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### Biz con econ

#### Business confidence is strong, driving economic recovery.

Halloran ’9-14 [Michael; 2021; M.B.A. from Carnegie Mellon University, former aerospace research engineer, Equity Strategist; Janney, “Despite Potential Headwinds, Key Labor Market Indicators Bode Well for the Economy,” https://www.janney.com/latest-articles-commentary/all-insights/insights/2021/09/14/despite-potential-headwinds-key-labor-market-indicators-bode-well-for-the-economy]

However, we remain encouraged by the recovery that has been unfolding since the economy began reopening. We continue to see improvement in important cyclical sectors of the economy while consumers are historically healthy and still have pent-up demand. Business confidence has rebounded with strong corporate profits that should support further capital spending and hiring (there are now more job openings than there are unemployed people by a record amount).

We expect to see further improvement in the international backdrop, supported by unprecedented fiscal and monetary stimulus and accelerating rates of vaccination. Although the impact of the Delta wave is still being felt, recent evidence confirms the effectiveness of vaccines in limiting deaths and hospitalizations. With the pace of vaccination now picking up in the areas most impacted by this wave—Asia and Australia—the case for fading headwinds leading to improving economic growth later this year remains positive.

The signals from financial markets themselves remain positive. Despite consolidating last week, stocks remain near record highs while the 10-year Treasury remains well above the lows of earlier this summer when concerns about Delta first emerged.

These factors support our view of a durable economic recovery from the pandemic that should continue supporting stock prices. A healthy labor market is a critical element for a sustainable recovery that supports profit growth and last week’s news from the labor market remains encouraging.

#### The AFF devastates the economy.

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Economic growth is one of the most important pillars of a state. Most developing states put in place measures that enhance or speed-up the economic growth of their countries. It is believed that if the economy of a country is stable, the lives of the people improve with available resources being shared among the country’s inhabitants or citizens. However, it becomes difficult when the growth of the economy is hampered by the exercise of one or more of the constitutionally entrenched rights such as the right to strike. 1 Strikes in South Africa are becoming more common, and this affects businesses, employees and their families, and eventually, the economy. It becomes more dangerous for the economy and society at large if strikes are accompanied by violence causing damage to property and injury to people. The duration of strikes poses a problem for the economy of a developing country like South Africa. South Africa is rich in mineral resources, the world’s largest producer of platinum and chrome, the secondlargest producer of zirconium and the third-largest exporter of coal. It also has the largest economy in Africa, both in terms of industrial capacity and gross domestic product (GDP).2 However, these economic advantages have been affected by protracted and violent strikes.3 For example, in the platinum industries, labour stoppages since 2012 have cost the sector approximately R18 billion lost in revenue and 900 000 oz in lost output. The five-monthlong strike in early 2014 at Impala Platinum Mine amounted to a loss of about R400 million a day in revenue.4 The question that this article attempts to address is how violent strikes and their duration affect the growth of the economy in a developing country like South Africa. It also addresses the question of whether there is a need to change the policies regulating industrial action in South Africa to make them more favourable to economic growth.

2 BACKGROUND

When South Africa obtained democracy in 1994, there was a dream of a better country with a new vision for industrial relations.5 However, the number of violent strikes that have bedevilled this country in recent years seems to have shattered-down the aspirations of a better South Africa. South Africa recorded 114 strikes in 2013 and 88 strikes in 2014, which cost the country about R6.1 billion according to the Department of Labour.6 The impact of these strikes has been hugely felt by the mining sector, particularly the platinum industry. The biggest strike took place in the platinum sector where about 70 000 mineworkers’ downed tools for better wages. Three major platinum producers (Impala, Anglo American and Lonmin Platinum Mines) were affected. The strike started on 23 January 2014 and ended on 25 June 2014. Business Day reported that “the five-month-long strike in the platinum sector pushed the economy to the brink of recession”. 7 This strike was closely followed by a four-week strike in the metal and engineering sector. All these strikes (and those not mentioned here) were characterised with violence accompanied by damage to property, intimidation, assault and sometimes the killing of people. Statistics from the metal and engineering sector showed that about 246 cases of intimidation were reported, 50 violent incidents occurred, and 85 cases of vandalism were recorded.8 Large-scale unemployment, soaring poverty levels and the dramatic income inequality that characterise the South African labour market provide a broad explanation for strike violence.9 While participating in a strike, workers’ stress levels leave them feeling frustrated at their seeming powerlessness, which in turn provokes further violent behaviour.10

These strikes are not only violent but take long to resolve. Generally, a lengthy strike has a negative effect on employment, reduces business confidence and increases the risk of economic stagflation. In addition, such strikes have a major setback on the growth of the economy and investment opportunities. It is common knowledge that consumer spending is directly linked to economic growth. At the same time, if the economy is not showing signs of growth, employment opportunities are shed, and poverty becomes the end result. The economy of South Africa is in need of rapid growth to enable it to deal with the high levels of unemployment and resultant poverty.

One of the measures that may boost the country’s economic growth is by attracting potential investors to invest in the country. However, this might be difficult as investors would want to invest in a country where there is a likelihood of getting returns for their investments. The wish of getting returns for investment may not materialise if the labour environment is not fertile for such investments as a result of, for example, unstable labour relations. Therefore, investors may be reluctant to invest where there is an unstable or fragile labour relations environment.

#### Just short-term disruptions stop economic recovery.

Shannon Pettypiece 10-24, senior White House reporter for NBCNews.com. October 24, 2021. “Biden on the sidelines of 'Striketober,' with economy in the balance” <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-sidelines-striketober-economy-balance-n1282094> brett

But President Biden faces a different dynamic from candidate Biden, because strikes risk adding to labor shortages and supply chain disruptions that are already driving up prices as the global economy reels from pandemic strains. While the strikes could benefit workers by driving up wages in the long term, the near-term impact of persistent or growing work stoppages could include worst-case scenarios like food shortages or lack of access to hospitals.

"This will come at an economic cost to employers and therefore the economy, and I think that may be why Biden has gone a little silent," said Ariel Avgar, an associate professor of labor relations, law and history at Cornell University. "It is tricky for him. On the one hand, he is on the record supporting unions and their ability to use collective action. On the other hand, the point of strikes is to extract an economic price for employers unwilling to negotiate in a way the union feels is appropriate."

There have been 184 strikes by health care to factory workers this year after the coronavirus pandemic aggravated concerns over low wages and poor working conditions, and the tight labor market has given workers more leverage. Among the strikers are more than 10,000 John Deere workers who went on strike this month. More than 24,000 health care workers at Kaiser Permanente are preparing to strike, joining thousands of nurses and other health care workers elsewhere who have been striking for months.

#### Decline cascades---nuclear war

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Various scholars and institutions regard global social instability as the greatest threat facing this decade. The catalyst has been postulated to be a Second Great Depression which, in turn, will have profound implications for global security and national integrity. This paper, written from a broad systems perspective, illustrates how emerging risks are getting more complex and intertwined; blurring boundaries between the economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal and technological taxonomy used by the World Economic Forum for its annual global risk forecasts. Tight couplings in our global systems have also enabled risks accrued in one area to snowball into a full-blown crisis elsewhere. The COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic fallouts exemplify this systemic chain-reaction. Onceinexorable forces of globalization are rupturing as the current global system can no longer be sustained due to poor governance and runaway wealth fractionation. The coronavirus pandemic is also enabling Big Tech to expropriate the levers of governments and mass communications worldwide. This paper concludes by highlighting how this development poses a dilemma for security professionals.

Key Words: Global Systems, Emergence, VUCA, COVID-9, Social Instability, Big Tech, Great Reset

INTRODUCTION

The new decade is witnessing rising volatility across global systems. Pick any random “system” today and chart out its trajectory: Are our education systems becoming more robust and affordable? What about food security? Are our healthcare systems improving? Are our pension systems sound? Wherever one looks, there are dark clouds gathering on a global horizon marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA).

But what exactly is a global system? Our planet itself is an autonomous and selfsustaining mega-system, marked by periodic cycles and elemental vagaries. Human activities within however are not system isolates as our banking, utility, farming, healthcare and retail sectors etc. are increasingly entwined. Risks accrued in one system may cascade into an unforeseen crisis within and/or without (Choo, Smith & McCusker, 2007). Scholars call this phenomenon “emergence”; one where the behaviour of intersecting systems is determined by complex and largely invisible interactions at the substratum (Goldstein, 1999; Holland, 1998).

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is a case in point. While experts remain divided over the source and morphology of the virus, the contagion has ramified into a global health crisis and supply chain nightmare. It is also tilting the geopolitical balance. China is the largest exporter of intermediate products, and had generated nearly 20% of global imports in 2015 alone (Cousin, 2020). The pharmaceutical sector is particularly vulnerable. Nearly “85% of medicines in the U.S. strategic national stockpile” sources components from China (Owens, 2020).

An initial run on respiratory masks has now been eclipsed by rowdy queues at supermarkets and the bankruptcy of small businesses. The entire global population – save for major pockets such as Sweden, Belarus, Taiwan and Japan – have been subjected to cyclical lockdowns and quarantines. Never before in history have humans faced such a systemic, borderless calamity.

COVID-19 represents a classic emergent crisis that necessitates real-time response and adaptivity in a real-time world, particularly since the global Just-in-Time (JIT) production and delivery system serves as both an enabler and vector for transboundary risks. From a systems thinking perspective, emerging risk management should therefore address a whole spectrum of activity across the economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal and technological (EEGST) taxonomy. Every emerging threat can be slotted into this taxonomy – a reason why it is used by the World Economic Forum (WEF) for its annual global risk exercises (Maavak, 2019a). As traditional forces of globalization unravel, security professionals should take cognizance of emerging threats through a systems thinking approach.

METHODOLOGY

An EEGST sectional breakdown was adopted to illustrate a sampling of extreme risks facing the world for the 2020-2030 decade. The transcendental quality of emerging risks, as outlined on Figure 1, below, was primarily informed by the following pillars of systems thinking (Rickards, 2020):

• Diminishing diversity (or increasing homogeneity) of actors in the global system (Boli & Thomas, 1997; Meyer, 2000; Young et al, 2006);

• Interconnections in the global system (Homer-Dixon et al, 2015; Lee & Preston, 2012);

• Interactions of actors, events and components in the global system (Buldyrev et al, 2010; Bashan et al, 2013; Homer-Dixon et al, 2015); and

• Adaptive qualities in particular systems (Bodin & Norberg, 2005; Scheffer et al, 2012) Since scholastic material on this topic remains somewhat inchoate, this paper buttresses many of its contentions through secondary (i.e. news/institutional) sources.

ECONOMY

According to Professor Stanislaw Drozdz (2018) of the Polish Academy of Sciences, “a global financial crash of a previously unprecedented scale is highly probable” by the mid- 2020s. This will lead to a trickle-down meltdown, impacting all areas of human activity.

The economist John Mauldin (2018) similarly warns that the “2020s might be the worst decade in US history” and may lead to a Second Great Depression. Other forecasts are equally alarming. According to the International Institute of Finance, global debt may have surpassed $255 trillion by 2020 (IIF, 2019). Yet another study revealed that global debts and liabilities amounted to a staggering $2.5 quadrillion (Ausman, 2018). The reader should note that these figures were tabulated before the COVID-19 outbreak.

The IMF singles out widening income inequality as the trigger for the next Great Depression (Georgieva, 2020). The wealthiest 1% now own more than twice as much wealth as 6.9 billion people (Coffey et al, 2020) and this chasm is widening with each passing month. COVID-19 had, in fact, boosted global billionaire wealth to an unprecedented $10.2 trillion by July 2020 (UBS-PWC, 2020). Global GDP, worth $88 trillion in 2019, may have contracted by 5.2% in 2020 (World Bank, 2020).

As the Greek historian Plutarch warned in the 1st century AD: “An imbalance between rich and poor is the oldest and most fatal ailment of all republics” (Mauldin, 2014). The stability of a society, as Aristotle argued even earlier, depends on a robust middle element or middle class. At the rate the global middle class is facing catastrophic debt and unemployment levels, widespread social disaffection may morph into outright anarchy (Maavak, 2012; DCDC, 2007).

Economic stressors, in transcendent VUCA fashion, may also induce radical geopolitical realignments. Bullions now carry more weight than NATO’s security guarantees in Eastern Europe. After Poland repatriated 100 tons of gold from the Bank of England in 2019, Slovakia, Serbia and Hungary quickly followed suit.

According to former Slovak Premier Robert Fico, this erosion in regional trust was based on historical precedents – in particular the 1938 Munich Agreement which ceded Czechoslovakia’s Sudetenland to Nazi Germany. As Fico reiterated (Dudik & Tomek, 2019):

“You can hardly trust even the closest allies after the Munich Agreement… I guarantee that if something happens, we won’t see a single gram of this (offshore-held) gold. Let’s do it (repatriation) as quickly as possible.” (Parenthesis added by author).

President Aleksandar Vucic of Serbia (a non-NATO nation) justified his central bank’s gold-repatriation program by hinting at economic headwinds ahead: “We see in which direction the crisis in the world is moving” (Dudik & Tomek, 2019). Indeed, with two global Titanics – the United States and China – set on a collision course with a quadrillions-denominated iceberg in the middle, and a viral outbreak on its tip, the seismic ripples will be felt far, wide and for a considerable period.

A reality check is nonetheless needed here: Can additional bullions realistically circumvallate the economies of 80 million plus peoples in these Eastern European nations, worth a collective $1.8 trillion by purchasing power parity? Gold however is a potent psychological symbol as it represents national sovereignty and economic reassurance in a potentially hyperinflationary world. The portents are clear: The current global economic system will be weakened by rising nationalism and autarkic demands. Much uncertainty remains ahead. Mauldin (2018) proposes the introduction of Old Testament-style debt jubilees to facilitate gradual national recoveries. The World Economic Forum, on the other hand, has long proposed a “Great Reset” by 2030; a socialist utopia where “you’ll own nothing and you’ll be happy” (WEF, 2016).

In the final analysis, COVID-19 is not the root cause of the current global economic turmoil; it is merely an accelerant to a burning house of cards that was left smouldering since the 2008 Great Recession (Maavak, 2020a). We also see how the four main pillars of systems thinking (diversity, interconnectivity, interactivity and “adaptivity”) form the mise en scene in a VUCA decade.

ENVIRONMENTAL

What happens to the environment when our economies implode? Think of a debt-laden workforce at sensitive nuclear and chemical plants, along with a concomitant surge in industrial accidents? Economic stressors, workforce demoralization and rampant profiteering – rather than manmade climate change – arguably pose the biggest threats to the environment. In a WEF report, Buehler et al (2017) made the following pre-COVID-19 observation:

The ILO estimates that the annual cost to the global economy from accidents and work-related diseases alone is a staggering $3 trillion. Moreover, a recent report suggests the world’s 3.2 billion workers are increasingly unwell, with the vast majority facing significant economic insecurity: 77% work in part-time, temporary, “vulnerable” or unpaid jobs.

Shouldn’t this phenomenon be better categorized as a societal or economic risk rather than an environmental one? In line with the systems thinking approach, however, global risks can no longer be boxed into a taxonomical silo. Frazzled workforces may precipitate another Bhopal (1984), Chernobyl (1986), Deepwater Horizon (2010) or Flint water crisis (2014). These disasters were notably not the result of manmade climate change. Neither was the Fukushima nuclear disaster (2011) nor the Indian Ocean tsunami (2004). Indeed, the combustion of a long-overlooked cargo of 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate had nearly levelled the city of Beirut, Lebanon, on Aug 4 2020. The explosion left 204 dead; 7,500 injured; US$15 billion in property damages; and an estimated 300,000 people homeless (Urbina, 2020). The environmental costs have yet to be adequately tabulated.

Environmental disasters are more attributable to Black Swan events, systems breakdowns and corporate greed rather than to mundane human activity.

Our JIT world aggravates the cascading potential of risks (Korowicz, 2012). Production and delivery delays, caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, will eventually require industrial overcompensation. This will further stress senior executives, workers, machines and a variety of computerized systems. The trickle-down effects will likely include substandard products, contaminated food and a general lowering in health and safety standards (Maavak, 2019a). Unpaid or demoralized sanitation workers may also resort to indiscriminate waste dumping. Many cities across the United States (and elsewhere in the world) are no longer recycling wastes due to prohibitive costs in the global corona-economy (Liacko, 2021).

Even in good times, strict protocols on waste disposals were routinely ignored. While Sweden championed the global climate change narrative, its clothing flagship H&M was busy covering up toxic effluences disgorged by vendors along the Citarum River in Java, Indonesia. As a result, countless children among 14 million Indonesians straddling the “world’s most polluted river” began to suffer from dermatitis, intestinal problems, developmental disorders, renal failure, chronic bronchitis and cancer (DW, 2020). It is also in cauldrons like the Citarum River where pathogens may mutate with emergent ramifications.

On an equally alarming note, depressed economic conditions have traditionally provided a waste disposal boon for organized crime elements. Throughout 1980s, the Calabriabased ‘Ndrangheta mafia – in collusion with governments in Europe and North America – began to dump radioactive wastes along the coast of Somalia. Reeling from pollution and revenue loss, Somali fisherman eventually resorted to mass piracy (Knaup, 2008).

The coast of Somalia is now a maritime hotspot, and exemplifies an entwined form of economic-environmental-geopolitical-societal emergence. In a VUCA world, indiscriminate waste dumping can unexpectedly morph into a Black Hawk Down incident. The laws of unintended consequences are governed by actors, interconnections, interactions and adaptations in a system under study – as outlined in the methodology section.

Environmentally-devastating industrial sabotages – whether by disgruntled workers, industrial competitors, ideological maniacs or terrorist groups – cannot be discounted in a VUCA world. Immiserated societies, in stark defiance of climate change diktats, may resort to dirty coal plants and wood stoves for survival. Interlinked ecosystems, particularly water resources, may be hijacked by nationalist sentiments. The environmental fallouts of critical infrastructure (CI) breakdowns loom like a Sword of Damocles over this decade.

GEOPOLITICAL

The primary catalyst behind WWII was the Great Depression. Since history often repeats itself, expect familiar bogeymen to reappear in societies roiling with impoverishment and ideological clefts. Anti-Semitism – a societal risk on its own – may reach alarming proportions in the West (Reuters, 2019), possibly forcing Israel to undertake reprisal operations inside allied nations. If that happens, how will affected nations react? Will security resources be reallocated to protect certain minorities (or the Top 1%) while larger segments of society are exposed to restive forces? Balloon effects like these present a classic VUCA problematic.

Contemporary geopolitical risks include a possible Iran-Israel war; US-China military confrontation over Taiwan or the South China Sea; North Korean proliferation of nuclear and missile technologies; an India-Pakistan nuclear war; an Iranian closure of the Straits of Hormuz; fundamentalist-driven implosion in the Islamic world; or a nuclear confrontation between NATO and Russia. Fears that the Jan 3 2020 assassination of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qasem Soleimani might lead to WWIII were grossly overblown. From a systems perspective, the killing of Soleimani did not fundamentally change the actor-interconnection-interaction adaptivity equation in the Middle East. Soleimani was simply a cog who got replaced.

## Case

#### Link turn -- The affirmation of the right to strike as something to be recognized places the energy that drives class struggle into containment, rendering the right conditional.

Marc Crépon & Micol Bez 19; Marc Crépon is a French philosopher and academic who writes on the subject of languages and communities in the French and German philosophies and contemporary political and moral philosophy. Micol Bez @ CPES (Cycle Pluridisciplinaire d’Études Supérieures) at the University of Paris Sciences and Letters. The Right to Strike and Legal War in Walter Benjamin's “Toward the Critique of Violence”. Critical Times 1 August 2019; 2 (2): 252–260. <https://read.dukeupress.edu/critical-times/article/2/2/252/141479/The-Right-to-Strike-and-Legal-War-in-Walter> brett

In other words, nothing would endanger the law more than the possibility of its authority being contested by a violence over which it has no control. The function of the law would therefore be, first and foremost, to contain violence within its own boundaries. It is in this context that, to demonstrate this surprising hypothesis, Benjamin invokes two examples: the right to strike guaranteed by the state and the law of war.

Let us return to the place that the right to strike occupies within class struggle. To begin with, the very idea of such a struggle implies certain forms of violence. The strike could then be understood as one of the recognizable forms that this violence can take. However, this analytical framework is undermined as soon as this form of violence becomes regulated by a “right to strike,” such as the one recognized by law in France in 1864. What this recognition engages is, in fact, the will of the state to control the possible “violence” of the strike. Thus, the “right” of the right to strike appears as the best, if not the only, way for the state to circumscribe within (and via) the law the relative violence of class struggles. We might consider this to be the perfect illustration of the aforementioned hypothesis. Yet, there are two lines of questioning that destabilize this hypothesis that we would do well to consider

First, is it legitimate to present the strike as a form of violence? Who has a vested interest in such a representation? In other words, how can we trace a clear and unequivocal demarcation between violence and nonviolence? Are we not always bound to find residues of violence, even in those actions that we would be tempted to consider nonviolent? The second line of questioning is just as important and is rooted in the distinction established by Georges Sorel, in his Reflections on Violence, between the “political strike” and the “proletarian general strike,” to which Benjamin dedicates a set of complementary analyses in §13 of his essay. Here, again, we are faced with a question of limits. What is at stake is the possibility for a certain type of strike (the proletarian general strike) to exceed the limits of the right to strike— turning, in other words, the right to strike against the law itself. The phenomenon is that of an autoimmune process, in which the right to strike that is meant to protect the law against the possible violence of class struggles is transformed into a means for the destruction of the law. The difference between the two types of strikes is nevertheless introduced with a condition: “The validity of this statement, however, is not unrestricted because it is not unconditional,” notes Benjamin in §7. We would be mistaken in believing that the right to strike is granted and guaranteed unconditionally. Rather, it is structurally subjected to a conflict of interpretations, those of the workers, on the one hand, and of the state on the other. From the point of view of the state, the partial strike cannot under any circumstance be understood as a right to exercise violence, but rather as the right to extract oneself from a preexisting (and verifiable) violence: that of the employer. In this sense, the partial strike should be considered a nonviolent action, what Benjamin named a “pure means.”

The interpretations diverge on two main points. The first clearly depends on the alleged “violence of the employer,” a predicate that begs the question: Who might have the authority to recognize such violence? Evidently it is not the employer. The danger is that the state would similarly lack the incentive to make such a judgment call. It is nearly impossible, in fact, to find a single instance of a strike in which this recognition of violence was not subject to considerable controversy. The political game is thus the following: the state legislated the right to strike in order to contain class struggles, with the condition that workers must have “good reason” to strike. However, it is unlikely that a state systematically allied with (and accomplice to) employers will ever recognize reasons as good, and, as a consequence, it will deem any invocation of the right to strike as illegitimate. Workers will therefore be seen as abusing a right granted by the state, and in so doing transforming it into a violent means. On this point, Benjamin’s analyses remain extremely pertinent and profoundly contemporary. They unveil the enduring strategy of governments confronted with a strike (in education, transportation, or healthcare, for example) who, after claiming to understand the reasons for the protest and the grievances of the workers, deny that the arguments constitute sufficient reason for a strike that will likely paralyze this or that sector of the economy. They deny, in other words, that the conditions denounced by the workers display an intrinsic violence that justifies the strike. Let us note here a point that Benjamin does not mention, but that is part of Sorel’s reflections: this denial inevitably contaminates the (socialist) left once it gains power. What might previously have seemed a good reason to strike when it was the opposition is deemed an insufficient one once it is the ruling party. In the face of popular protest, it always invokes a lack of sufficient rationale, allowing it to avoid recognizing the intrinsic violence of a given social or economic situation, or of a new policy. And it is because it refuses to see this violence and to take responsibility for it that the left regularly loses workers’ support.

The second conflict of interpretation concerns what is at stake in the strike. For the state, the strike implies a withdrawal or act of defiance vis-à-vis the employer, while for the workers it is a means of pressuring, if not of blackmail or even of “hostage taking.” The diference is thus between an act of suspension (which can be considered nonviolent) and one of extortion (which includes violence). Does this mean that “pure means” are not free of ambiguity, and that there can be no nonviolent action that does not include a residue of violence? It is not clear that Benjamin’s text allows us to go this far. Nevertheless, the problem of pure means, approached through the notion of the right to strike, raises the following question: Could it be that the text “Zur Kritik der Gewalt,” which we are accustomed to reading as a text on violence, deals in fact with the possibility and ambiguity of nonviolence?

The opposition between the aforementioned conflicts of interpretation manifests itself in Benjamin’s excursus on the revolutionary strike, and specifically in the opposition between the political strike and the proletarian general strike, and in the meaning we should attribute to the latter. As previously discussed, the state will never admit that the right to strike is a right to violence. Its interpretative strategy consists in denying, as much as possible, the effective exercise of the right that it theoretically grants. Under these conditions, the function of the revolutionary strike is to return the strike to its true meaning; in other words, to return it to its own violence. In this context, the imperative is to move beyond idle words: a call to strike is a call to violence. This is the reason why such a call is regularly met with a violent reaction from the state, because trade unions force the state to recognize what it is trying to ignore, what it pretends to have solved by recognizing the right to strike: the irreducible violence of class struggles. This means that the previously discussed alternative between “suspension” and “extortion” is valid only for the political strike—in other words, for a strike whose primary vocation is not, contrary to that of the proletarian general strike, to revolt against the law itself. Essentially, the idea of a proletarian general strike, its myth (to borrow Sorel’s words), is to escape from this dichotomous alternative that inevitably reproduces and perpetuates the violence of domination.

### 1NC AT: Chinese Decline

#### Chinese economic decline doesn’t cause war

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…But Beijing Is Unlikely to Wage War if the Economy Crashes

By the same token, analysts should probably discard the notion that a crash of the domestic economy would provoke a Chinese military adventure abroad in order to distract Chinese people from upheaval at home. This “wag the dog” scenario may gain currency with screenplay writers and conspiracy buffs, but it is not borne out by history. Although it is true that strife-torn countries often get embroiled in external wars, it is rarely because their leaders set out to generate a diversionary activity for their restive populace. Indeed, most workshop participants argued that if China were beset by an acute internal crisis, the Communist Party would almost certainly refocus its energy and resources inward. The leadership and its security apparatus, including components of the military, would have their hands full protecting against social instability, tamping down the activities of Uighur and Tibetan separatists, and maintaining the cohesiveness of the party itself. To launch a foreign war in an atmosphere of domestic public grievance would be particularly dangerous for Beijing. If China sustained a defeat at the hands of the Japanese or U.S. navy, the leadership would compound its reputation for economic mismanagement with one for military ineptitude—a potentially lethal cocktail for the ruling party.

### 1NC---No Escalation

#### The US won’t intervene for a non-recognized, non-allied state.

Babones 16 (Salvatore, Associate fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), 1-12-2016, “One China, One Taiwan” https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/taiwan/2016-01-12/one-china-one-taiwan)

Although a Taiwanese declaration of independence would arouse much sympathy in the United States, it would not likely result in American diplomatic recognition. Taiwan may be a fellow democracy with free and vibrant political institutions, but the United States is a [global hegemon](http://nationalinterest.org/feature/american-hegemony-here-stay-13089) with global responsibilities and a massive stake in the stability of the Asia-Pacific region. The United States may [sell weapons](http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-taiwan-arms-idUSKBN0TZ2C520151217) to Taiwan in a tit-for-tat response to [Chinese expansionism](http://www.cnbc.com/2015/11/22/china-spratlys-island-building-is-to-protect-reefs-make-civilian-facilities.html) in the South China Sea, but it is not about to start World War III over Taiwanese sovereignty. The real revolution of a DPP victory in Taiwan will be a revolution in identity. There is already a [pitched battle](http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/07/21/taiwan-textbook-controversy-china-independence-history/) in Taiwan over the teaching of history. In the old textbooks, the history of the Chinese people began in the fertile valley of the Yellow River and ended in exile on the rocky island of Taiwan. In the new textbooks, the lush island of Taiwan was buffeted by historical forces beyond its control but ultimately found its way to democracy, prosperity, and independence. The emergence of a distinctively Taiwanese identity is bitterly resisted by the old guard of the KMT, but the people of Taiwan [overwhelmingly identify](https://www.aei.org/publication/chinese-check-forging-new-identities-hong-kong-taiwan-2/) either as Taiwanese or as a mix of Taiwanese and Chinese. Nearly 90 percent of Taiwanese want [equal status](http://www.taiwan.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=13053&ctNode=1937&mp=999) for their country in the international community. While these numbers are somewhat suspect—the questions seem designed in such a way as to elicit a positive response—the [overall trend](http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=167) is clear. Although most can trace a Chinese heritage,[very few](http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/course/news.php?Sn=166) people in Taiwan want to be Chinese. American pundits often discuss whether the United States should accommodate China through the [Finlandization](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2010-01-01/not-so-dire-straits) of Taiwan or even [abandon Taiwan](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/2011-03-01/will-chinas-rise-lead-war) to China. Such analyses are at least 30 years too late. Taiwan will never again be part of China. That train has left the station. Taiwan is a [highly successful](https://www.aei.org/publication/why-giving-up-taiwan-will-not-help-us-with-china/) country of more than 23 million people with its own politics and its own place in the world. Admittedly, that place may fall short of what many Taiwanese people want for their country, but it is nonetheless secure. January’s election won’t change that.

#### Empirics and geography prove.

Roger **Jiang, 17**, "To protect Taiwan, would the United States go to war with China if China were determined to take it back?," Quora, https://www.quora.com/To-protect-Taiwan-would-the-United-States-go-to-war-with-China-if-China-were-determined-to-take-it-back)SEM

If the US didn’t intervene militarily when Russia annexed Crimea, why do people think it will go into war with China over Taiwan? Let us first take a look at war potentials - Russia GDP was 1/5 of the US in 2016 in PPP terms while China’s GDP in PPP was about 10% higher than that of the US, according to IMF data. Moreover, Chinese manufacuring output in value terms is roughly equal to those of the US and Japan, COMBINED. China also controls most of the rare earth in the world, a key ingredient for modern electronics. And China boasts the largest ship building capacity and ouput globally - China is building FOUR 12,000 ton warships simultaneously, and the same shipyards are still working on the commercial orders at the same time, AND that is just the shipyards in Shanghai and Dalian that we are talking about - another major shipyard in Guangzhou is not yet involved. People simply have no idea how massive Chinese industrial capacity is. Lastly, Taiwan is about 200km away from mainland China but about 10,000km away from mainland US. Who do you think has the geographical advantage here? Now let us talk about economics - Russia barely had any trade with the US but China is the largest trading partner with both the US and the EU. China is the largest car market in the world where both European and American car companies have made massive investments. China is also the largest customer of Boeing, Airbus, BMW and Qualcom, etc. GE, Intel, Pfizer etc. are doing billions of business in China. And China buys tons and tons of American agricultural and fishery products. When the economic benefits are large enough, they always trump geo-political considerations - why was UK, the long time ally of the US, the first country to join China’s Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), despite strong US opposition? Didn’t the Europeans know that AIIB is China’s attempt to build another global financial framework in challenge to World Bank and IMF? I am sure the Europeans know it pretty well but they are smart enough not to let ideological difference stop them from making a buck or two. And they also wanna hedge their bets. The Brits are known for stratigic vision and they surely know how to adjust the ship when the tide is changing. Many Taiwanese have this ludicrous belief that Taiwan is of such an importance to the world that the whole world would come to Taiwan’s rescue should China invade Taiwan. But the reality is that most people outside East Asia cannot even find Taiwan on a map and couldn’t care less about a remote island somewhere in the Pacific… Yeah, the West loves talking about democracy, freedom and human rights. But to risk a global economic recession, huge loss of lives and even nuclear holocaust, to rescue some island that has always been officially recognized as a part of China by world governments? Nah… If China invades Taiwan, clearly a small skirmish is simply not enough to stop China. But a large scale fully blown war will have unbearable costs. So when fighting small wont work and fighting big is too costly, what do you do? You do nothing. So, no, the US will not go into war with China over Taiwan.

#### It’d be too costly to justify.

Hugh White 19, emeritus professor of strategic studies at the Australian National University, 2-13-2019, "The US shouldn’t go to war with China over Taiwan—and nor should Australia," Strategist, https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/the-us-shouldnt-go-to-war-with-china-over-taiwan-and-nor-should-australia/

These somber facts would have to be taken into account in Washington and Canberra in any deliberations about war. They imply that the choice in both capitals would not be the simple one that Dibb suggests—a choice between going to war and preserving the US-led order in Asia or stepping back and destroying it. A long, costly and indecisive US–China war would destroy the regional order anyway, because America’s leadership in Asia wouldn’t survive a war with China. Most probably it would lead to America’s withdrawal from Asia—just as its long, indecisive but far less costly wars in the Middle East have led it to withdraw from that region. If so, Australia’s alliance with America would wither too. So the real choice Washington would face would be to abandon its position in Asia by fighting China, or by not fighting China. Given the cost and risks of war with a nuclear power, it is easy to see which America should choose, and I think probably would choose. Dibb’s counterargument is that America was willing to fight a nuclear war to save West Germany from the Soviets in the Cold War. That’s a compelling argument to the extent that China’s ambitions today pose as big a threat to America as the Soviets’ did in the Cold War. It was the fear that the expansion of Soviet power would threaten the survival of America itself which drove US leaders and voters to accept the risk of nuclear war to make containment work. I don’t think that China poses a similar threat today, which is why I don’t think America should fight China over Taiwan. But do Americans believe that China poses a similar threat today? That’s actually the big question that underlies the entire future of America’s position in Asia in the face of China’s ambitions, and it deserves closer scrutiny. So far it seems not, because for all the tough talk from Vice President Mike Pence and others in recent months, no US political leader has tried to convince Americans that they should be willing to fight a nuclear war with China. Indeed, US policy as set out in the 2018 nuclear posture review doesn’t even acknowledge America’s vulnerability to Chinese nuclear forces. We’d be wise not to assume that the Americans would risk a nuclear war with China until they say they are willing to do so.

### 1NC---Transition

#### Chinese invasion of Taiwan would result in a quagmire that would stimulate democratic forces in China

Wang Mouzhou 17, pen name of a former NSA intelligence officer, 3-24-2017, “What Happens After China Invades Taiwan?” The Diplomat, https://thediplomat.com/2017/03/what-happens-after-china-invades-taiwan/

Let’s assume, hypothetically, that the People’s Republic of China (PRC) successfully conquers Taiwan. Most analyses of an attempted invasion consider only if the PRC could successfully subdue Taiwan. The consequences of an attempted invasion –even a tactically successful one – have received little thought, however. This analysis considers some likely consequences for the PRC if it attempts and/or completes an invasion of Taiwan. Likely consequences include: the direct human and economic expenditures of the invasion itself; the costs of garrisoning Taiwan; the PRC’s post-war diplomatic and economic isolation; and, finally, the significant and potentially destabilizing process of incorporating 23 million individuals into the PRC. It is still too soon to say if Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in Crimea and the Donbass produced a strategic defeat or victory for Russia. However, the elements that advantaged Russia vis-à-vis Ukraine will not avail themselves to the PRC in a cross-straits crisis. Invading Taiwan would prove highly dangerous and costly for Beijing. Incorporation of Taiwan into the PRC would prove to be, at best, a Pyrrhic victory if attempted in the near or medium term. The Invasion of Taiwan While the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) is a highly capable and formidable force, a conventional military invasion of Taiwan would prove highly costly in treasure and blood and could fail to achieve the Communist Party of China’s (CPC’s) objectives. Ship-to-shore and shore-to-shore landings are extremely hazardous for the invasion force. In the first Gulf War, American military planners were rumored to estimate that an amphibious invasion of Saddam Hussein-occupied Kuwait would cost up to 10,000 American lives, despite the considerable relative military superiority of U.S. forces. The Republic of China (ROC) possesses a much more sophisticated military than Hussein did in 1991 and, due to advances in anti-access area denial doctrine and capabilities, can impose asymmetric costs on an invader. Additionally, American forces (and, potentially, other actors) would impose punishing costs on any invasion force. A 2015 RAND study estimated that United States submarines alone could sink 41 percent of Chinese amphibious ships in a theoretical 2017 conflict. A direct invasion attempt by the PRC would likely lead to significant – and potentially massive – casualties for all involved actors, as well as a regional or even global economic depression. In the “best-case” scenario for the PRC, a successful invasion would still suffer substantial casualties and cost tens of billions of dollars. Moreover, the consequences of an invasion would persist, as health expenses and pensions would burden the Chinese state for decades (at a time when Chinese veterans are already protesting about unpaid pensions). An invasion and the one-child policy could exacerbate an already hellish social crisis for the mainland, as wounded and deceased veterans – often only children – would be unable to support their elderly parents and grandparents. Instead of a direct invasion, the PRC could employ a blockade or another form of so-called “asymmetrical warfare.” Russia used the tactics of asymmetric warfare to achieve short-term political objectives in Crimea, the Donbass, and, according to some reports, the 2016 United States presidential election. It may also potentially achieve the dissolution of the European Union and stimulate a worldwide financial crisis through its intervention in European elections. Leaving aside, for now, the wisdom of these actions, it is worth noting that the PRC’s invasion of Taiwan would confront an environment hostile to asymmetric means. Several factors aided Russia’s asymmetric/hybrid invasion of Ukraine: popular support in Crimea and the Donbass for close political ties with Russia; a significant number of former Russian (and Soviet) citizens and even veterans in the invaded territories, especially in Crimea; a largely ineffective opposing military force; and the element of surprise. A PRC invasion of Taiwan would confront much more challenging conditions. Few in Taiwan desire reunification with the CPC-dominated mainland: a 2014 public opinion poll by the ROC’s Mainland Affairs Council found that 84 percent of respondents on the island wanted to “maintain the status quo defined in a broader sense.” The PRC could surely count on some fifth-column support in the event of an invasion or asymmetric campaign but the reality is that most individuals in Taiwan fear PRC rule and would actively resist a reduction in their political freedoms and economic prosperity. Finally, the ROC’s military – and other militaries – are unlikely to be surprised by asymmetric warfare and would respond vigorously. Therefore, in the highly likely event of an asymmetric invasion’s failure, the CPC’s political leadership would have to face a hard choice: accept a massive symbolic defeat, which could jeopardize the Party’s legitimacy, or escalate an asymmetric operation into a full military invasion with all attendant risks. Garrison Island The costs of invading Taiwan could, perhaps surprisingly, pale in comparison to the costs of maintaining control over it. In the best-case scenario for the PRC, the island would fall with minimal damage to its physical (not to mention human) infrastructure. It is perhaps more realistic to expect that a PRC invasion would lead to catastrophic destruction of private property (much of it owned by mainland elites); severe damages to Taiwan’s transportation infrastructure, such as railroads, bridges, ports, airports, and metro systems; ecological devastation from landmines and unexploded ordinance; and, perhaps, an anti-Communist insurgency. As many Chinese officials and scholars like to point out (especially when they are upset at American actions), the United States has spent significant blood and treasure in Iraq and Afghanistan and has achieved relatively few results. An invasion of Taiwan could provide the PRC with an object lesson in the difficulties of counterinsurgency (for an excellent exposition on guerrilla war in the cross-strait context, see the CSBA’s 2014 “Hard ROC 2.0” report). It is extremely difficult to pacify an invaded region. Unlike, say, Crimea, individuals in Taiwan are quite likely to actively resist their

#### New pressures result in a soft democratic landing – but public buy-in is key

Pei 13 (Minxin, Tom and Margot Pritzker ’72 Professor of Government and director of the Keck Center for International and Strategic Studies at Claremont McKenna College, “5 Ways China Could Become a Democracy”, http://thediplomat.com/2013/02/5-ways-china-could-become-a-democracy/1/)

“Happy ending” would be the most preferable mode of democratic transition for China. Typically, a peaceful exit from power managed by the ruling elites of the old regime goes through several stages. It starts with the emergence of a legitimacy crisis, which may be caused by many factors (such as poor economic performance, military defeat, rising popular resistance, unbearable costs of repression, and endemic corruption). Recognition of such a crisis convinces some leaders of the regime that the days of authoritarian rule are numbered and they should start managing a graceful withdrawal from power. If such leaders gain political dominance inside the regime, they start a process of liberalization by freeing the media and loosening control over civil society. Then they negotiate with opposition leaders to set the rules of the post-transition political system. Most critically, such negotiations center on the protection of the ruling elites of the old regime who have committed human rights abuses and the preservation of the privileges of the state institutions that have supported the old regime (such as the military and the secret police). Once such negotiations are concluded, elections are held. In most cases (Taiwan and Spain being the exceptions), parties representing the old regime lose such elections, thus ushering in a new democratic era. At the moment, the transition in Burma is unfolding according to this script. But for China, the probability of such a happy ending hinges on, among other things, whether the ruling elites start reform before the old regime suffers irreparable loss of legitimacy. The historical record of peaceful transition from post-totalitarian regimes is abysmal mainly because such regimes resist reform until it is too late. Successful cases of “happy ending” transitions, such as those in Taiwan, Mexico, and Brazil, took place because the old regime still maintained sufficient political strength and some degree of support from key social groups. So the sooner the ruling elites start this process, the greater their chances of success. The paradox, however, is that regimes that are strong enough are unwilling to reform and regimes that are weak cannot reform. In the Chinese case, the odds of a soft landing are likely to be determined by what China’s new leadership does in the coming five years because the window of opportunity for a political soft landing will not remain open forever.

#### China has the pre-requisites for a stable transition

Rowen 7—Henry S. Rowen, Professor emeritus in the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University, and senior fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace [July 2007, “When Will the Chinese People Be Free?” *Journal of Democracy* 18.3, Project Muse]

I observed in 1996 that a democratic China in a region with many democracies would be good for peace because democracies do not fight each other (which does not imply that democracies are inherently peaceable). Yet all is not necessarily well. Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder find that countries making the transition from authoritarian to democratic governance are more likely to start foreign broils than are consolidated democracies because internal contests for power can cause a faction to identify, or to conjure up, a foreign enemy as a means of rallying mass support.26 Mansfield and Snyder hold that this is most likely where elections are held in countries with a weak sense of nationhood, a shaky rule of law, feeble bureaucracies, poor civilian control of the military, a winner-take-all attitude among contending parties, and few safeguards for press freedom. This leads them to recommend that, where possible, elections should come on the heels and not ahead of institution-building, with a competent central government and legal system needed most urgently of all. If these premises are correct, China's prospects are not bad. The Chinese today possess a strong sense of nationhood, a legal system that is moving in the right direction, a military that seems firmly under civilian control, increased professionalism in many organizations, and nothing like the shadow of "premature" elections on the horizon. Other positives for peace are China's high trade-to-GDP ratio and membership in several international organizations.

#### China’s just going through normal economic cycles---no collapse

LSE 16, London School of Economics, citing Dr Keyu Jin, Assistant Professor in LSE's Department of Economics and an Associate of the Centre for Economic Performance and the Centre for Macroeconomics, "Guarded Optimism" over the medium term on Chinese Economy, 6 Jan 2016, http://www.lse.ac.uk/newsAndMedia/news/archives/2016/01/Chinalecture.aspx

An LSE expert on the Chinese economy has said she has guarded optimism about the country’s finances over the next three to five years, but argued further reforms were needed to aid its growth.¶ ¶ The comments were made on 6 January, by LSE economist Dr Keyu Jin, as part of the 2016 LSE China Lecture Series, Present Challenges for the Chinese Economy.¶ In her lecture Dr Jin addressed the persistent global fears on the sustainability and stability of the world's second largest economy, particularly in light of the recent stock market drop, along with the historical legacy of China's current economic model from the country's opening-up.¶ Dr Jin mentioned that the "doomsday scenarios" on China's economy are nothing new, and that since the opening up of the economy in 1979 there have been normal cycles of strong and then weaker growth.

#### We control uniqueness---Nationalism is declining

**Johnston, 17** - Alastair Iain Johnston is the James Albert Noe and Linda Noe Laine Professor of China in World Affairs at Harvard University (“Is Chinese Nationalism Rising?” International Security, Winter, <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/ISEC_a_00265>

The rising nationalism meme is one element in the narrative of a “newly assertive China” that generalizes from China’s coercive diplomacy in maritime space to claims that a dissatisfied China is challenging a U.S.-dominated liberal international order writ large.5 Rising nationalism, in this narrative, constrains the Chinese leadership and helps explain its more militantly realpolitik or noncooperative behaviors, as well as China’s more proactive challenges to international “rules of the game.”6 In addition, rising popular nationalism has led many U.S. government officials to worry that the Chinese leadership will engage in diversionary conflict when China’s economic growth slows.7 Thus the rising nationalism meme is an important element of an even larger emerging narrative about a revisionist China. Using an original time-series survey dataset from Beijing and a range of indicators of nationalism extending back to 1998, I conduct five different tests of the claim about China’s rising nationalism. The analysis shows that there has not been a continuously rising level of nationalism among the survey respondents. Indeed, most indicators show a decline in levels of nationalism since around 2009. Moreover, contrary to the conventional wisdom, the data do not show that China’s youth express higher levels of nationalism than older generations. Indeed, it is China’s older generations that are more nationalistic than its youth. These findings—with due regard for caveats about representativeness— suggest that rising popular nationalism may not be a critically important variable constraining Chinese foreign policy. The findings from the survey have a number of implications. First, they suggest that China’s coercive diplomacy in maritime disputes over the last few years is unlikely to be a driven by rising popular nationalism. A list of more likely explanations includes the search for energy, fishing rights, the organizational interests of the military and of maritime law enforcement, leaders’ preferences, elite nationalism, Chinese reactions to actions by other maritime claimants, an emerging U.S.-China security dilemma, and growing naval capabilities. Second, the findings suggest that rising popular nationalism is unlikely to spur Chinese leaders to engage in diversionary conflict in the face of an economic slowdown.8 On a number of measures, levels of Chinese nationalism have stagnated or dropped since around 2009, even as annual economic growth rates have declined somewhat. Finally, the findings underscore that analysis of Chinese foreign policy has to be more consciously self-critical of the assumptions, conventional wisdoms, and memes that are circulated in the media, among pundits, and in academia. They also confirm that these elements are being rapidly reproduced in an era of digital and social media. Given the implications for stability in U.S.-China relations of the emergence of a “revisionist China” meme in the United States and of a “containing China” meme in China, it is especially important that scholars examine emerging conventional wisdoms and viral memes carefully and with a variety of data and methods.

#### Prefer our ev---they have no empirical testing

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I am not the first to ask whether Chinese nationalism is, in fact, rising. There are a number of skeptics of the rising nationalism meme. Zhu Tianbiao, for example, argues that the goal of Chinese nationalism is national independence and territorial sovereignty. This has been a long-standing goal for different Chinese governments and leaders across time, and there is little evidence of much variation in this goal.19 Jia Qingguo suggests that memes about rising nationalism or an out-of-control nationalism are ahistorical and empirically problematic, and that they divert attention away from the external or international drivers of Chinese foreign policy.20 Using surveys and interviews of participants in the demonstrations outside the U.S. embassy in Beijing in 1999, Yu Zhiyuan and Zhao Dingxin look at the demonstrators’ reasons for participation in this iconic expression of contemporary youth nationalism. They find that nationalism and anti-U.S. sentiment were not nearly as strong as other motivations such as anger at a discrete event, peer pressure, and for many an exciting chance to participate in political theater.21 Allen Carlson’s skepticism is bluntly empirical: “[D]espite (or, perhaps, because of) the pervasiveness of the resulting conventional wisdom about a surge in Chinese nationalism, to date the literature lacks any rigorous empirical testing of such an observation.”22 Most recently, Li Liqing has drawn on structured interview data with Chinese students to suggest that quotidian consciousness about, and commitment to, the nation is quite weak.23 For the most part, critical voices such as these have been ignored beyond the academic world. My starting point, then, is the scholarly skepticism embodied in this literature.