# 1NC

### 1

#### Interpretation – “A” in the resolution indicates that you must defend that all just governments recognize an unconditional right to strike.

#### An indefinite article like the word “a” is a universal quantifier if the main verb applies directly to it

Michael Hess. 1985. (Michael Hess is professor of Computational Linguistics and head of the Institute of Computational Linguistics. PhD at University of Zurch). “How Does Natural Language Quantify?”. <https://www.aclweb.org/anthology/E85-1002.pdf>. Bergen AK

The indefinite article seems, on the surface, to cause much less trouble than the definite article. Its interpretation as an existential quantifier always looked quite straightforward. However, it was noticed (Kamp 1981) that indefinite articles sometimes must be represented as universal quantifiers. Prominent among these cases are the so- called donkey sentences, exemplified by sentences 7 and 8. 7) If Pedro owns a donkey he is rich. 8) If Pedro owns a donkey he beats it. The traditional, and most natural, representation of 7 is 7a 7a) EXISTS X: (donkey(X) AND owns(pedro,X)) IMPLIES rich(pedro). where the top-most syntactic connector of the English sentence, i.e. the conjunction "if", corresponds to the top-most connector of the logical form, i.e. the implication. However, if we apply the same schema mechanically to example 8 it will produce the non-sentence 8a: 8a) EXISTS X: (donkey(X) AND owns(pedro,X)) IMPLIES beats(pedro, X). This is not a logical sentence because the variable "X" in the consequent is outside the scope of the existential quantifier and remains unbound. 8 must therefore be represented as 8b 8b) ALL X: ((donkey(X) AND owns(pedro,X)) IMPLIES beats(pedro, X)) where the indefinite article is now represented as a universal quantifier. Now we are in the most unsatisfactory situation that we have to represent two syntactically very similar surface sentences by two radically different logical sentences, and that the same noun phrase has to be mapped into an existential quantifier one time, into a universal quantifier another time. If we try to consistently represent indefinite articles as universal quantfflers we get 7b as representation for 7 7b) ALL X: ((donkey(X) AND owns(pedro,X)) IMPLIES rich(pedro)). which is indeed logically equivalent to 7a, but on purely formal grounds. The scope has been artificially extended to span over terms without any variables, which certainly runs very much against our intuition about the meaning of the original sentence. The conclusion cannot be avoided that even the seemingly innocuous indefinite article cannot be represented as a straightforward existential quantifier.

#### That applies to the rez – the obligation in the resolution applies directly to the just government, which makes “A” a universal quantifier. Vote aff:

#### 1] Limits – there’s 195 different governments that you could potentially specify, which explodes the number of affs – there’s no universal disad to every government since each has different political scenarios so we lose core neg ground like the business confidence DA or the Grids/Police PIC. Limits outweighs – it controls the internal link to the possibility of engagement which turns education.

#### 2] Precision – semantics outweighs pragmatics:

#### A] Anything else allows the aff to jettison words from the resolution to moot neg ground since they’re not bound by the resolution – they’ll say they’re good enough but there’s no brightline for that which justifies straying from the rez always.

#### B] Jurisdiction – tournament rules mandate that we must defend the resolution, which means the judge doesn’t have the jurisdiction to vote on an advocacy that’s not topical.

#### Fairness is a voter—the judge must vote for the better debater which is impossible if the round is skewed.

#### Drop the debater since drop the arg is severance – restarts the debate so the aff gets 7-6 time skew and too late for new neg offense.

#### Use competing interps—[a] leads to a race to the top where we find the best norms [b] reasonability is arbitrary and invites judge intervention [c] reasonability collapses—you use offense/defense on the paradigm debate.

#### No RVIs—[a] logic – you don’t win for being fair, [b] means you bait theory and go for the RVI

### 2

#### Capitalism is a system engendering massive violence and inevitable extinction – the foundational task is to find a way out – the Role of the Ballot is to endorse the best organizational tactics.

Badiou ‘18

[Alain, former chair of philosophy at the Ecole Normale Superiure, professor of philosophy at The European Graduate School. Translated by David Broder. 07/30/2018. “The Neolithic, Capitalism, and Communism,” <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3948-the-neolithic-capitalism-and-communism>] pat

Today, it has become commonplace to predict the end of the human race such as we know it. There are various reasons for such forecasts. According to a messianic kind of environmentalism, the excessive predations of a beastly humanity will soon bring about the end of life on Earth. Meanwhile, those who instead point to runaway technological advances prophesy, indiscriminately, the automation of all work by robots, grand developments in computing, automatically-generated art, plastic-coated killers, and the dangers of a super-human intelligence.

Suddenly, we see the emergence of threatening categories like transhumanism and the post-human — or, their mirror image, a return to our animal state — depending on whether one prophesies on the basis of technological innovation or laments all the attacks on Mother Nature.

For me, all such prophesies are just so much ideological noise, intended to obscure the real peril that humanity is today exposed to: that is to say, the impasse that globalised capitalism is leading us into. In fact, it is this form of society — and it alone — which permits the destructive exploitation of natural resources, precisely because it connects this exploitation to the boundless quest for private profit. The fact that so many species are endangered, that climate change cannot be controlled, that water is becoming like some rare treasure, is all a by-product of the merciless competition among billionaire predators. There is no other reason for the fact that scientific innovation is subject to the question of what technologies can sell, in an anarchic selection mechanism.

Environmentalist preaching does sometimes use persuasive descriptions of what is going on — despite the exaggerations typical of the prophet. But most of the time this becomes mere propaganda, useful for those states who want to show their friendly face. Just as it is for the multinationals who would have us believe — to the greater benefit of their balance sheets — in the noble, fraternal, natural purity of the commodities they are trafficking.

The fetishism of technology, and the unbroken series of "revolutions" in this domain — of which the "digital revolution" is the most in vogue — has constantly spread the beliefs both that this will take us to the paradise of a world without work — with robots to serve us, and us left to idle — and then, on the other hand, that digital "thought" will crush the human intellect. Today there is not one magazine that does not inform its astonished readers of the imminent "victory" of artificial over natural intelligence. But in most cases neither "nature" nor the "artificial" are properly or clearly defined.

Since the origins of philosophy, the question of the real scope of the word "nature" has been constantly posed. "Nature" could mean the romantic reverie of evening sunsets, the atomic materialism of Lucretius (De natura rerum), the inner being of things, Spinoza’s Totality (Deus sive Natura), the objective underside of all culture, rural and peasant surroundings as counterposed to the suspicious artificiality of the towns ("the earth does not lie," as Marshal Pétain put it), biology as distinct from physics, cosmology as compared to the tiny location that is our planet, the invariance of centuries as compared to the frenzy of innovation, natural sexuality as compared to perversion… I am afraid that today "nature" most of all refers to the calm of the villa and the garden, the charm wild animals have for tourists, and the beach or the mountains where we can spend a nice summer. Who, then, can imagine man responsible for nature, when thus far he has just been a thinking flea on a secondary planet in an average solar system at the edge of one banal galaxy?

Since its origins philosophy has also devoted a great deal of thought to Technology, or the Arts. The Greeks meditated on the dialectic of Techne and Physis — a dialectic within which they situated the human animal. They laid the ground for this animal to be seen as "a reed, the weakest of nature, but … a thinking reed." For Pascal, this meant that humanity was stronger than Nature and closer to God. A long time ago, they saw that the animal capable of mathematics would do great things to the order of materiality.

Are these "robots" which they keep banging on about anything more than calculation in the form of a machine? Digits in motion? We know that they can count quicker than us, but it was we who invented them, precisely in order to fulfil this task. It would be stupid to look at a crane raising a concrete pillar up to some great height, use this to argue that man is incapable of the same feat, and then conclude by saying that some muscular, superhuman giant has emerged… Lightning-quick counting is not the sign of an insuperable "intelligence" either. Technological transhumanism plays the same old tune — an inexhaustible theme of horror and sci-fi movies — of the creator overwhelmed by his own creation. It does so either thrilled about the advent of the superman — something we have been expecting ever since Nietzsche — or fearing him and taking refuge under the skirt of Gaia, Mother Nature.

Let’s put things in a bit more perspective.

For four or five millennia, humanity has been organised by the triad of private property — which concentrates enormous wealth in the hands of very narrow oligarchies; the family, in which fortunes are transmitted via inheritance; and the state, which protects both property and the family by armed force. This triad defined our species’ Neolithic age, and we are still at this point — we could even say, now more than ever. Capitalism is the contemporary form of the Neolithic. Its enslavement of technology in the interests of competition, profit and concentrating capital only raises to their fullest extension the monstrous inequalities, the social absurdities, the murderous wars, and the damaging ideologies that have always accompanied the deployment of new technology under the reign of class hierarchy throughout history.

We should be clear that technological inventions were the preliminary conditions of the arrival of the Neolithic age, and by no means its result. If we consider our species’ fate, we see that sedentary agriculture, the domestication of cattle and horses, pottery, bronze, metallic weapons, writing, nationalities, monumental architecture, and the monotheist religions are inventions at least as important as the airplane or the smartphone. Throughout history, whatever has been human has always, by definition, been artificial. If that had not existed, there would not have been Neolithic humanity — the humanity we know — but a permanent close proximity with animal life; something which did indeed exist, in the form of small nomadic groups, for around 200,000 years.

A fearful and obscurantist primitivism has its roots in the fallacious concept of "primitive communism." Today we can see this cult of the ancient societies in which babies, men, women and the elderly supposedly lived in fraternity, without anything artificial, and indeed lived in common with the mice, the frogs, and the bears. Ultimately, all this is nothing but ridiculous reactionary propaganda. For everything suggests that the societies in question were extremely violent. After all, even their most basic survival needs were constantly under threat.

To speak fearfully of the victory of the artificial over the nature, of robot over man, is today an untenable regression, something truly absurd. It is easy enough to answer such fears, such prophesies. For judged by this standard, even a simple axe, or a domesticated horse, not to mention a papyrus covered in symbols, is an exemplary case of the post- or trans-human. Even an abacus allows quicker calculation than the fingers of the human hand.

Today we need neither a return to primitivism, or fear of the "ravages" the advent of technology might bring. Nor is there any use in morbid fascination for the science-fiction of all-conquering robots. The urgent task we face is the methodical search for a way out of the Neolithic order. This latter has lasted for millennia, valuing only competition and hierarchy and tolerating the poverty of billions of human beings. It must be surpassed at all cost. Except, that is, the cost of the high-tech wars so well known to the Neolithic age, in the lineage of the wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945, with their tens of millions of dead. And this time it could be a lot more.

The problem is not technology, or nature. The problem is how to organise societies at a global scale. We need to posit that a non-Neolithic way of organising society is possible. This means no private ownership of that which ought to be held in common, namely the production of all the necessities of human life. It means no inherited power or concentration of wealth. No separate state to protect oligarchies. No hierarchical division of labour. No nations, and no closed and hostile identities. A collective organisation of everything that is in the collective interest.

All this has a name, indeed a fine one: communism. Capitalism is but the final phase of the restrictions that the Neolithic form of society has imposed on human life. It is the final stage of the Neolithic. Humanity, that fine animal, must make one last push to break out of a condition in which 5,000 years of inventions served a handful of people. For almost two centuries — since Marx, anyway — we have known that we have to begin the new age. An age of technologies incredible for all of us, of tasks distributed equally among all of us, of the sharing of everything, and education that affirms the genius of all. May this new communism everywhere and on every question stand up against the morbid survival of capitalism. This capitalism, this seeming "modernity," represents a Neolithic world that has in fact been going on for five millennia. And that means that it is old — far too old.

#### History proves an effective right to strike is impossible in liberal capitalist society – courts will water it down and workers will be replaced – but its justification relies on the same tropes of property protection that will be used to delegitimize worker militancy.

White ‘18

[Ahmed, University of Colorado Law School. 2018. “Its Own Dubious Battle: The Impossible Defense of an Effective Right to Strike,” <https://scholar.law.colorado.edu/articles/1261/>] pat

Like every other aspect of Taft-Hartley, the 1947 amendments to the Wagner Act that directly touched on mass picketing and other forms of strike militancy were strongly supported by the business community, including prominent employers and business associations like the National Association of Manufactures, the American Iron and Steel Institute, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Promoted by these groups, witness after witness regaled the Congress with stories of how mass picketing, along with secondary boycotts and other militant tactics, gave unions too much power, eroded the power of owners and their supervisors, and threatened the American way. Time and again, senators and representatives expressed their support for new restrictions on the right to strike as mandates of a common faith, a commitment of the nation itself, to the principles of property and order. “They are a veritable pronouncement of contempt of law and order, private capitalism, and ownership of property, competition, and everything that even smacks of liberty,” said Ohio Representative Frederick Smith, speaking of NLRB positions that seemed to continence an expansive view of the right to strike. “He has been required to employ or reinstate individuals who have assaulted him and his employees and want only to destroy his property,” said New York Representative Ralph Gwinn, in defense of employers supposedly ravaged by such strikes. Under prevailing law, such employers endured “respectable robbery without liability,” Gwinn said.

We in America prize human individual liberty even above the state. We believe that property rights are natural to man. The best protection of those property rights and of that liberty is in the balancing of the rights of our workers and the rights of our businessmen so that the great majority of our citizens will enjoy that private property and that human liberty,

said Representative Charles Kersten of Wisconsin, condemning mass picketing of the sort that had recently featured at the Allis-Chalmers plants in his state. Consider, too, the remarks of Representative John Robsion of Kentucky:

There have been cases in this country where literally thousands of persons have picketed a plant and engaged in violence. In my honest opinion, labor nor management never did help its cause by engaging in lawlessness, violence, and the destruction of the property of others, and under this bill and the law the company cannot mistreat, browbeat and engage in violence and lawlessness against the workers.

Nor was it only conservatives who joined in this, as evidenced by remarks of Utah Senator Elbert Thomas, who had supported the New Deal and the work of the La Follette Committee, on which he had served, and who had joined with Robert La Follette Jr. in 1939 in sponsoring a pro-labor amendment to the Wagner Act. For a worker, he said,

to interpret his right to strike as being an absolute right, entitling him to quit work while the water is turned on in the plant, for leaving in a mine certain equipment in such a way as to result in costly destruction, would obviously be most improper. No person has a right to do such things. No one has a right to act against society. No one has a right to destroy it.

And so it went, the references to the inviolate values of property and order in defense of the legislation much too numerous to exhaustively cite. It is easy to dismiss these contentions, even from moderates like Thomas, as the contrived utterances of people who were singularly committed to advancing their narrow class and political interests. To some extent, they surely were that. But these views were hardly outside the mainstream of American politics, particularly among elites, broad swathes of the middle class, and important elements of the working class. Indeed, they comported very conveniently with commonplace views about the virtues of property and order and resonated with what much of the public believed at the time—this is what made them so resonant. And whether contrived or not, they performed an important function. By invoking the virtues of property and order in this way, these Congressmen and the witnesses before them who favored restricting mass picketing and other forms of coercive protest were conspicuously able to couch this position as something other than a malicious attack on the “legitimate” rights of labor. Instead, theirs was a mission to realign the labor law with fundamental American values, to save it from those who had allowed labor policies and the habits of union to stray beyond this field. In this way they were able to deflect, if not disprove, the all-too-apt contention by the legislation’s opponents, repeated many times in the process, that what Taft-Hartley was really about was elevating property rights over human rights.

Added proof that strike militancy was actually indefensible can be found in the fact that no scholars would justify it, not even mass picketing—at least not beyond the point at which it became coercive, which was of course the very point at which it was employed in an effective way. In the wake of the Memorial Day Massacre, most all the major papers sided with the police, declaring the strikers enemies of public order who brought the violence upon themselves. Initially, this stance was premised on distorted readings of the events of that day that charged the strikers with various acts of provocation. But even when the La Follette Committee publicized a Paramount Pictures newsreel (which the company had suppressed) and unearthed other evidence that proved that most all of the blame for what happened that day rested on the police, most of the papers still adhered to this reading of the events.

This attitude toward mass picketing was a centerpiece of revived interest in the right to strike in the major papers, one that extended from the mid 1930s into the 1940s and exceeded the surge in interest of the late 1910s and early 1920s. In 1941, for instance, the New York Herald Tribune described pending legislative attempts to limit mass picketing as “too thoroughly justified to require argument.” In 1946 the New York Times summoned up the rhetoric used to condemn the sitdown trikes and declared mass picketing a “seizure” that was “by its very nature illegal because it infringes both individual and property rights.” Conservative though he was, newspaperman David Lawrence, founder of U.S. News and World Report, spoke for many when he declared mass picketing an act of “violence” by which unionists were seeking to take the law into their own hands. In fact, Lawrence’s judgement that mass picketing was an affront to civil liberties aligned with that of the American Civil Liberties Union, long a champion of labor rights, which, as the New York Times was keen to note, also condemned the tactic in these terms.

Such views fit with a broader tendency to criticize the right to strike as being too aggressively employed by unionists and too generously construed by the courts and the NLRB. In the decade between the validation of the Wagner and the passage of Taft-Hartley, newspapers gave voice to a criticism of mass picketing and other erstwhile excessive forms of strike behavior, one that typically described the Wagner Act as having gone too far in protecting workers’ prerogatives to protest. A typical example of the content and tenor of these pieces is a 1941 editorial in the Chicago Daily Tribune:

“The right to strike” is now used frequently to mean the right of union leaders to force men who don’t want to strike to do so. It is used to justify the seizure of industries and the blockading of factories by mass picketing to prevent the entrance of workers who are satisfied with their working conditions and the movement of goods in and out of the plants. “The right to strike” in this sense means not only that every strike is right but that every measure which may be adopted to win a strike is right.

In fact, at this crucial moment it was common for elites of all stripes to claim that they supported the right to strike and yet to assert that it was being abused by unionists who insisted on winning every labor dispute and using coercive and disorderly methods to do so. In 1946, Hebert Hoover, who might well have denied just such a thing fifteen years earlier, inveighed that “Nobody denies that there is a ‘right’ to strike”; but that right, he said, had been abused to the detriment of the public interest. Although considerably more liberal than Hoover, Walter Lippmann, the extremely popular political commentator, offered a similar judgement about a railroad strike that same year, concluding “we must henceforth refuse to regard the right to strike as universal and absolute, and as one of the inalienable rights of man.” Also writing in 1946, Henry Ford II, whose father had used a small army of thugs and toughs to enforce the open shop at his plants and bitterly fought unionization until 1941, now purported at once to support the right to strike—and to believe that it should be limited. “There is no longer any question of the right of organized workers to strike, but that right,” he said, “is being misused.”

Like Taft-Hartley’s supporters in Congress, figures like Hoover, Lippmann, and Ford did not trouble themselves to confess that such tactics as they so blithely condemned might actually be necessary to counterbalance the power of employers and give life and meaning to a statute that did not take adequate account of this basic reality, let alone that they were essential in establishing the idea that workers enjoyed any enforceable right to strike. But they did not have to, either; for they honestly did not believe that labor should generally prevail. Liberal or conservative, it did not matter; these were capitalists in a capitalist society, contented, consistent with their values, with a right to strike that went little further than a right to withhold one’s labor. To be sure, these were not the views of ordinary people. But the public’s perspective did not seem to vary all that much from those of elites. Although overall approval of union membership as measured in Gallup surveys slipped noticeably after 1937, it remained quite high—well above fifty percent right through the 1940s. Nevertheless, Gallup surveys taken in June 1937, after the big wave of sit-strikes had waned noticeably, but while mass picketing and overall levels of labor militancy remained high, revealed that fifty-seven percent supported the proposition that the militia should “be called out whenever strike trouble threatens.”

As with the sit-down strikes, too, the status of mass picketing and other forms of strike militancy can also be gauged by the way these tactics were defended. During the hearings on Taft-Hartley, only a few labor leaders stood against the torrent of criticism of these practices by businessmen, conservative unionists, and congressmen and senators, and tried to parry the move to prohibit the strikes. With only a couple of exceptions, most of them consistently qualified their defense of these tactics by downplaying their coercive qualities—again the very thing that made them so effective in the first place—while also describing them as expedients, presumably temporary, that were justified by the unreasonable stances of some employers.

While the political motivations and implications of this campaign against these forms of strike militancy might be as dubious as the attacks on the sit-down strikes, their value in expressing dominant political judgments concerning these tactics is not. Repeatedly, it was taken for granted that workers could not be allowed to excessively coerce their fellow workers, that they should be obliged to adhere to their contractual obligations, that they did not own the streets or the workplace, and that whatever the right to strike was, it was surely, as Brandeis had insisted, not an absolute right. Of course, all of this was controversial for many unionists. But unionists were almost the only ones to really push back against these measures. Even President Harry Truman’s dramatic veto of Taft-Hartley is widely regarded as a political move taken with the expectation that Congress would override the veto anyway. It is also notable that despite dedicating itself to this aim, the labor movement has never come close to repealing the Taft-Hartley Act, or even securing the enactment of favorable amendments to any of its provisions.

And then there is the replacement worker doctrine where, if anything, the change in the law even more clearly reflected the depth and power of liberal norms. For the rule established in Mackay Radio came out of the blue. It was set forth in a case which required no such question to be resolved, in a manner that drew no support from the text of the Wagner Act, and on the basis of legislative history that was ambiguous at best. Worse, as Getman points out, the rule is in direct conflict with the very statutory principle of barring discrimination on the basis of a worker’s assertion of the basic labor rights laid out in § 7 that it was, itself, supposedly derived from.

As an exercise in statutory construction and administration, Mackay Radio makes no sense; but as a defense of property rights it makes all the sense in the world. One way to see this is to consider what would have happened had the Court decided the matter in a fundamentally different way. If employers were barred from replacing economic strikers, it seems likely that strikes would have proliferated to an extraordinary extent, as workers could at least plausibly have expected to be able to strike under a broad array of circumstances and yet be restored to their jobs no matter the outcome. But precisely because such a doctrine would have given workers so much power, Congress would almost certainly have stepped in with its own rule, codifying employers’ right to permanently replace striking workers and bringing this to an end. Ultimately, it is difficult to imagine a much more liberal alternative to the Mackay Radio rule surviving for very long—a point that also draws support from labor’s failure to repeal the rule in Congress in the early 1990s.

A simple exercise in counterfactual speculation bears similar fruit in regard to other, more basic, limitations on the right to strike, including those imposed relative to sit-down strikes, mass picketing, and secondary boycotts. Shrill and self-interested though it was, all the testimony from employers and their allies during the hearings on Taft-Hartley or Landrum-Griffin about the perils posed by these tactics, was fundamentally correct. For were workers able to make unfettered use of sit-down strikes, mass picketing, and general strikes and sympathy walkouts, they could have very much challenged the sovereignty of capitalists in and about the workplace, and with this the bedrock institutions and norms of liberal society. As Jim Pope puts it, Charles Evans Hughes’ opinion in Fansteel established the maxim that “the employer could violate the workers’ statutory rights without sacrificing its property rights, while the workers could not violate the employer’s property rights without sacrificing their statutory rights.” This is unquestionably true. But equally unquestionable is that neither this court nor any other important arbiter of legal rights in this country was ever prepared to endorse the contrary view that property rights might be sufficiently subordinate to labor rights as to justify the kinds of tactics by which workers could routinely defeat powerful employers on the fields of industrial conflict.

Significantly, there is no reason to believe that any of this has changed or is poised to change today. Quite the contrary: In a culture and political system more immersed than ever in the veneration of order and control, mediated by criminal law and police work, by the celebration of property rights, and by a readiness to punish violence, it is all but unthinkable that the courts or the NLRB would deign to give legal sanction to workers to engage in any sustained way in the kinds of tactics that might make going on strike a worthwhile thing to do.

#### Democracy promotion is capitalism promotion – its assumptions don’t account for local preferences.

Bridoux 19 – Lecturer in the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University [Jeff Bridoux, “Shaking off the neoliberal shackles: “democratic emergence” and the negotiation of democratic knowledge in the Middle East North Africa context,” 2019, *Democratization*, Vol. 26, Issue 5, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13510347.2018.1557148 – ability edited]

Yet, knowledge and experiences that underpin modernization theory and transition paradigm are proving problematic on two grounds. Firstly, the transition paradigm’s main assumptions, growing from experiences of 1990s democratization in Eastern Europe, have become gradually irrelevant.49 This is particularly the case for “grey-zone” countries; countries that are not authoritarian but also not heading in the direction of democracy: “what is often thought of as an uneasy, precarious middle ground between full-fledged democracy and outright dictatorship is actually the most common political condition today of countries in the developing world and the postcommunist world.”50

Secondly, the reliance on a fixed set of knowledge claims of democratization defined by Western practices and experiences institutes a hierarchy of power between democracy promoters and recipients. As Sadiki argues: “Democratic knowledge, theoretical or practical, is not neutral. It is implicated in the web of power relations that is moulded by knowledge or, in turn, moulds it.”51 Democratization studies and democracy promotion practices focus on Western-centric transitional mechanistic processes aiming at the replication of the Third Wave of democratization through an analysis of variables such as “institutions, elite cohesion, ruling parties, elections, coalitions, impact of democracy promotion, security, and in the case of Arab countries, role of Islam in absence of democracy.”52 This is problematic because it causes a disconnect between theory – the transition paradigm – and conditions on the ground.53 As will be developed further in this article, a reconsideration of the assumptions made by the transition paradigm is needed. It is critical for democracy promoters to engage in a genuine process of negotiation of democratic knowledge with recipients rather than for democracy promotion to remain shackled to assumptions that do not reflect the political and social realities of countries democracy promoters intervene in. The lack of flexibility imposed by the transition paradigm and modernization theory actually impedes on democratic progress and on the emergence of a conceptualization of the “good society” by recipients of democracy promotion.

Neoliberal practices and technocratic agenda

This lack of flexibility on behalf of democracy promoters is further compounded by development aid practices, including democracy promotion. Such practices are the product of neoliberalism, the dominant philosophy in Western societies; neoliberalism conceived as a “politically imposed discourse  …  a specific economic discourse or philosophy which has become dominant and effective in world economic relations as a consequence of super-power sponsorship [the US]”.54 As Harvey puts it: “neoliberalism … has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become incorporated into the common-sense many of us interpret, live in and understand the world.”55 As [Author] argues, knowledge produced by Western government and organization is neoliberal in nature: “Positivism and quantitative methods are embedded in all attempts to generate knowledge about and in all manners of managing the social world.”56 Such specific knowledge is needed to maximize the neoliberal zeitgeist that shifts the focus of economic activity as organizing principle of all social and political relations on competition between economic actors, in contrast to classical liberalism and its focus on exchange.57 The maximization of the principle of competition across society requires a specific type of governance: “creating calculable spaces to monitor outcomes (relying heavily on auditing, targets, and ranking) … ”58 In other words, progress must be measured in order to maximize competition in between social actors. Quantitative analysis is thus the dominant mode of assessment; considered as the most objective way to set benchmarks and assess how well individuals perform.59

How is this dominance of neoliberal practices in knowledge production reflected in US democracy promotion? The main expression of neoliberal practices in US democracy promotion consists in the ever-present principle of competition in how USAID manages its relations with recipients of aid and in the reduction of its activities into a sequential technical agenda of measurable outcomes with the aim to insert capitalism in developing societies.

The introduction of Partnering with USAID: Building Alliances leaves little doubts regarding the purpose of US foreign assistance: “furthering America’s foreign policy interests in expanding democracy and free markets while improving the lives of the citizens of the developing world.”60 It is interesting to note that for all the discourses on democracy, ownership of development and sustainability, a free market economy and its principles of rationalization, efficiency, profit making and risk-taking remains central to an American conception of development, not only as an end in itself but also as organizing principles of how development aid is dispended. Indeed, USAID insists that the most efficient way to achieve development is to “embrace a culture of risk-taking and entrepreneurship that has driven much of our progress and prosperity”.61

Competition, as regulatory mechanism, creates a bias in the attribution of contracts; in a competitive market some are more equal than others. This competitive selection process impacts USAID partners; they must bow to efficiency principles that will ensure the best return on investment for USAID. This is less an issue for governments and multinational corporations than for smaller actors who may not have the required expertise to go through the selection process. USAID’s obligations for FY 2012 shows that no NGO based in developing countries is in the top 40 of USAID’s partners.62 USAID’s procurement rules condition the way private actors of democracy promotion offer their services according to the laws of the market.

Free market rules also apply to recommending democratic norms to be promoted. Democratic rules and norms that facilitate free market economy are at the forefront of USAID’s programmes and are also implicitly hidden in the procurement system. For example, the document informing for-profit corporations about how to partner with USAID identifies “rule of law and transparent governance” as one programme area of public-private partnership relevant to “finance, media and ICT industries” with the following potential areas of shared interests: “rule of law and business-friendly operating environment, supporting transparent elections and political processes, promoting free and independent media”.63 Multinational Corporations do not object to these as they facilitate their operations and USAID is quick to point out shared interests in reinforcing public-private partnerships for development initiatives that “benefit businesses by mitigating risks, creating access to new markets, training workforces, and building relationships with key stakeholders”.64 Moreover, partnering with USAID “can lend authority and legitimacy to a business’ development efforts. Development initiatives can also create new customers and new markets”.65 USAID thus acts as a facilitator for US businesses to develop their activities in developing countries, in turn helping USAID to achieve development aid objectives, of which democratization is an aspect, which in turn contributes to reach more general US foreign policy goals: expanding democracy and free markets.

Another consequence of neoliberal aid practices concerns the willingness to empower local governmental actors of development in order to achieve ownership and long-term sustainability of development aid, including democracy promotion. This is based on the premises that “successful development depends in large part on the efficiency, integrity and effectiveness with which a country raises, manages and expends public resources.”66 As USAID forcefully points out, this requires working through host country systems that need to be reformed in order to match USAID’s expectations. This entails creating an economic climate friendly to business, notably through offering stability and predictability. Reforming host country systems thus starts with improving public financial management including a reform of the public procurement system for a more efficient use of public resources, greater accountability and transparency guaranteed by “a vibrant and strengthened civil society that monitors performance, encourages transparency and demands results”.67 But what does improving public financial management entail?

According to USAID, achieving sound public financial management in developing countries means institutional strengthening of the ministry of finance, more legislative oversight of the budget, financial management process and civil society budget oversight, strengthening of government audit and internal control, and implementing procurement reform.68 Procurement is considered an essential element of public financial management because it is the most susceptible to corruption, which is seen as threatening good governance and democracy, deterring foreign investment, ~~crippling~~ [stiffling] economic growth and development.69

Those reforms will strengthen sustainability and develop capacity but will also facilitate the opening of local markets to economic globalization. Indeed, as USAID argues, through its engagement with local government and supporting transparent rule of law, USAID reduces regulatory risks that endanger foreign investments. USAID thus seeks to reform local legislation by increasing transparency and support for compliance codes and labour regulations supportive of stable operating environment for business.70 Measures that target the improvement of local systems thus aim at creating conditions facilitating free markets – that is transforming local governmental institutions so that they embed procedures protecting core elements of free market economy like limited governmental control, protection of private property, open competition, etc …

In summary, neoliberal governmental practices result in the adoption of a business-driven approach that does not widen the pool of recipients of democracy aid and allows for greater local ownership. Instead, such practices turn democracy promotion into a depoliticized agenda that is not open to the contestation of liberal democracy and free market economy identified as the two pillars of the “good society” by Western actors: “too deeply is a generically liberal democratic discourse embedded within its history and its political, economic, and bureaucratic discourses and structures.”71 Despite a rhetorical agreement on the nature of a “good society” and its focus on socio-economic justice, US democracy promotion practices make this convergence irrelevant and recipients’ knowledge claims about “good society” invisible.

Such a conclusion is problematic when considering the potential for negotiation between democracy promoters and recipients about the meaning of democracy and how it can help building the “good society”. Indeed, the problem is structural, not agential. Because democracy promotion operates within a neoliberal framework that expresses the transition paradigm, knowledge about democracy that matters is essentially produced by democracy promoters. The alternative is for democracy promoters to realize that negotiating democratic knowledge is critical if democratization is to succeed. Through a pluralization of debates about the meaning of democracy, political and civil society in supported countries will be able to formulate a political project that reflects emancipatory political futures in tune with the aspirations of their populations. Democracy aid community and its recipients must speak the same language of democracy if democratization is to be successful and if the “good society” is to be viable. Current democracy promotion practices do not lead to a genuine empowerment of recipients through a mutual acceptance of respective knowledge claims made about democracy. The alternative would be for democracy promoters to engage in negotiations with recipients to define a substance of democracy that meets MENA populations’ expectations. That means allowing for the emergence of alternative claims to democratic knowledge.

#### Vote neg to join the party – dual power organizing is the only path to revolutionary change.

Escalante ‘18

[Alyson, philosophy at U of Oregon. 08/24/2018. “Against Electoralism, For Dual Power!” <https://theforgenews.org/2018/08/24/against-electoralism-for-dual-power/>] pat

I am sure that at this point, the opportunists reading this have already begun to type out their typical objection: the world is different than it was in 1917, and the conditions of the United States in no way echo the conditions which enabled the Bolsheviks to achieve revolutionary success.

To this tried and true objection, there is one simple answer: you are entirely correct, and that is why we need to abandon electoralism and working within the bourgeois state.

What were the conditions which allowed the Bolsheviks to successfully revolt? The conditions were that of Dual Power. Alongside the capitalist state, there existed a whole set of institutions and councils which met the needs of the workers. The soviets, a parallel socialist government made up of individual councils, successfully took over many governmental responsibilities in some parts of Petrograd. In the radical Viborg district, the Bolshevik controlled soviets provided government services like mail, alongside programs that could meet the needs of workers. When a far right coup was attempted against the provisional government, it was troops loyal to the Bolshevik factions within the soviet who repelled the coup plotters, proving concretely to the workers of Petrograd that the socialists could not only provide for their needs, but also for their defense.

In short: the Bolsheviks recognized that instead of integrating into the bourgeois state, they could operate outside of it to build dual power. They could establish programs of elected representatives who would serve the workers. They would not bolster the capitalist state in the name of socialism, they would offer an alternative to it.

And so, when the time came for revolt, the masses were already to loyal to the Bolsheviks. The only party who had never compromised, who had denounced the unpopular imperialist wars, who had rejected the provisional government entirely, was the party who successfully gained the support of the workers.

And so, many of us on the more radical fringes of the socialist movement wonder why it is the the DSA and other socialist opportunists seem to think that we can win by bolstering the capitalist state? We wonder, given this powerful historical precedent, why they devote their energy to getting more Ocasios elected; what good does one more left democrat who will abandon the workers do for us?

The answer we receive in return is always the same: we want to win small changes that will make life for the workers easier; we want to protect food stamps and healthcare.

And do this, we reply: what makes you think reformism is the only way to do this. When the bourgeois state in California was happy to let black children go to school unfed, the Black Panthers didn’t rally around democratic candidates, they became militant and fed the children themselves. In the 40s and 50s, socialists in New York saw people going without healthcare and instead of rallying behind democratic candidates, they built the IWO to provide healthcare directly. Both these groups took up our pressing revolutionary task: building dual power.

Imagine if all those hours the DSA poured into electing Ocasio were instead used to feed the people of New York, to provide them with medical care, to ensure their needs were met. Imagine the masses seeing socialism not as a pipe dream we might achieve through electing more imperialists, but as a concrete movement which is currently meeting their needs?

The fact is, we are not nearly ready for revolution. Socialists in the United States have failed to meet the needs of the people, and as long as their only concrete interaction with the masses is handing them a voter registration form, they will continue to fail the people. Our task now is not to elect representatives to advocate for the people; it is much more gruelingly laborious than that. Our task is to serve the people. Our task is to build dual power.

The movement to do this is underway. Members of the DSA refoundation caucus have begun to move the left of the DSA in this direct, socialist groups like Philly Socialists have begun to build dual power through GED programs and tenants unions, many branches of the Party For Socialism and Liberation have begun to feed the people and provide for their concrete needs, and Red Guard collectives in Los Angeles have built serve the people programs and taken on a stance of militant resistance to gentrification. The movement is growing, its time is coming, and dual power is achievable within our life time.

The opportunists are, in a sense, correct. We are not where we were in 1917, but we can begin to move in that direction and dual power can take us there. In order to achieve dual power we have to recognize that Lenin was right: there will be no socialist gains by working within state institutions designed to crush socialism. Furthermore, we must recognize that the strategies of the electoral opportunists trade off with dual power. Electing candidates drains resources, time, and energy away from actually serving the people.

And so, we should commit to undertake the difficult and dangerous task of building dual power. We must reject opportunism, we must name the democratic party as our enemy, we must rally around power directly in the hands of the socialist movement. We do not have a parallel system of soviets in the United States. We can change that. Someday the cry “all power to the soviets” will be heard again. Lets make it happen.