental pollution and degradation, food safety issues, overcapacity of state-owned enterprises, and Xi’s exhaustive anticorruption campaign are likely to dissuade others from following China’s example. **China’s soft power** campaign is **limited by the dissonance between** the **image** that **China aspires to project and the country’s actions**, experts say. Rising nationalism, assertiveness vis-à-vis territorial disputes, **crackdowns** on nongovernmental organizations, censorship of domestic and international media, limits to the entry of foreign ideals, **and political repression constrain China’s soft power**. “If China’s narratives don’t address the country’s shortcomings, it becomes very hard to sell the idea of China as a purveyor of attractive values,” says CFR Senior Fellow Elizabeth C. Economy. Chinese culture and ideas have the potential to appeal worldwide, but only when there is “honesty in the depiction,” Economy adds. Moreover, other experts have warned of the rise of authoritarian influence, dubbed “sharp power.” Authors of a 2017 report from the National Endowment for Democracy described the concept as “principally not about attraction or even persuasion; instead, it centers on distraction and manipulation.” Reports of entrenched Chinese influence in Australian and New Zealand politics, as well as attempts to pierce German business and political circles, triggered alarms across Western democracies in late 2017. Ultimately, **China’s** tightening **authoritarian** political **system** is the **biggest obstacle** to the positive image the country and government yearn for. “So long as [China’s] political system denies, rather than enables, free human development, its propaganda efforts will face an uphill battle,” wrote David Shambaugh in Foreign Affairs in 2015. Without the free exchange of ideas and the ability of Chinese citizens to engage in open debate, the gap between the government’s portrayal and China’s reality will likely grow. “**China will find it hard to win** friends and **influence** nations so long **as it muzzles its best advocates**,” writes the Economist.

#### Chinese Economic Decline leads to all-out War – specifically over Taiwan.

Joske 18 Stephen Joske 10-23-2018 “China’s Coming Financial Crisis And The National Security Connection” <https://warontherocks.com/2018/10/chinas-coming-financial-crisis-and-the-national-security-connection/> (senior adviser to the Australian Treasurer during the 1997–98 Asian crisis)//re-cut by Elmer

The biggest **national security issues**, however, **arise from** the unpredictable **political impact of a recession in China**. We learned this, or should have, during the 1997 to 1998 Asian crisis. China may have had a disguised recession or near recession in 1998, but it was in a much smaller economy. Apart from that one episode there is no collective memory of recession and how to deal with it. As such, **China** is now **psychologically unprepared** to deal with the challenges of a recession. China’s coming recession will be accompanied by a large uncontrolled devaluation of the RMB as foreign exchange reserves evaporate, so it will be impossible to conceal this time. All asset prices, including housing prices, will be hit. **Combine** the **shock** of an unexpected economic setback **with tensions** in a one party state where a single individual has been calling the shots, and **political instability could set in.** While Xi’s anti-corruption campaign has not eliminated corruption, it has created many enemies who are biding their time. Minxin Pei has documented the activities of China’s powerful corruption networks. These networks, not a debilitated civil society, represent the alternative government of China. Competition between them could easily be destabilizing in a winner-take-all political environment. While our understanding of elite politics in China is poor, a recession would likely discredit the existing leadership and **set off intense competition between corrupt factions** for control of China. Bo Xilai, a former Chongqing party chief and Politburo member, was purged in 2012 but his son appears to still be interested in politics. While the outcome is impossible to predict, we can **see** the conditions in place for destabilizing events ranging from **military adventurism** to **civil war**. Alternatively, the regime could reassert its stability through increased repression, which would make China harder to deal with and would spill over into the Chinese diaspora. China’s Belt and Road Initiative has never had a real economic base. It is all about power projection (such as the Gwadar port) and would quickly be dropped by Beijing as a post-crisis China becomes focused on domestic political and economic stability. **Any Chinese military adventurism is likely to be focused on Taiwan.** China’s military is currently poorly equipped for an invasion of Taiwan, which has difficult geography and a substantial military, making an invasion of Taiwan unlikely to succeed. However, it is possible the Chinese **leadership would miscalculate** the risks, leaving it in a limited war with no clear resolution that would quickly **draw in Japan and the U**nited **S**tates. China has spent most of its history disunited, reflecting its geography. It has a number of widely dispersed economic centers. It was in outright civil war as recently as the 1960s. If competition between political factions remains unresolved, a civil war could develop, leaving China as a battleground where Russia, Japan, and the United States seek to influence the outcome. This scenario would stall or even end China’s rise as a global military and political power.

#### Taiwan goes Nuclear.

Talmadge 18 [Caitlin, Associate Professor of Security Studies at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, “Beijing’s Nuclear Option: Why a U.S.-China War Could Spiral Out of Control,” accessible online at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2018-10-15/beijings-nuclear-option>, published Nov/Dec 2018]//re-cut by Elmer

As China’s power has grown in recent years, so, too, has the risk of war with the United States. Under President Xi Jinping, China has increased its political and economic pressure on Taiwan and built military installations on coral reefs in the South China Sea, fueling Washington’s fears that Chinese expansionism will threaten U.S. allies and influence in the region. U.S. destroyers have transited the Taiwan Strait, to loud protests from Beijing. American policymakers have wondered aloud whether they should send an aircraft carrier through the strait as well. Chinese fighter jets have intercepted U.S. aircraft in the skies above the South China Sea. Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump has brought long-simmering economic disputes to a rolling boil. A war between the two countries remains unlikely, but the prospect of a **military confrontation**—resulting, for example, **from a Chinese campaign against Taiwan**—**no longer seems** as **implausible** as it once did. And the odds of such a confrontation going nuclear are higher than most policymakers and analysts think. Members of China’s strategic community tend to dismiss such concerns. Likewise, U.S. studies of a potential war with China often exclude nuclear weapons from the analysis entirely, treating them as basically irrelevant to the course of a conflict. Asked about the issue in 2015, Dennis Blair, the former commander of U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific, estimated the likelihood of a U.S.-Chinese nuclear crisis as “somewhere between nil and zero.” This assurance is misguided. If deployed against China, the Pentagon’s preferred style of conventional warfare would be a potential recipe for nuclear escalation. Since the end of the Cold War, the United States’ signature approach to war has been simple: punch deep into enemy territory in order to rapidly knock out the opponent’s key military assets at minimal cost. But the Pentagon developed this formula in wars against Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Serbia, none of which was a nuclear power. **China**, by contrast, not only has **nuclear weapons**; it has also **intermingled** them **with its conventional** military **forces**, **making it difficult to attack one without attacking the other**. This means that a major U.S. military campaign targeting China’s conventional forces would likely also threaten its nuclear arsenal. Faced with such a threat, Chinese leaders could decide to use their nuclear weapons while they were still able to. As U.S. and Chinese leaders navigate a relationship fraught with mutual suspicion, they must come to grips with the fact that a conventional war could skid into a nuclear confrontation. Although this risk is not high in absolute terms, its consequences for the region and the world would be devastating. As long as the United States and China continue to pursue their current grand strategies, the risk is likely to endure. This means that leaders on both sides should dispense with the illusion that they can easily fight a limited war. They should focus instead on managing or resolving the political, economic, and military tensions that might lead to a conflict in the first place. A NEW KIND OF THREAT There are some reasons for optimism. For one, China has long stood out for its nonaggressive nuclear doctrine. After its first nuclear test, in 1964, China largely avoided the Cold War arms race, building a much smaller and simpler nuclear arsenal than its resources would have allowed. Chinese leaders have consistently characterized nuclear weapons as useful only for deterring nuclear aggression and coercion. Historically, this narrow purpose required only a handful of nuclear weapons that could ensure Chinese retaliation in the event of an attack. To this day, China maintains a “no first use” pledge, promising that it will never be the first to use nuclear weapons. The prospect of a nuclear conflict can also seem like a relic of the Cold War. Back then, the United States and its allies lived in fear of a Warsaw Pact offensive rapidly overrunning Europe. NATO stood ready to use nuclear weapons first to stalemate such an attack. Both Washington and Moscow also consistently worried that their nuclear forces could be taken out in a bolt-from-the-blue nuclear strike by the other side. This mutual fear increased the risk that one superpower might rush to launch in the erroneous belief that it was already under attack. Initially, the danger of unauthorized strikes also loomed large. In the 1950s, lax safety procedures for U.S. nuclear weapons stationed on NATO soil, as well as minimal civilian oversight of U.S. military commanders, raised a serious risk that nuclear escalation could have occurred without explicit orders from the U.S. president. The good news is that these Cold War worries have little bearing on U.S.-Chinese relations today. Neither country could rapidly overrun the other’s territory in a conventional war. Neither seems worried about a nuclear bolt from the blue. And civilian political control of nuclear weapons is relatively strong in both countries. What remains, in theory, is the comforting logic of mutual deterrence: in a war between two nuclear powers, neither side will launch a nuclear strike for fear that its enemy will respond in kind. The bad news is that one other trigger remains: a conventional war that threatens China’s nuclear arsenal. **Conventional forces** can threaten nuclear forces in ways that **generate pressures to escalate**—especially when ever more capable U.S. conventional forces face adversaries with relatively small and fragile nuclear arsenals, such as China. **If U.S. operations endangered** or damaged China’s **nuclear forces,** Chinese leaders might come to think that Washington had aims beyond winning the conventional war—that it might be seeking to disable or destroy China’s nuclear arsenal outright, perhaps as a prelude to regime change. In the fog of war, **Beijing might** reluctantly **conclude** that limited **nuclear escalation**—an initial strike small enough that it could avoid full-scale U.S. retaliation—**was** a **viable** option to defend itself. STRAIT SHOOTERS The **most worrisome flash point** for a U.S.-Chinese war **is Taiwan**. Beijing’s long-term objective of reunifying the island with mainland China is clearly in conflict with Washington’s longstanding desire to maintain the status quo in the strait. It is not difficult to imagine how this might lead to war. For example, China could decide that the political or military window for regaining control over the island was closing and launch an attack, using air and naval forces to blockade Taiwanese harbors or bombard the island. Although U.S. law does not require Washington to intervene in such a scenario, the Taiwan Relations Act states that the United States will “consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States.” Were Washington to intervene on Taipei’s behalf, the world’s sole superpower and its rising competitor would find themselves in the first great-power war of the twenty-first century. In the course of such a war, U.S. conventional military operations would likely threaten, disable, or outright eliminate some Chinese nuclear capabilities—whether doing so was Washington’s stated objective or not. In fact, if the United States engaged in the style of warfare it has practiced over the last 30 years, this outcome would be all but guaranteed. Consider submarine warfare. China could use its conventionally armed attack submarines to blockade Taiwanese harbors or bomb the island, or to attack U.S. and allied forces in the region. If that happened, the U.S. Navy would almost certainly undertake an antisubmarine campaign, which would likely threaten China’s “boomers,” the four nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines that form its naval nuclear deterrent. China’s conventionally armed and nuclear-armed submarines share the same shore-based communications system; a U.S. attack on these transmitters would thus not only disrupt the activities of China’s attack submarine force but also cut off its boomers from contact with Beijing, leaving Chinese leaders unsure of the fate of their naval nuclear force. In addition, nuclear ballistic missile submarines depend on attack submarines for protection, just as lumbering bomber aircraft rely on nimble fighter jets. If the United States started sinking Chinese attack submarines, it would be sinking the very force that protects China’s ballistic missile submarines, leaving the latter dramatically more vulnerable. Even more dangerous, U.S. forces hunting Chinese attack submarines could inadvertently sink a Chinese boomer instead. After all, at least some Chinese attack submarines might be escorting ballistic missile submarines, especially in wartime, when China might flush its boomers from their ports and try to send them within range of the continental United States. Since correctly identifying targets remains one of the trickiest challenges of undersea warfare, a U.S. submarine crew might come within shooting range of a Chinese submarine without being sure of its type, especially in a crowded, noisy environment like the Taiwan Strait. Platitudes about caution are easy in peacetime. In wartime, when Chinese attack submarines might already have launched deadly strikes, the U.S. crew might decide to shoot first and ask questions later. Adding to China’s sense of vulnerability, the small size of its nuclear-armed submarine force means that just two such incidents would eliminate half of its sea-based deterrent. Meanwhile, any Chinese boomers that escaped this fate would likely be cut off from communication with onshore commanders, left without an escort force, and unable to return to destroyed ports. If that happened, China would essentially have no naval nuclear deterrent. The situation is similar onshore, where any U.S. military campaign would have to contend with China’s growing land-based conventional ballistic missile force. Much of this force is within range of Taiwan, ready to launch ballistic missiles against the island or at any allies coming to its aid. Once again, U.S. victory would hinge on the ability to degrade this conventional ballistic missile force. And once again, it would be virtually impossible to do so while leaving China’s nuclear ballistic missile force unscathed. Chinese conventional and nuclear ballistic missiles are often attached to the same base headquarters, meaning that they likely share transportation and supply networks, patrol routes, and other supporting infrastructure. It is also possible that they share some command-and-control networks, or that the United States would be unable to distinguish between the conventional and nuclear networks even if they were physically separate. To add to the challenge, some of China’s ballistic missiles can carry either a conventional or a nuclear warhead, and the two versions are virtually indistinguishable to U.S. aerial surveillance. In a war, targeting the conventional variants would likely mean destroying some nuclear ones in the process. Furthermore, sending manned aircraft to attack Chinese missile launch sites and bases would require at least partial control of the airspace over China, which in turn would require weakening Chinese air defenses. But degrading China’s coastal air defense network in order to fight a conventional war would also leave much of its nuclear force without protection. Once China was under attack, its leaders might come to fear that even intercontinental ballistic missiles located deep in the country’s interior were vulnerable. For years, observers have pointed to the U.S. military’s failed attempts to locate and destroy Iraqi Scud missiles during the 1990–91 Gulf War as evidence that mobile missiles are virtually impervious to attack. Therefore, the thinking goes, China could retain a nuclear deterrent no matter what harm U.S. forces inflicted on its coastal areas. Yet recent research suggests otherwise. Chinese intercontinental ballistic missiles are larger and less mobile than the Iraqi Scuds were, and they are harder to move without detection. The United States is also likely to have been tracking them much more closely in peacetime. As a result, China is unlikely to view a failed Scud hunt in Iraq nearly 30 years ago as reassurance that its residual nuclear force is safe today, especially during an ongoing, high-intensity conventional war. China’s vehement criticism of a U.S. regional missile defense system designed to guard against a potential North Korean attack already reflects these latent fears. Beijing’s worry is that this system could help Washington block the handful of missiles China might launch in the aftermath of a U.S. attack on its arsenal. That sort of campaign might seem much more plausible in Beijing’s eyes if a conventional war had already begun to seriously undermine other parts of China’s nuclear deterrent. It does not help that China’s real-time awareness of the state of its forces would probably be limited, since blinding the adversary is a standard part of the U.S. military playbook. Put simply, the favored **U.S. strategy** to ensure a conventional victory **would** likely **endanger** much of China’s **nuclear arsenal** in the process, at sea and on land. Whether the United States actually intended to target all of China’s nuclear weapons would be incidental. All that would matter is that Chinese leaders would consider them threatened. LESSONS FROM THE PAST At that point, the question becomes, How will China react? Will it practice restraint and uphold the “no first use” pledge once its nuclear forces appear to be under attack? Or will it use those weapons while it still can, gambling that limited escalation will either halt the U.S. campaign or intimidate Washington into backing down? Chinese writings and statements remain deliberately ambiguous on this point. It is unclear which exact set of capabilities China considers part of its core nuclear deterrent and which it considers less crucial. For example, if China already recognizes that its sea-based nuclear deterrent is relatively small and weak, then losing some of its ballistic missile submarines in a war might not prompt any radical discontinuity in its calculus. The danger lies in **wartime developments** that could **shift** **China’s assumptions about U.S. intentions.** If Beijing interprets the erosion of its sea- and land-based nuclear forces as a deliberate effort to destroy its nuclear deterrent, or perhaps even as a prelude to a nuclear attack, it might see limited nuclear escalation as a way to force an end to the conflict. For example, China could use nuclear weapons to instantaneously destroy the U.S. air bases that posed the biggest threat to its arsenal. It could also launch a nuclear strike with no direct military purpose—on an unpopulated area or at sea—as a way to signal that the United States had crossed a redline. If such escalation appears far-fetched, China’s history suggests otherwise. In 1969, similar dynamics brought China to the brink of nuclear war with the Soviet Union. In early March of that year, Chinese troops ambushed Soviet guards amid rising tensions over a disputed border area. Less than two weeks later, the two countries were fighting an undeclared border war with heavy artillery and aircraft. The conflict quickly escalated beyond what Chinese leaders had expected, and before the end of March, Moscow was making thinly veiled nuclear threats to pressure China to back down. Chinese leaders initially dismissed these warnings, only to radically upgrade their threat assessment once they learned that the Soviets had privately discussed nuclear attack plans with other countries. Moscow never intended to follow through on its nuclear threat, archives would later reveal, but Chinese leaders believed otherwise. On three separate occasions, they were convinced that a Soviet nuclear attack was imminent. Once, when Moscow sent representatives to talks in Beijing, China suspected that the plane transporting the delegation was in fact carrying nuclear weapons. Increasingly fearful, China test-fired a thermonuclear weapon in the Lop Nur desert and put its rudimentary nuclear forces on alert—a dangerous step in itself, as it increased the risk of an unauthorized or accidental launch. Only after numerous preparations for Soviet nuclear attacks that never came did Beijing finally agree to negotiations. China is a different country today than it was in the time of Mao Zedong, but the 1969 conflict offers important lessons. China started a war in which it believed nuclear weapons would be irrelevant, even though the Soviet arsenal was several orders of magnitude larger than China’s, just as the U.S. arsenal dwarfs China’s today. Once the conventional war did not go as planned, the Chinese reversed their assessment of the possibility of a nuclear attack to a degree bordering on paranoia. Most worrying, China signaled that it was actually considering using its nuclear weapons, even though it had to expect devastating retaliation. Ambiguous wartime information and worst-case thinking led it to take nuclear risks it would have considered unthinkable only months earlier. This pattern could unfold again today.

#### Nuke war causes extinction AND outweighs other existential risks

* Checked

PND 16. internally citing Zbigniew Brzezinski, Council of Foreign Relations and former national security adviser to President Carter, Toon and Robock’s 2012 study on nuclear winter in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, Gareth Evans’ International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament Report, Congressional EMP studies, studies on nuclear winter by Seth Baum of the Global Catastrophic Risk Institute and Martin Hellman of Stanford University, and U.S. and Russian former Defense Secretaries and former heads of nuclear missile forces, brief submitted to the United Nations General Assembly, Open-Ended Working Group on nuclear risks. A/AC.286/NGO/13. 05-03-2016. <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/OEWG/2016/Documents/NGO13.pdf> //Re-cut by Elmer

Consequences human survival 12. Even if the 'other' side does NOT launch in response the smoke from 'their' burning cities (incinerated by 'us') will still make 'our' country (and the rest of the world) uninhabitable, potentially inducing global famine lasting up to decades. Toon and Robock note in ‘Self Assured Destruction’, in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists 68/5, 2012, that: 13. “A nuclear war between Russia and the United States, even after the arsenal reductions planned under New START, could produce a nuclear winter. Hence, an attack by either side could be suicidal, resulting in self assured destruction. Even a 'small' nuclear war between India and Pakistan, with each country detonating 50 Hiroshima-size atom bombs--only about 0.03 percent of the global nuclear arsenal's explosive power--as air bursts in urban areas, could produce so much smoke that temperatures would fall below those of the Little Ice Age of the fourteenth to nineteenth centuries, shortening the growing season around the world and threatening the global food supply. Furthermore, there would be massive ozone depletion, allowing more ultraviolet radiation to reach Earth's surface. Recent studies predict that agricultural production in parts of the United States and China would decline by about **20 percent** for four years, and by 10 percent for a decade.” 14. A conflagration involving USA/NATO forces and those of Russian federation would most likely cause the deaths of most/nearly all/all humans (and severely impact/extinguish other species) as well as destroying the delicate interwoven techno-structure on which latter-day 'civilization' has come to depend. Temperatures would drop to below those of the last ice-age for up to 30 years as a result of the lofting of up to 180 million tonnes of very black soot into the stratosphere where it would remain for decades. 15. Though human ingenuity and resilience shouldn't be underestimated, human survival itself is arguably problematic, to put it mildly, under a 2000+ warhead USA/Russian federation scenario. 16. The Joint Statement on Catastrophic Humanitarian Consequences signed October 2013 by 146 governments mentioned 'Human Survival' no less than 5 times. The most recent (December 2014) one gives it a highly prominent place. Gareth Evans’ ICNND (International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament) Report made it clear that it saw the threat posed by nuclear weapons use as one that at least threatens what we now call 'civilization' and that potentially threatens human survival with an immediacy that even climate change does not, though we can see the results of climate change here and now and of course the immediate post-nuclear results for Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well.

#### Chinese Economic Strength increases Economic Diplomacy Efforts, specifically OBOR, AND decreases need for Military Expansion.

Cai 18, Kevin G. "The one belt one road and the Asian infrastructure investment bank: Beijing’s new strategy of geoeconomics and geopolitics." Journal of Contemporary China 27.114 (2018): 831-847. (Associate Professor at Renison University College, University of Waterloo, Canada)//Elmer

Fourthly, the OBOR and the AIIB were launched by Beijing as a diplomatic and strategic move as well in the face of new geopolitical and security challenges in the context of the changing geopolitical setting in the Asia-Pacific region in the first two decades of the 2000s. The geopolitical and security environment in the region was generally favorable for China to concentrate on economic development with minimal explicit geopolitical and security challenges from outside in the 1980s through the early 2000s, largely because a rising China was not quite seen as a real or imminent threat yet by others in the region. By the early 2010s, however, the rise of Chinese power, its military power in particular, had become all the more evident and real, which inevitably made the status-quo powers and neighboring states increasingly concerned. It is within this context that the Obama administration started to adopt a new Asia policy, dubbed ‘Asia pivot’ and ‘rebalancing,’ which, in Beijing’s eyes, is clearly intended to contain a rising China. In the meantime, there were, in Beijing’s view, growing ‘deliberate’ moves by some East Asian neighbors on highly sensitive issues of territorial disputes in the East and South China Seas, the most significant move of which was Japan’s nationalization of the Diaoyu Islands/Senkaku Islands in September 2012. Under such circumstances, **Beijing** has **started to adjust its** **foreign policy by adopting** a more comprehensive **diplomatic strategy** that involves both ‘sticks’ and ‘carrots.’ On the one hand, Beijing has dropped its previous tao guang yang hui (low-profile) foreign policy, which was initially introduced by Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s, and moved to take a more active and even assertive policy to directly respond to the rising external challenges. On the other hand, however, **Beijing**, by **using** its **increased economic power** and wealth **as a diplomatic weapon**, has **provided** huge economic **incentives** **for Asian states to develop** **closer cooperation** with China. The **OBOR** and AIIB initiatives have been launched precisely against this backdrop as an important part of Beijing’s overall foreign policy adjustment under the leadership of Xi Jinping. A regional ‘infrastructure gap’ estimated at least in the amount of $8 trillion20 makes Beijing’s two initiatives all the more attractive to many countries in the region. Obviously, huge carrots like the OBOR and the AIIB would help compromise Washington’s ‘containment’ policy in the name of Asia pivot and rebalancing and help soften and mitigate the ‘shock’ brought about by Beijing’s more determined and assertive policy in the East and South China Seas. Although the new US President Trump’s China policy is still in the process of being finalized, it can well be expected that containing the rising influence of China in the region would still be a major theme of Trump’s policy towards Beijing. This is clearly reflected in the Trump administration’s newly endorsed ‘Indo-Pacific’ concept following an official four-party meeting that involved the USA, Japan, Australia and India in Manila on 12 November 2017 during Trump’s 12-day, five-country trip to East Asia.21 The ‘Indo-Pacific’ concept is believed to have been adopted by the Trump administration to replace the previous administration’s Asia pivot and rebalancing policy as Trump’s new strategy of quadrilateral alliance of the USA, Japan, Australia and India to counter a rising China.22 It is in this sense that the OBOR and AIIB initiatives are not just economic projects, but more importantly, they are also Beijing’s diplomatic and strategic maneuver, clearly and deliberately intended to mitigate the effects of US policy of containing China. To pursue the analysis further, it is China’s philosophical belief that the conflicting national interests would become all the more prominent and unmanageable if nation-states shared no common interests. It is in this sense that the OBOR and the AIIB are deliberately designed to help develop and expand common interests between China and other countries, particularly those that are currently involved in territorial disputes with China in the South China Sea and those that are fearful of a rising Chinese power. As such, it is Beijing’s hope that the two initiatives will help reduce the tensions derived from the territorial disputes in the South China Sea and create a more amiable atmosphere and an opportunity for effectively managing these disputes and preventing them from becoming out of control, potentially even solving these disputes with the countries involved. In a broader sense, the initiatives could help further strengthen Beijing’s third world diplomacy.

#### Solves Central Asian and South Asia War.

Muhammad et Al 19, Imraz, Arif Khan, and Saif ul Islam. "China Pakistan Economic Corridor: Peace, Prosperity and Conflict Resolution in the Region." (Lecturer, Department of Political Science, University of Buner)//Elmer

In the twenty first century, the geostrategic importance of South Asia is rising because of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which is the important component of the **o**ne **b**elt **o**ne **r**oad initiative (BRI). CPEC, started point is Gawadar a deep water port connects to the China‘s province of Xinjiang. Being part of the BRI, once CPEC is completely started functioning, it **will improve** the **political, social and economic situation** of the regional states and will raise the geo-strategic importance. CPEC is the priority of both states China and Pakistan, for Pakistan, CPEC pass through Pakistan‘s geography, is outlet for the landlocked countries and provides access to the supply and demands market to regional countries, while it is very short route for China, CPEC replace 13000 km only into 2500 km to reach to Middle East.1 So both the states have an instinct desire to continue it irrespective of change in the government. Not only this, CPEC will **boost** up the **regional** states‘ **economy**, **ensure peace** and prosperity in the region. Political, social and economic degradation in South Asia, created a hurdle in the cooperation among the regional countries. Security issues, terrorism, over population, economic disparities, lacking of education and modern inventions, lacking of health facilities, poor economic setup, water issues etc. devastated the life style and hindered the progress, development and peace in the region. CPEC is a turning point in the history of Asians‘ countries, it is not only a game changer and a target for Pakistan and China but a project for the whole region. Goal of this project is to promote commerce and trade culture, integrate the regional states for the development of economy, agriculture and industries. Furthermore, it is a source of peace, prosperity and conflicts resolutions in the region through economic development, economic dependence and regional integration. CPEC is a sign of peace and affluence for the whole region as for Pakistan. Being economic zone it will bring political, social and especially economic growth in the region. However, this research work deals with analyse the CPEC role in bringing peace and prosperity on the one hand and led to conflict resolution in South Asia on the other hand. What is CPEC? The CPEC is the part of one belt, one road has featuring of common advantages and prosperity, containing on complimentary interest, cooperation and collaboration and mutual benefits. A widespread transport corridor, industrial and trade cooperative rout between China and Pakistan, having the potential of people to people contact and communication, sources of cultural diffusion and exchange. Additionally, CPEC has the ability of political, social and economic growth, bringing peace, prosperity and security in region2 The CPEC covers the areas starting from a muslim majority province Xinjiang Uygur in China and almost all provinces Pakistan. Main areas through which CPEC passes are Kashgar, Atushi, Tumshuq, Shule, Shufu, Akto, Tashkurgan Tajik, Gilgit, Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Islamabad, Lahore, Multan, Quetta, Sukkur, Hyderabad, Karachi and Gwadar. Furthermore, the CPEC will comprise one belt, three passageways, and two axes and five functional zones. Peace, Prosperity and Conflict Resolutions Narrowly peace is defined as the passivity and acceptance of injustice and cruelty without showing reaction.3 It may also be turn as the complete absence of war which simply fall in the negative peace category, but actually **peace** is more than that, it is **based on the political,** social **and economic development** of society and elimination of the injustice, and violations of the human rights.4 More elaborately, peace focused on the modern concept of democracy, liberalism and postmodern society, which is really related to the deconstruction of the parochial society, snatch powers from single body and share with rest of the society, where there is popular democracy is observed. Where there is no exploitation of the individual and restriction on the abusive use of the authorities.5 Nonviolence, the philosophy of Gandhi and Bacha Khan, is the part of positive peace, where there is no violation of the law, demand for rights under the shadow of law, no threats are used during protest and strikes. So, by this way there is risk for the conflicts, violations and war. Demand for right by using violence fall under the umbrella of negative peace. Jonathan Schell fruitfully summarised the dilemma of non-violence as cooperation, collective action consist on the mutual consent against abusive and parochial power and compel those actions which are taken against them.6 However, it is a very emotive term which has many heads and tails has not absolute end, in short the think tankers are in seeking to find easy way to bring cooperation, consensus, mediations, resolutions and more effective ways to resolve the issues and disputes, and transform the causes of war into peace. Perpetual peace is possible in resolving the conflicts, but due to anarchy in the international community, there is conflict. Disagreements, irrational demands, denial and counter claim leads to conflicts. So, prevention of the conflicts, mediation, management and resolution fascinated the international community, because the cost of war and conflicts is higher. For the conflict resolution, various methods are used as the tactics of good offices, arbitration, enquiry, negotiation, problem setting workshop, second track diplomacy, reconciliation and judicial settlement.7 However, conflict resolution depends upon clear assurance from all parties. CPEC Role in Bringing Peace and Prosperity & Peace through Economic Growth & Regional Integration: Political, social and economic interdependence society, reduce the chances of conflicts and war. Liberal thinkers probe out that **free trade and** economic **interdependence** flourish peace and **eliminate** the risk of **militancy**. The theory of Economic Opportunity Cost Hypothesis investigated that economic interdependence increase the level of integration among nations, consequently there is the eruption of peace and alleviated the condition of war8 . Economically weak states, where is economically disintegrated states are mostly enhanced in conflicts with each other. So, it is the benefits of trade globalization which decreases conflicts among nations. The theory of Neo-Functionalism which discussed norms and values of the Europe integration, has focused that cooperation and harmonization in one sector open the routes of another for the cooperation.9 Where, further expansion of the chain of integration, cooperation and as a result peace enhances in society. Like European states, Afghanistan, Iran, India, **Pakistan**, China **and** other **central Asian states** **have** the **capacity of regional integration** through CPEC. The CPEC has the potential of cooperation, integration, economic growth, and forged unity among regional states. According to the norms of NeoFunctionalism, CPEC provides an opportunity of free trade, economic dependence, transportation and regional integration through functional cooperation. **South Asia** is the **most exacerbated region** in the world, because of militancy, conflicts, overpopulation, less development, lacking of education and specially the arm race among nations. Terrorism in the region (Afghanistan and Pakistan) created security dilemma and furthermore the conflicts of Pakistan and India over Kashmir worsen the situation, which disturb the economic chain in the region for a long time. **CPEC** **bestowed the best opportunity to resolve the conflicts** and created peace through geo-economics and geo-politics. This corridor has the capacity to create economic interdependence in the region and regional integration because of functional cooperation based on common interest and needs.10 CPEC network connected the regional and extra-regional countries through, economic trade, liberalization of economy, free policies and open membership, to get advancement in commerce and trade on global level.11 Being part of the of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), CPEC has the capacity to **interconnect** China, **Pakistan**, Iran, **India**, Afghanistan, **Central Asia**, West Asia, not only this other states of the Central Asia are also may connected with this corridor through India. After Passing through Asia, CPEC enter into Europe through ―One Belt, One Road‖ strategy.12 By this way CPEC created cooperation among adjacent and de-adjacent countries, and lead to peace and prosperity through economic dependence, as the China‘s Assistant Foreign Minister opined that peace, prosperity and economic development of CPEC not only limited to China and Pakistan but to the whole region.13 Similar view has been presented by the Ex-PM Nawaz Sharif during his visit to Turkmenistan, CPEC would be beneficial for everyone in the region in the socio-economic perspective, as he said that ―CPEC will offer opportunities for hundreds of millions of people.‖ But it is necessary to promote peace in the region because without peace, development remains just words on the tongue, as he further mentioned that peace and prosperity are connected with each other. Furthermore, flourishing the popular concept of happiness and prosperity Nawaz Sharif added, that my government will ensure Regional integration and connectivity. It will help us to work together towards pursuing our common objective of strengthening peace and bringing development in our region. In fact CPEC is an opportunity where Pakistan and other countries of the region have to work for the betterment of our people.‖14 So, through integration of the regional states, CPEC has a great role in the flourishing of the peace, prosperity and development in the region. The issue of terrorism, militancy, Kashmir disputes, crimes as piracy, human trafficking and problems around the Indian Oceans, are created severe affection over the region regarding international trade and commerce, crumpling of economy and security threats. These issues also devastating the security and economic situation of Pakistan, therefore, responding to these devastating issues is one of the foremost priorities of Pakistan and China. ChinaPakistan adopted joint struggle for the fortification of their maritime security to bring peace and stability in the region and secure the CPEC from insecurity.15

#### Central Asia Instability explodes globally

Blank 2k [Stephen J. - Expert on the Soviet Bloc for the Strategic Studies Institute, “American Grand Strategy and the Transcaspian Region”, World Affairs. 9-22]

Thus many structural conditions for conventional war or protracted ethnic conflict where third parties intervene now exist in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia**.** The outbreak of violence by disaffected Islamic elements, the drug trade, the Chechen wars**,** and the unresolved ethnopolitical conflicts that dot the region, not to mention the undemocratic and unbalanced distribution of income across corrupt governments, provideplenty of tinder for future fires. Many Third World conflicts generated by local structural factors also have great potential for unintended escalation**.** Big powers **often** feel obliged to rescue their proxies and proteges. One or another big power may fail to grasp the stakes **for the other side since interests here are not as clear as in Europe. Hence** commitments involving the use of nuclear weapons **or perhaps even conventional war to prevent defeat of a client** are not well established **or clear as in Europe. For instance, in 1993 Turkish noises about intervening on behalf of Azerbaijan induced Russian leaders to threaten a nuclear war in that case. Precisely because Turkey is a NATO ally but probably could not prevail in** a long war against Russia**, or if it could,** would conceivably trigger a potential nuclear blow **(not a small possibility given the erratic nature of Russia's declared nuclear strategies),** the danger of major war is higher here thanalmost everywhere else **in the CIS or the "arc of crisis" from the Balkans to China. As Richard Betts has observed,** The greatest danger lies in areas where(1)the potential for serious instability is high**; (2) both** superpowers perceive vital interests**; (3) neither recognizes that the other's perceived interest or commitment is as great as its own; (4) both have the capability to inject conventional forces; and (5)** neither has willing proxies capable of settling the situation**.(77)**

#### Even a limited Indo-Pak war causes extinction.

Menon 19 Prakash Menon, The nuclear cloud hanging over the human race, Nov 15, 2019, [PhD from Madras University for his thesis “Limited War and Nuclear Deterrence in the Indo-Pak context”] [https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/the-nuclear-cloud-hanging-over-the-human-race/cid/1719608#](https://www.telegraphindia.com/opinion/the-nuclear-cloud-hanging-over-the-human-race/cid/1719608) SM

The nuclear cloud hanging over the human race Even a limited India-Pakistan nuclear conflict could pose an existential challenge to life on Earth The smoke injected into the stratosphere due to a nuclear attack would block the sunlight and result in a ‘Nuclear Winter' - freezing temperatures that pose an existential threat. One study estimates that in an India-Pakistan exchange, the immediate casualties could number 125 million lives The smoke injected into the stratosphere due to a nuclear attack would block the sunlight and result in a ‘Nuclear Winter' - freezing temperatures that pose an existential threat. One study estimates that in an India-Pakistan exchange, the immediate casualties could number 125 million lives iStock Prakash Menon | | Published 15.11.19, 08:04 PM With the recent administrative changes in Jammu and Kashmir, Indo-Pak hyphenation has come back to haunt India’s aspirations to break out of that narrow mould and be perceived as an independent player on the global stage. The clubbing of India with Pakistan is an echo of India’s political and strategic confinement to the sub-continent. Pakistan has always attempted to paint the Indo-Pak situation as a nuclear flashpoint essentially to invite international intervention in what India insists is a bilateral issue. A recent report in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists by Toon et al entitled 'How an India-Pakistan Nuclear War Could Start and have Global Consequences' provides grist to the mill of the nuclear flashpoint theory. But it also raises an issue that has yet not found its place in the public imagination nor has sufficient cognisance been taken by the political and military leadership of nuclear weapon powers – the climatic consequences of nuclear explosions. It is well known that nuclear powers have and continue to base their targeting requirements of nuclear weapons on calculations that are restricted mostly to the major but immediate effects of nuclear explosions – blast, heat and radiation. According to General Lee Butler, the former United States, Strategic Forces Commander, during the cold war, the Standard Integrated Operation Plan (SIOP) had targeted Moscow with 400 nuclear weapons and Kiev with 40. Several scientific studies of the impact of nuclear explosions since the 1980s up to the present which utilises advanced computer models, confirm the effect of smoke injected into the stratosphere that would block sunlight from reaching the earth’s surface and is described as ‘Nuclear Winter’. In essence global temperatures would plunge below freezing point thus posing threats to life support systems especially food production. In short, it threatened human existence itself. Later studies that focused on regional nuclear wars especially in the Indo-Pak context, have indicated that the impact of a nuclear exchange would have an immediate significant and catastrophic impact in terms of death and destruction. The latest Toon study, estimates that in a situation where around 350 warheads are used by India and Pakistan, the immediate casualties would vary between 50 to 125 million lives depending on the yields of the weapons used which could vary between 15-100 Kilotons. (a Kiloton being the explosive equivalent power of 1000 tons of TNT). Such scales and speeds of destruction for both parties would indeed be of an existential nature. Therefore, both India and Pakistan despite the rhetoric during times of tension have so far displayed caution and refrained from getting into situations where nuclear weapons are alerted. The speedy de-escalation after Balakot is indicative of a cautionary approach. Of course, this is no guarantee that the next round would not witness a different outcome. For as long as nuclear weapons exist in the arsenals of both countries, the possibility of use remains, however low the probability. It is now well known (but widely ignored by the strategic cognoscenti) that even a regional Indo-Pak nuclear war with hundreds of low yield nuclear explosions can also pose an existential threat at the global level. The latest study states “In the India-Pakistan scenario, we calculated a total of 16.1 TG (1 TG is equivalent of one million tons of smoke) of black carbon injected into the upper atmosphere (11 from India and 5.1 from Pakistan) for weapons with yields of 15 kilotons; 27.3 TG (19.8 from India and 7.5 from Pakistan) for 50 kiloton weapons; and 36.6 TG (27.5 from India and 9.1 from Pakistan) for 100 kiloton weapons. The smoke would be heated by sunlight and lofted high into the stratosphere, where it could remain for years, since it does not rain in the stratosphere”. The Climate Model indicates that global average temperatures and precipitation would be significantly lowered and comparisons are drawn to the ice age that prevailed thousands of years ago. Agriculture around the world would be impacted and billions of people could face starvation. In earlier studies, even 5 TG of smoke produced (which is one third of what is expected in a lower scale Indo-Pak conflict), food production would change in China and the US for specific crops causing widespread shortages at the global level. Moreover, the ozone layer would be degraded as the rising smoke absorbs the sunlight and heats up the stratosphere that would permit ultra-violet rays of greater magnitude to reach the earth causing negative effects. The political and strategic implications of the long-term impact on climate change challenges the foundations of the edifice on which nuclear weapon strategy has been constructed. It is obvious that any deliberate initiation of nuclear war has a high probability of posing an existential threat to humanity. Even with the achievement of the complete destruction of an adversary’s arsenal through a first strike, the initiator cannot itself escape the existential threat posed by long term climate change. This indicates that the First Use doctrine in the name of strengthening deterrence stands fully exposed for its incredibility and the utter stupidity of the use of nuclear weapons.