**--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------TRIGGER WARNING: STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE/CLASS-BASED VIOLENCE**

**Today I must affirm Resolved: A just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike.**

**Definitions:**

**Strike:**

**Encyclopedia of American Law 08** Strike. (n.d.) West's Encyclopedia of American Law, edition 2. (2008). Retrieved June 30 2021 from https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Strike

A work stoppage;**the** concerted **refusal of employees to perform work that their employer has assigned** to them in order **to force the employer to grant certain demanded concessions, such as increased wages or improved employment conditions.** A work stoppage**[it] is generally the last step in a labor-management dispute** over wages and working conditions. **Because employees are not paid when they go on strike and employers lose productivity, both sides usually seek to avoid it. When negotiations have reached an impasse, however, a strike** may be **the only bargaining tool left for employees.** Employees can strike for economic reasons, for improvement of their working conditions, or for the mutual aid and protection of employees in another union. In addition, even if they do not have a union, employees can properly agree to stop working as a group; in that case they are entitled to all the protections that organized strikers are afforded. labor unions do not have the right to use a strike to interfere with management prerogatives or with policies that the employer is entitled to make that do not directly concern the employment relationship. A strike must be conducted in an orderly manner and cannot be used as a shield for violence or crime. Intimidation and coercion during the course of a strike are unlawful.

Bernd **Waas**, September 20**12,** Strike as a Fundamental Right of the Workers and its Risks of Conflicting with other Fundamental Rights of the Citizens,

https://islssl.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Strike-Waas.pdf

Third, as**strikes are a means of balancing power between the employer and the workers**, socio-economic conditions which influence this relationship may have to be considered when determining the rules on strikes. To give only two examples: Today, many companies are highly dependent on each other. Some of them may even form clusters. A move to reduce in-process inventory and associated carrying costs has made just in time production prevalent among, for instance, car manufacturers. Accordingly, a strike at a supplier will quickly start affecting the customers, a fact that lends additional power to unions and can therefore not be easily disregarded when determining the rules on strikes. Similarly, if employers can move factories beyond borders, which is indeed possible in times of a globalized economy, the question what workers should be able to throw into the balance needs to be addressed.

**Capitalism is Violent**

**Capitalism forces the majority of people into poor employment under a minority.**

**GOUREVITCH, 18 ALEX. “The Right to Strike: A Radical View.” American Political Science Review, vol. 112, no. 4, 2018, pp. 905–917., doi:10.1017/s0003055418000321.**

Empirical analysis of each country to which the argument applies, and how it would apply, is a separate project. The first **element of oppression in a class society** resides in the fact that (a) **there are some who are forced into the labor market while others are not** and (b)**those who are forced to work—workers—have to work for those who own productive** The oppression that matters for this article is the class-based oppression of a typical liberal capitalist society. By the class-based oppression, I mean the fact that the **majority of able-bodied people find themselves forced to work for members of a relatively small group who dominate control over productive assets and who, thereby, enjoy unjustifiable control over the activities and products of those workers.** There are workers and then there are owners and their managers. The facts I refer to here are **mostly drawn from the United States**to keep a consistent description of a specific society. While there is meaningful variation across liberal capitalist nations, the **basic facts of class-based oppression do not change in a way that vitiates my argument’s applicability to those countries too resources.** Workers are forced into the labor market because they have no reasonable alternative but to find a job. They cannot produce necessary goods for themselves, nor can they rely on the charity of others, nor can they count on adequate state benefits. **The only way most people can gain reliable access to necessary goods is by buying them. The most reliable,** often only,**way most people have of acquiring enough money to buy those goods is through employment. That is the sense in which they have no reasonable alternative but to find a job working for an employer.**SB.

**This results in an oppressive system.**

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“This **forcing is not symmetrical. A significant minority is not similarly forced to work for someone else, though they might do so freely. That minority has enough wealth,** either inherited or accumulated or both,**that they have a reasonable alternative to entering the labor market.** So, **this first dimension of oppression comes not from the fact that some are forced to work, but from the fact that the forcing is unequal and that asymmetry means some are forced to work for others.** That is to say, **what makes it oppressive is the wrong of unequally forcing the majority to work, for whatever purpose, while others face no such forcing at all. That way of organizing and distributing coercive work obligations, and of imposing certain kinds of forcing on workers, is an unjustifiable way**

**of limiting their freedom and therefore oppressive.** To fix ideas, I call this the structural element of oppression in class societies.” EC

**The resulting employee conditions are appalling.**

**(Reeves 19)** Richard Reeves *“Capitalism is failing. People want a job with a decent wage – why is that so hard?”* The Guardian, Wed 24 April 2019,

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/24/capitalism-is-failing-workers-people-want-a-job-with-a-decent-wag e-why-is-that-so-hard

This powerlessness of workers in specific companies has fuelled calls for higher minimum wages. At a federal level, the value of the wage floor has dropped by 46% since 1968. Seminal scholarship from David Card and the late, great, Alan Krueger helped to allay fears about negative economic consequences of a higher minimum wage. But a big challenge here is that the gap between richer and poorer places has also grown. A $15 minimum wage may make perfect sense in Boston (median wage = $24.16 an hour). But perhaps not in Brownsville, Texas (median wage = $11.59). Half of US workers earn less than $18.58 per hour.**A worker without power is one with a lighter paycheck. They** may **also suffer** greater **indignities or disrespect in** the course of **daily working life.** James Bloodworth’s Hired: **Six Months Undercover in Low-Wage Britain describes the loss of dignity faced by Amazon warehouse employees and Uber drivers. Horror stories abound of workers under constant surveillance, unable to take bathroom breaks and so resorting to adult diapers, or bullied or harassed by bosses or other workers. In 2011, the Morning Call of Allentown, Pennsylvania, reported that managers at the local Amazon warehouse refused to open the doors for ventilation despite soaring temperatures. They put ambulances outside instead, for the workers who collapsed.**

Vivid stuff, and no doubt true in the particular. But it is important to note that it is not the general experience of most workers. The proportion of Americans reporting that they were “treated with respect at work” has held steady at around 92% since 2002, according to the General Social Survey.

**This powerlessness has also contributed to a general trend of decline - of wages, time, and quality of life.**

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But the Great Recession also shone a light on trends long predating the downturn, not least in terms of stagnant wage growth for so many workers. **By comparison with the postwar years, economic growth has been slow for the**

**last few decades. At the same time, the transmission mechanism linking economic growth to the wages of workers appears to have broken. The share of income going to workers has dropped sharply, from 65% in 1974 to 57% in 2017.**

In the last few years, as the zombie gradually wakes up, household incomes and wages have begun to nudge upwards – but **families are still having to work more hours to get the income they need. Women are working more, and earning more (though the pay gap remains).** But as men work less, and earn less, many families are simply standing still in economic terms. **Since 1979, the median male wage in the US has dropped by 1.4% for white men – and by 9%** and 8% **for black and Hispanic men,** respectively. Workers at the top of

the earnings and education distribution have seen their paychecks continue to fatten: not so on the middle and bottom rungs of the labor market. **Wage growth remains torpid in the middle of the distribution.**

At the same time, the volatility of incomes at the bottom of the distribution has grown, in part because of shifts towards the so-called “gig economy”, intrinsically episodic, and in part because of the rise of unpredictable schedules.**Most American workers are still paid by the hour, and half of them have no formal control over their schedules.** Two in five hourly-paid workers aged between 26 and 32 know their schedules less than a week in advance.**Hard to arrange childcare on that notice. Many American workers are fighting, like the trade unions of old, on two fronts: for money, and for time.**

Why? **Why, for so many for middle-class and working-class Americans has “economic growth [has] become a spectator sport”,** as the liberal economist Jared Bernstein memorably put it.

**Solvency**

**There is not an ethical relationship in capitalism because the very concept of a worker ensures an improper power balance. Only an Unconditional strike serves as a means of resistance to capitalism; by providing a freedom of choice strike acts in a way completely antithetical to capitalism - a system that relies on the domination of laborers as a main source of profit**

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Workers have an interest in resisting the oppression of class society by using their collective power to reduce, or even overcome, that oppression. Their interest is a liberty interest in a double sense First,**resistance to** that **class-based oppression carries** with it, at least implicitly, **a demand for freedoms not yet enjoyed. A higher wage expands workers’ freedom of choice. Expanded labor rights increase workers’ collective freedom to influence the terms of employment.** Whatever the concrete set of issues, **workers’ strike demands are always also a demand for control over portions of one’s life that they do not yet enjoy** Second,**strikes don’t just aim at winning more freedom — they are themselves expressions of freedom. When workers walk out, they’re using their own individual and collective agency to win the liberties they deserve. The same capacity for self-determination that workers invoke to demand more freedom is the capacity they exercise when winning their demands.** Freedom, not industrial stability or simply higher living standards, is sthe name of their desire Put differently,**the right to strike has both an intrinsic and instrumental relation to freedom. It has intrinsic value as a**n (at least implicit) **demand for self-emancipation. And it has instrumental value insofar as the strike is an effective means for resisting the oppressiveness of a class society and achieving new freedoms** But if all this is correct, and the right to strike is something that we should defend, then it also has to be meaningful. The right loses its connection to workers’ freedom if they have little chance of exercising it effectively. Otherwise they’re simply engaging in a symbolic act of defiance — laudable, perhaps, but not a tangible means of fighting oppression. The right to strike must therefore cover at least some of the coercive tactics that make strikes potent, like sit-downs and mass pickets. It is therefore often perfectly justified for strikers to exercise their right to strike by using these tactics, even when these tactics are illegal. **Still, the question remains: why should the right to strike be given moral priority over other basic liberties? The reason is not just that** liberal **capitalism produces economic oppression but that the economic oppression that workers face is in part created and sustained by the very economic and civil liberties that liberal capitalism cherishes. Workers find themselves oppressed because of the way property rights, freedom of contract, corporate authority, and tax and labor law operate. Deeming these liberties inviolable doesn’t foster less oppressive, exploitative outcomes, as its defenders insist — quite the opposite. The right to strike has a stronger claim to be protecting a zone of activity that serves the aims of justice itself — coercing people into relations of less oppressive social cooperation. Simply put, to argue for the right to strike is to prioritize democratic freedoms over property rights.**

**The role of the ballot is to endorse the best methodology for resisting capitalism. There is no ethical consumption under capitalism so resistance is the only option for escape. An alternative that doesn’t foreground resistance to capitalism will get consumed under the current system. The affirmative is a radical interrogation of the structures of capitalism in order to develop new conceptions of society- ideas for change are generated in different spheres including the debate space.**

**Rustin 16** Dean of Social Sciences at the University of East London and Visiting Professor at the Tavistock Clinic (Michael, Alternatives to neoliberalism: a framing statement), Project Muse, https://muse-jhu-edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/article/615032/pdf//rL

**Constitutional reform needs to** go beyond the agenda of voting systems, reformed 21 Alternatives to neoliberalism Second Chambers and the like, to **consider the wider issue of how citizens can be**

**empowered to take part in all of the decisions**, not least the economic decisions, that shape their lives. One sphere to which attention should be given is the many regulatory institutions and inspectorates through which the state, within the model of ‘the new managerialism’ now seeks to direct not only ‘public’ but many ‘private’ institutions. Can ways be envisaged in which such inspection systems could enable more creative participation in governance, by citizens, communities, and employees, than they now do? **Attention also needs to be given,** as a second example, **to** the sphere of culture and communication, given that changes in the forms, flows and control of information continue to transform our entire world with breathtaking speed. Here the theoretical contribution of the new left has been crucial - through writers like Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall, and through its absorption of the ideas of Gramsci - for understanding **the nature both of modern capitalism and of potential sources of resistance to it**. Earlier debates on the organisation of communication and culture focused on the balance between the sphere of the market and the state - each seen to be enforcing a different kind of ideological domination, the former of consumerism, the latter of a conservative cultural hierarchy, understood as restrictive and nervous about open political debate. Cultural **powers and resources remain distributed in a highly unequal manner**, along the axes of class, region, gender and ethnicity, **and no-one seems to have a clear idea of how this might be changed.** Then there is the expanded role of the ‘cultural industries’ and of ‘social media’ to take into account. Is enhanced access to digital information to be understood as a new source of individual freedom and choice, and as providing new opportunities of collective organisation and action? Or is this merely the technology of an advanced phase of informational capitalism, now functioning as a superorganism in which individual ‘choices’ merely sustain and reproduce the system itself? We hope **to develop new perspectives on how society’s cultural institutions might be reimagined and redesigned so that they serve democratic** and **creative purposes** Methods and approaches **It is essential** that**reflect**ions **on** programmatic **alternatives to the dominant order** Soundings 22 should not be over-focused on what governments can or should do. **Change** usually **springs** in the first instance from **movements in society, not from government**s, although governmental action often comes to be of decisive importance. Changes in the lives of women and ethnic minorities - **moves towards ethnic justice and equality - have been of this kind, as were in the first instance the movements of the working class.** Unlike ‘Fabians’ or ‘Parliamentary Socialists’, we do not believe that the keys to all changes are held in Westminster. Our conception of a programmatic statement is one which will call on the participation of many people, especially **those living and working in** the **different institutional spaces** we will be discussing: **the aim is to work together** with the widest possible range of people to develop and give substance to what our contributors put forward, and **to carry ideas forward in different spheres of action**. It might seem counter-intuitive to some that we should be announcing the development of a programme antithetical to that of neoliberalism at a moment when that system appears to be wholly in control. We believe, however, that**this is just the moment in which alternative ideas are most needed**. And, furthermore, that the neoliberal system is by no means as secure in popular consent - and therefore as unchallengeable - as it might seem. Finally, we should say that our programmatic agenda is in no way a closed one. We will welcome proposals, offers and suggestions for other areas of social practice and organisation which call for a fundamental reconsideration of their functions and purposes, and for which new institutional designs are needed.

**The notion of striking reasserts the role of the worker as an advocate for their own conditions rather than a subordinate to a high power; thus granting them autonomy to participate in discourse about alternatives suggesting what their conditions and the economic system as a whole ought to be.**

**Under this framework, and due to the failures and abuses of the systems implemented and supported by our current government, a just government or any governing agency not only ought to, but are obligated to ensure an unconditional right to strike.**

**I am now open for Cross Examination. (EPIC MIC DROP MOMENT)**