### AC – Plan

#### Governments ought to recognize and unconditional right of workers to strike.

### AC – Democracy Adv

#### Cascading strike restrictions are getting worse

**Xhafa 16** [Edlira Xhafa, Albania · Executive Director, Global Labour University (GLU) Online Academy · International Center for Development of Decent Work, University of Kassel, Germany. "The Right to Strike Struck Down? An Analysis of Recent Trends." https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/12827.pdf]

The survey findings and the review of the ILO and ITUC reports show that most (23 countries8 ) of the 35 countries which are OECD members have enacted legal provisions and/or case-law rulings and/or have adopted practices which restrict the **right to strike** above and beyond established international **standards**. Whereas these **violations** took place in these countries prior to the 2012 debates at the ILO, in the last 5 years 9 countries – Australia, Belgium, Canada, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Norway, Spain and Turkey – have introduced legal measures which **violate** the **right to strike**. Plans to introduce a more restrictive **legal framework** are also in the pipeline in the **U**nited **K**ingdom. In addition to violations in the legal framework, 8 OECD countries – Belgium, Canada, Germany, Greece, Mexico, Portugal, Spain and Turkey – have recently adopted practices restricting the right to strike. Figure 3 shows that the areas violated by several countries are: 1) exclusion of groups of workers from the right to strike; 2) prohibition of / restrictions on political and sympathy strikes; and 3) excessive sanctions on legitimate strikes.

The OECD countries have followed the **same trends** revealed by general findings with regard to the practice of the **right to strike** (Figure 3): more countries have adopted restrictive practices in the areas of (1) acts of interference during strikes; and (2) excessive **sanctions** on legitimate strikes.

All emerging countries and economies9 are also reported to have enacted legal provisions and/or have had caselaw rulings which **violate** the **right to strike**. In the last 5 years, restrictive legal measures have been introduced in Brazil and India, while practices which violate the right to strike have been adopted in all the countries. In summary, the violations of the last 5 years can be better understood as a continuation of the attack on the right to strike. Indeed, the survey and the reviewed reports indicate that a restrictive regulatory framework existed in almost all the countries covered by the survey as well as in many other countries prior to the 2012 controversy at the ILC. At the same time, however, there is **noticeable trend** towards further **restrictions** on the right to strike in countries across regions and **regardless** of their stage of **economic development**. Under the guise of ›public **order**‹, ›public **security**‹, ›threat of **terrorism**‹, ›national **interest**‹ and ›**economic crisis**‹, countries have continued to introduce restrictive regulations which violate internationally recognized principles regulating the **right to strike**. The exercise of right to strike is further undermined by threats of **dislocation**, increasingly **precarious work**, arbitrary dismissals and extensive use of non-standard workers to replace **striking workers**.

#### The right to strike is key to global democracy – unions are incubators for resistance to authoritarianism

**Puddington 10** [Arch Puddington is currently Senior Scholar Emeritus at Freedom House. He also previously served as the Senior Vice President for Research at Freedom House. "The Global State of Workers’ Rights: Free Labor in a Hostile World." https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/inline\_images/WorkerRightsFULLBooklet-FINAL.pdf]

Some 30 years ago, in August 1980, workers in communist **Poland** formed the independent Solidarity trade union movement, thereby challenging one of the totalitarian system‘s fundamental principles: control of labor organizations by the party-state. The strike that led to Solidarity‘s establishment was launched at the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk. It quickly spread throughout Poland, and its program escalated from workplace issues to a sweeping demand for **freedom** to create the institutions that undergird a **democratic society**. After a decade of tumult and repression, Solidarity emerged triumphant, compelling the country‘s communist authorities to allow competitive elections that resulted in a landmark victory for the **democratic opposition**. This in turn led to the **domino-like collapse** of communist rule throughout Central and Eastern Europe and, two years later, the breakup of the **Soviet Union**.

The question some are asking today is whether a phenomenon similar to Solidarity might be possible in what is now the world‘s most powerful authoritarian country, China. In recent years, evidence of worker unrest there has steadily **mounted**. Strikes and other forms of labor protest occur regularly; just in the last few months, workers have called high-profile strikes at installations operated by some of the world‘s largest multinational **corporations**. As was the case in Poland, the official labor umbrella group, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), has played an obstructive role by trying to force striking workers back into their enterprises and in some instances acting as **strikebreakers**. There are also signs that some within the ACFTU, unlike in the official Polish union, see a need for change that seems to be lost on the leadership.

The burgeoning workers‘ resistance in China has drawn supporters and participants from many segments of the economy, including cab drivers, teachers, and factory workers. Despite their lack of experience as union activists, they have embraced the tried-and-true tactics of labor protest— sit-down strikes and roadblocks, for example—and have eschewed violence. These youthful workers have also used mobile telephones and the internet to draw attention to their causes. The stories they tell about conditions at the workplace are eerily familiar to anyone who is acquainted with the history of the trade union struggle in Europe and North America: low pay within the context of rapidly expanding inequality, punishing hours, harsh supervisors, and a consuming work routine that discourages family life.

The most recent strike wave has taken many observers outside China by **surprise**. The growth of the Chinese industrial juggernaut gave rise to myths about Chinese workers, who were widely regarded as docile, willing to work remarkably long hours without complaint, uninterested in unions or collective action, inspired by patriotic love for the Communist Party leadership, and unwilling to challenge authority. Among those caught unaware were the owners and managers of multinational corporations whose investments in China have been predicated on the assumption of cheap, compliant Chinese labor. Indeed, the American Chamber of Commerce in China was sharply **critical** of changes to Chinese **labor laws** that were adopted in 2008, issuing a thinly veiled warning that enhanced protections for workers would lead multinationals to look elsewhere for new **installations**.

Unlike the state-owned enterprises in communist **Poland**, the strike targets in modern China are foreign-owned, **private firms**. Accordingly, the strikers do not confront the state directly, and the strikes are thus not regarded as **overtly political**. Still, the increasing willingness of Chinese workers to risk arrest and jail to defend workplace rights is a potent **signal** to the government of the power of independent **worker action**.

The Chinese case is a cogent reminder of the central role played by the struggle for worker rights in the past century‘s broader movement toward democratic freedom. From South Africa to South Korea, Chile to the Czech Republic, the democracy and workers‘ rights movements have been closely linked. This **relationship** was well understood by **fascist**, communist, and authoritarian dictators who feared the strength of **democratic trade unionists**.

A number of important qualities distinguish free trade unions from other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that promote **democratic** reform. First, unlike most NGOs, they have a **mass membership**. Second, if they are run **democratically**, they can act as a training ground for democracy activists, who learn how to **campaign** on issues, muster support, and get themselves **elected** to union offices. And third, trade unions are one of the few NGOs that operate simultaneously in the **social**, **economic**, and **political** spheres, making them a potential **counterweight** to the **concentrated** power of economic and political elites.

It is no surprise, then, that a principal **goal of totalitarians** and **dictators** of both the right and the left has been to secure absolute **control** over organized **labor** and transform unions into pliant instruments of the **party-state**. Communist movements of the past, which claimed to draw legitimacy from the working classes, were particularly eager to capture and destroy independent labor organizations.

Today, repressive regimes are still wary of the power of organized workers. In a number of societies, unions and workers remain in the **forefront** of movements that seek **human rights**, **fair elections**, a free press, and laws to stem rampant **corruption**. Unions have played a crucial role, for example, in the effort to bring reforms to Zimbabwe in the face of murderous reprisals by the regime of President Robert **Mugabe**. In South Africa, it was the labor movement that prevented the transshipment of Chinese weapons to Zimbabwe at a time when the government of President Thabo Mbeke went out of its way to befriend Mugabe. In **Iran**, bus drivers and other workers have been important forces in the struggle for **democracy**; threatening statements issued in recent months by the country‘s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, have paid special attention to the role of workers in the opposition. In **Guinea**, unions were a critical force in demonstrations that sought **democratic change**, and union members were prominent among those massacred by the country‘s military junta in September 2009. And in **Venezuela**, unions have strongly resisted attempts by President Hugo Chavez to bring the entire labor movement under his **personal control**.

The political leaderships of many authoritarian countries—such as **Russia**, **China**, **Iran**, and **Egypt**—are acutely aware of the Solidarity example and are determined to forestall a repetition on their territory. However, only the most **oppressive regimes**—North Korea and Cuba, for example—exert the degree of tight control that marked previous eras, and relatively few countries respond to trade union activism with the sort of thuggery employed by Mugabe. Just as they have developed sophisticated mechanisms to **muzzle** independent **voices in the media**, control the activities of civil society organizations, and marginalize opposition political parties, modern authoritarian regimes have devised more nuanced strategies to keep organized labor under control. Thus the Communist Party leadership in **China** has developed an approach that combines concessions to striking workers with efforts to restrict press attention to labor **unrest**, prevent labor complaints from reaching **higher authorities** in the state or party, and above all block the formation of a nationwide **workers‘ movement** that could become an **autonomous source of power** like Solidarity.

The problems of workers are not restricted to countries with authoritarian political environments. Societies that otherwise observe a wide array of democratic freedoms—those that tolerate robust debate in the media, are sensitive to the rights of minorities, and have adopted a series of policies to achieve gender equality—may still take steps to limit the power of trade unions as agents of collective bargaining and sources of independent political power. The most glaring example of this phenomenon is the United States. While the country has adopted laws that in principle guarantee the rights of workers to form unions, engage in collective bargaining, and conduct strikes and other forms of workplace protest, these rights have been circumscribed in practice over the past three decades through a combination of court decisions, political initiatives, and government policies.

The status of workers‘ rights must also be viewed within the **context** of a global **decline** in **freedom of association**. Authoritarian governments have singled out the institutions of civil society for special attention in recent years. Targets include democratic political parties, human rights organizations, women‘s advocates, groups that investigate corruption or monitor abuse by security services, organizations that seek legal reform, and groups that champion minority rights or religious freedom—organizations, in other words, that aim to provide ordinary people with a voice or influence on public policy.

#### Establishing an unconditional right to strike is key – it’s the backbone of organized labor activities in every sector

**Pope 18** [James Gray Pope is a distinguished professor of law at Rutgers Law School and serves on the executive council of the Rutgers Council of AAUP/AFT Chapters, AFL-CIO. He can be reached at jpope@law.rutgers.edu. "Labor’s right to strike is essential." https://www.psc-cuny.org/clarion/september-2018/labor%E2%80%99s-right-strike-essential]

The recent teacher strikes **underscore** another, equally **vital** function of the strike: political **democracy**. It is no accident that strikers often serve as midwives of democracy. Examples include Poland in the 1970s, where shipyard strikers brought down the **dictatorship**, and South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, where strikers were central to the defeat of **apartheid**. Even in relatively democratic countries like the **U**nited **S**tates, workers often find it necessary to withhold their labor in order to offset the **disproportionate** power of wealthy interests and **racial elites**. During the 1930s, for example, it took mass strikes to overcome judicial resistance to progressive economic regulation. Today, workers confront a political system that has been warped by voter suppression, **gerrymandering** and the judicial protection of corporate political expenditures as “freedom of speech.” With corporate lackeys holding a majority of seats on the Supreme Court, workers may soon need **strikes** to clear the way for **progressive legislation** just as they did in the 1930s.

But if the **right to strike** is a **no-brainer**, then how did Cuomo and de Blasio justify **attacking it**? “The premise of the Taylor Law,” said Cuomo, “is you would have chaos if certain services were not provided,” namely police, firefighters and prison guards. If that’s the premise, then why not endorse Nixon’s proposal as to teachers and most public workers, and propose exceptions for truly essential services? That’s the approach of international law, and that’s what Nixon clarified she supports. But Cuomo couldn’t explain why teachers and other non-essential personnel should be denied this basic human right. As for de Blasio, he claimed that the Taylor Law accomplishes “an important public purpose” and that “there are lots of ways for workers’ rights to be acknowledged and their voices to be heard.” What public purpose? Forcing workers to accept inadequate wages and unsafe conditions? What ways to be heard? Groveling to politicians for a raise in exchange for votes?

The ban forces once-proud unions to serve as cogs in the political machines of Wall Street politicians. No sooner did Nixon endorse the right to strike than two prominent union leaders rushed to provide cover for Cuomo. Danny Donohue, president of the Civil Service Employees Association, called her “incredibly naive” and charged that “clearly, she does not have the experience needed to be governor of New York.” Evidently Cuomo, who was elected governor on a program of attacking unions and followed through with cuts to public workers’ pensions and wages, does have the requisite experience. John Samuelsen of the Transport Workers Union, which represents more than 40,000 New York City transit workers, also lashed out, saying, “I believe that she will cut and run when we shut the subway down…. As soon as her hipster Williamsburg supporters can’t take public transit to non-union Wegmans to buy their kale chips, she will call in the National Guard and the Pinkertons.”

Tough talk. Roger Toussaint, the TWU Local 100 president who led a subway strike in 2005 and was jailed for it, once tagged Samuelsen a “lapdog” for Cuomo. But “attack dog” might be more accurate in this case. Presented with a rare opportunity to trumpet workers’ most fundamental right in the glare of media attention, Samuelsen chose instead to drive a cultural wedge between traditionally minded workers and nonconformists, many of whom toil as baristas, restaurant servers and tech workers – constituencies that are fueling the anti-Trump resistance and pushing the Democratic Party to break with Wall Street.

Here we see shades of former AFL-CIO President George Meany, who helped to elect a very different Richard Nixon by refusing to endorse George McGovern, one of the most consistently pro-labor candidates in US history, on the ground that he was supported by “hippies.”

Samuelsen’s descent to Cuomo attack dog is inexplicable except as a response to the crushing pressures generated by the Taylor Law. He stands out from most other public-sector labor leaders not for sucking up to establishment politicians, but for minimizing it. Just two years ago, Samuelsen was one of the few major labor leaders who had the guts to endorse Bernie Sanders over Wall Street’s choice, Hillary Clinton. And when he was elected president of the New York local, it was on a promise to be more effective at mobilization and confrontation than Toussaint. Once on the job, however, he and his slate had to confront the devastating results of the strike ban. In addition to jailing Toussaint and penalizing strikers two days’ pay for each day on strike, a court had fined the union millions of dollars and stripped away its right to collect dues through payroll deductions. No wonder Samuelsen quietly redirected the union’s strategy away from striking and toward less confrontational mobilizations and political deal-making.

A WAY FORWARD

Any way you look at it, striking will be absolutely **essential** if American organized **labor**, now down to 11 percent of the workforce, is to revive. As AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka once warned, workers must have “their **only true weapon** – the **right to strike**,” or “organized labor in America will soon **cease to exist**.” Red-state teachers have shown the way, exercising their constitutional and human right to strike in defiance of “law.” Will Democrats and labor leaders celebrate their example, or will they follow Cuomo, de Blasio and the Republicans down the path of suppression?

#### And revitalizing union activity and worker dissent ensures democracy prevails

**Chenoweth 19** [Eric Chenoweth was the founding director of IDEE from 1985 to 1987 and has been its co-director since 1994, overseeing fundraising, publications, and special programs. Among the programs he directed was Civic Bridges in Yugoslavia, which helped civic movements to organize under the Milošević dictatorship, and promoted civil society and democracy in Serbia and other republics of former Yugoslavia. "A Forgotten Legacy: American Labor’s Pioneering Role in Global Support for Democracy." https://freedomhouse.org/article/forgotten-legacy-american-labors-pioneering-role-global-support-democracy]

There is also a growing understanding that trade unions are not historical **anachronisms** but still **essential institutions** both for defending workers from **economic exploitation** and also for protecting basic **democratic** interests and **representation**. We see a revived interest in organizing trade unions here in the **U**nited **S**tates and **Europe**. And there are certainly many countries where a revival of international **solidarity** and direct support for trade unions could bring **democratic change**, from **Hungary to Zimbabwe**. But we need to have a **genuine revival** of trade unionism here and also a realignment back from the abstract “civil society” concept of “democracy promotion” to a more **concrete** support for mass-based **worker and political organizations**. It is such organizations and movements that can both bring about and institutionalize **democratic change**. This is what didn’t happen after 1989.

#### It spills over – democratized labor creates a culture of participation that offsets authoritarian populism

**Spiegelaere 18** [Stan De Spiegelaere is a researcher at the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI). "An Unlikely Cure For Populism: Workplace Democracy." https://socialeurope.eu/an-unlikely-cure-for-populism-workplace-democracy]

Trump in the White House, **Orban** in Hungary, the Law and Justice party in Poland, the **AfD** in Germany, **Erdoğan** in Turkey… It seems like the list of challenges to our democracies is becoming **worryingly extensive**. Time to act! And the area where one should act might surprise you: our **companies**.

Democracy lives on **values** of speaking up, **participating** in decision making and being involved. It’s when societies think their voices and votes don’t matter, that democracies are **threatened** in their core. Yet, the place where we spend a good deal of our active days, companies, is quite **authoritarian**. Speaking up is not always values, participating in decision making not welcome and don’t even think about suggesting to vote out your management.

Think about it. Our societies want us to spend about 40 hours a week in **non-democratic environments**, doing as we are told and at the same time be critical, voicing and engaged citizens in the remaining time. No surprise that many resolve this **cognitive dissonance** by **retreating** from political **democracy** altogether, with all due consequences.

**Democracy starts at work**

It’s not the first time our societies are confronted with this limbo between democracy and the capitalist organization of the firm. And many countries have found ways to at least lessen this painful spread by introducing some types of democracy in the companies: employees are given a vote. Not to choose the company management (yet), but to choose some representatives that can talk with the management on their behalf.

**Unions**, works councils and similar institutions take democracy down to the company floors. **Imperfect**, sure, but they give at least a slim **democratic coating** to our rather autocratic working lives. They enable workers to voice their demands, suggest changes and denounce issues without risking personal **retaliation**.

And by doing so, they create an environment in which individual employees feel more comfortable to speak up too about their own work. About how it can be improved, about when to do what. And these hands-on experiences of democracy breed a more general **democratic culture.** According to two recent studies, employees being involved in decision making about their work are **more likely** to be **interested** in politics, have a **pro-democratic attitude,** vote, sign a petition or be active in parties or action groups. And this is what democracy is all about. It’s more than just casting a vote every so often, it’s about being **engaged** and **involved** in decision making that affects you.

The picture is quite clear: if we want political democracy to **succeed** we need citizens to have practical experiences with **participation** and involvement. And where better to organize this then in companies by giving people a vote on their representatives and a say in how they do their day-to-day work. Empowered employees bring **emancipated citizens**. No coincidence the European Trade Union Confederation aims to put this back on the policy agenda.

Populism gives us a **fish**, workplace democracy **teaches us how** to fish

Lacking voice in the workplace, lacking hands on experiences with the (often difficult) democratic decision making, many turn to politicians promising to be their voice. “I am your voice” said Trump to working America in 2016. Similarly, the German AfD stressed to be the voice of the ‘little man’.

They all promise of **restoring ‘real democracy’** by being their voice on the highest level. At the same time, all these populists take measures which break the voice of workers on the company level. Trump is making it harder for unions to organize or bargain collectively. In Hungary, the **Orban** government has limited the **right to strike** and made organizing more difficult.

#### Democratic global governance prevents existential threats

**Kolodziej 17,** [Emeritus Research Professor of Political Science @ University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Challenges to the Democratic Project for Governing Globalization, https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/96620/Kolodziej%20Introduction%205.19.17.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y]

The Rise of a Global Society

Let me first sketch the global democratic project for global governance as a point of reference. We must first recognize that globalization has given rise to a global society for the **first time** in the evolution of the human **species**. We are now **stuck with each other**; **seven and half billion** people today — nine to **ten** by **2050**: all **super connected** and **interdependent**. In greater or lesser measure, humans are mutually dependent on each other in the pursuit of their most salient values, interests, needs, and preferences — concerns about personal, community, and national **security**, sustainable economic **growth**, protection of the **environment**, the equitable **distribution** of the globe’s material wealth, human **rights**, and even the validation of their personal and social identities by others. Global **warming** is a metaphor of this morphological social change in the human condition. **All** humans are **implicated** in this looming Anthropogenic-induced **disaster** — the exhausts of billions of automobiles, the methane released in fracking for natural gas, outdated U.S. coal-fired power plants and newly constructed ones in China. Even the poor farmer burning charcoal to warm his dinner is complicit.

Since interdependence surrounds, ensnares, and binds us as a human society, the dilemma confronting the world’s diverse and divided populations is evident: the **expanding scope** as well as the **deepening**, **accumulating**, and **thickening** interdependencies of globalization urge global government. But the Kantian ideal of universal governance is beyond the reach of the world’s disparate peoples. They are **profoundly divided** by religion, culture, language, tribal, ethnic and national loyalties as well as by class, social status, race, gender, and sexual orientation. How have the democracies responded to this dilemma? How have they attempted to reconcile the growing interdependence of the world’s disputing peoples and need for global governance?

What do we mean by the governance of a human society?

A working, **legitimate government** of a human society requires simultaneous responses to three competing imperatives: Order, Welfare, and Legitimacy. While the forms of these OWL imperatives have differed radically over the course of human societal evolution, these constraints remain predicable of all human societies if they are to replicate themselves and flourish over time. The OWL imperatives are no less applicable to a global society.

1. Order refers to a society’s investment of awesome material power in an individual or body to arbitrate and resolve value, interest, and preference conflicts, which cannot be otherwise resolved by non-violent means — the Hobbesian problematic.

2. The Welfare imperative refers to the necessity of humans to eat, drink, clothe, and shelter themselves and to pursue the full-range of their seemingly limitless acquisitive appetites. Responses to the Welfare imperative, like that of Order, constitute a distinct form of governing power and authority with its own decisional processes and actors principally associated either with the Welfare or the Order imperative. Hence we have the Marxian-Adam Smith problematic.

3. Legitimacy is no less a form of governing power and authority, independent of the Order and Welfare imperatives. Either by choice, socialization, or coerced acquiescence, populations acknowledge a regime’s governing authority and their obligation to submit to its rule. Here arises the Rousseaunian problematic.

The government of a human society emerges then as an evolving, precarious balance and compromise of the ceaseless struggle of these competing OWL power domains for ascendancy of one of these imperatives over the others. It is against the backdrop of these OWL imperatives — Order, Welfare, and Legitimacy — that we are brought to the democratic project for global governance.

The Democratic Project

For Order, open societies constructed the global democratic state and, in alliance, the democratic global-state system. Collectively these initiatives led to the creation of the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, and the European Union to implement the democratic project’s system of global governance.

The democratic global state assumed all of the functions of the Hobbesian Westphalian security state — but a lot more. The global state became a Trading, Banking, Market, and Entrepreneurial state. To these functions were added those of the Science, Technology and the Economic Growth state. How else would we be able to enjoy the **Internet**, **cell phones** and iPhones, or **miracle cures**? These are the products of the **iron triangle** of the global democratic state, academic and non-profit research centers, and corporations. It is a **myth** that the Market System did all this **alone**. Fueled by increasing material wealth, the democratic global state was afforded the means to become the **Safety Net** state, providing **ed**ucation, **health**, **social security**, leisure and recreation for its population. And as the global state’s power expanded across this broad and enlarging spectrum of functions and roles, the global state was also constrained by the social compacts of the democracies to be bound by popular rule. The ironic result of the expansion of the global state’s power and social functions and its obligation to accede to popular will was a Security state and global state-system that vastly outperformed its principal authoritarian rivals in the Cold War. So much briefly is the democratic project’s response to the Order imperative.

Now let’s look at the democratic project’s response to the Welfare imperative. The democracies institutionalized Adam Smith’s vision of a global Market System. The Market System trucks and barters, Smith’s understanding of what it means to be human. But it does a lot more. The Market System facilitates and fosters the free movement of people, goods and services, capital, ideas, values, scientific discoveries, and best technological practices. Created is a vibrant global civil society oblivious to state boundaries. What we now experience is De Tocqueville’s Democracy in America on global steroids.

As for the imperative of Legitimacy, the social compacts of the democracies affirmed Rousseau’s conjecture that all humans are free and therefore equal. Applied to elections each citizen has one vote. Democratic regimes are also obliged to submit to the rule of law, to conduct free and fair elections, to honor majority rule while protecting minority rights, and to **promote** human rights at home and **abroad**.

The Authoritarian Threat to the Democratic Project

The **democratic project** for **global governance** is now at **risk**. Let’s start with the challenges posed by authoritarian regimes, with Russia and China in the lead. Both Russia and China would **rest global governance** on Big Power spheres of influence. Both would assume **hegemonic status** in their respective regions, asserting their versions of the **Monroe Doctrine**. Their regional hegemony would then **leverage** their claim to be global **Big Powers**. Moscow and Beijing would then have an equal say with the United States and the West in sharing and shaping global governance. The Russo-Chinese global system of Order would ascribe to Russia and China governing privileges not accorded to the states both aspire to dominate. Moscow and Beijing would enjoy **unconditional** recognition of their state **sovereignty**, territorial integrity, and non-interference in their domestic affairs, but they would reserve to themselves the right to **intervene** in the domestic and foreign affairs of the states and peoples under their tutelage in pursuit of their hegemonic interests. President Putin has announced that Russia’s **imperialism** encompasses the **millions** of Russians living in the former republics of the Soviet Union. Russia contends that Ukraine and Belarus also fall under Moscow’s purported claim to historical sovereignty over these states. Forceful re-absorption of **Crimea** and control over eastern **Ukraine** are viewed by President Putin as Russia’s historical inheritances. Self-determination is not extended to these states or to other states and peoples of the former Soviet Union. Moscow rejects their right to freely align, say, with the European Union or, god forbid, with NATO.

In contrast to the democratic project, universal in its reach, the Russo-Chinese conception of a stable global order rests on more **tenuous** and **conflict-prone** **ethno-national foundations**. Russia’s proclaimed enemies are the United States and the European Union. Any means that undermines the unity of these entities is viewed by Moscow as a gain. The endgame is a **poly-anarchical** interstate system, potentially as **war-prone** as the Eurocentric system **before** and **after World War I**, but now populated by states with **nuclear weapons.**

Global politics becomes a **zero-sum game**.

Moscow has **no compunctions** about **corrupting** the **electoral processes** of democratic states, conducting threatening **military exercises** along NATO’s east border, or violating the more than 30-year old treaty to ban the deployment of Intermediate-Range **missile launchers**, capable of **firing nuclear weapons**. Nothing less than the **dissolution** of the democratic project is Moscow’s solution for global Order.

China also seeks a revision of the global Order. It declares sovereignty over the **South China Sea**. Rejected is The Hague Tribunal’s dismissal of this claim. Beijing continues to build artificial islands as military bases in the region to assert its control over these troubled waters. If it could have its way, China would decide which states and their naval vessels, notably those of the United States, would have access to the South China Sea.

Where Moscow and Beijing depart sharply are in their contrasting responses to the Welfare imperative. Moscow has **no solution** other than to use its oil and gas resources as instruments of **coercive diplomacy** and to weaken or **dismantle** existing Western **alliances** and international economic **institutions**. China can ill-afford the dismantling of the global market system. In his address to the Davos gathering in January of this year, Chinese President Xi asserted that “any attempt to cut off the flow of capital, technologies, products, industries and people between economies, and channel the waters in the ocean back into isolated lakes and creeks is simply not possible.” Adam Smith could not have said it better. Both Moscow and Beijing have been particularly assiduous to legitimate their regimes. President Putin’s case for legitimacy is much broader and deeper than a pure appeal to Russian nationalism. He stresses the spiritual and cultural unity of Russianspeaking populations spread across the states of the post-Soviet space. A central core of that unity is the Russian Orthodox Church, a key prop of the regime. Reviled is Western secularism, portrayed as corrupt and decadent, viewed by Putin as an existential threat to the Russian World. The Chinese regime, secular and atheistic, can hardly rely on religion to legitimate the regime. Beijing principally rests its legitimacy on its record of economic development and nationalism. The regime’s success in raising the economic standards of hundreds of millions of Chinese reinforces its claim to legitimacy in two ways. On the one hand, the Communist Party can rightly claim to have raised hundreds of millions of Chinese from poverty within a generation. On the other hand, the Communist Party insists that its model of economic growth, what critics scorn as crony capitalism, is superior to the unfettered, market-driven model of the West. Hence capitalism with Chinese characteristics is more effective and legitimate than the Western alternative.

Where Moscow and Beijing do **converge** is in fashioning their responses to the Legitimacy imperative. They **repudiate Western liberal democracy**. Both reject criticisms of their human rights abuses as interventions into their domestic affairs. Dissidents are harassed, incarcerated, or, in some instances, assassinated. Journalists are co-opted, selfcensored, silenced, or imprisoned. Social media is state controlled. Both the Putin regime and the Chinese Communist Party monopolize the public narratives evaluating governmental policy. Transparency and accountability are hostage to governmental secrecy. Civil society has few effective avenues to criticize governmental actions. Moscow adds an ironic twist to these controls in manipulating national elections to produce an elected authoritarian regime.

Whether either of these authoritarian responses to the Legitimacy imperative will survive **remains to be seen**. Beijing’s use of economic performance and nationalism to underwrite its legitimacy is a double-edged sword. If economic performance falters, then legitimacy suffers. Whether top-down nationalism will always control nationalism from the bottom-up is also problematic. In resting legitimacy on nationalism, dubious historical claims, and crypto-religious beliefs, Moscow is spared Beijing’s economic performance test. That said, there is room for skepticism that in the long-run Russians will exchange lower standards of living for corrupt rule in pursuit of an elusive Russian mission antagonistic to the West. The implosion of the Soviet Union, due in no small part to its retarded economic and technological development, suggests that the patience of the Russian people has limits. Demonstrations in March 2017 against state corruption in 82 Russian cities, led largely by Russian youth, reveal these limits. They are an ominous omen for the future of the Putin kleptocracy. Meanwhile, neither Russia nor China offers much to solve the Legitimacy imperative of global governance.

#### Democratic regress causes global war.

**Diamond ’19** [Larry; 2019; Professor of Sociology and Political Science and at Stanford University, Ph.D. in Sociology from Stanford University; Ill Winds, “Conclusion: A New Birth of Freedom,” Ch. 14]

In such a **near future**, my fellow experts would no longer talk of “**democratic erosion**.” We would be **spiraling downward** into a time of **democratic despair**, recalling Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s grim observation from the 1970s that liberal democracy “is where the world **was**, not where **it is going**.” 5

The world **pulled out** of that downward spiral—but it took new, more purposeful **American leadership**. The planet was not so lucky in the 1930s, when the **global implosion** of democracy led to a **catastrophic world war**, between a **rising axis** of **emboldened dictatorships** and a shaken and economically depressed collection of self-doubting democracies.

These are the stakes. Expanding democracy—with its liberal norms and constitutional commitments—is a **crucial foundation** for **world peace** and **security**. Knock that away, and our most basic hopes and assumptions will be imperiled.

The problem is not just that the ground is **slipping**. It is that we are perched on a **global precipice**. That ledge has been **gradually giving way** for a decade. If the **erosion** continues, we may well reach a **tipping point** where democracy goes **bankrupt** suddenly—plunging the world into **depths of** oppression and **aggression** that we have not seen since the end of **World War II**. As a political scientist, I know that our theories and tools are not nearly good enough to tell us just how close we are getting to that point—until it happens.

### AC – Inequality Advantage

#### Strikes are key to broad unionization and solve inequality

**Bahn 19** [Kate Bahn is the director of labor market policy and interim chief economist at the Washington Center for Equitable Growth. Her areas of research include gender, race, and ethnicity in the labor market, care work, and monopsonistic labor markets. Previously, she was an economist at the Center for American Progress. Bahn also formerly served as the executive vice president and secretary for the International Association for Feminist Economics. Bahn received her Ph.D. in economics from the New School for Social Research and her B.A. from Hampshire College. "The once and future role of strikes in ensuring U.S. worker power." https://equitablegrowth.org/the-once-and-future-role-of-strikes-in-ensuring-u-s-worker-power/]

In addition to Hertel-Fernandez’s work showing broad support for unions generally and increasing support for bold labor actions, more policymakers and advocates are providing much-needed **proposals** on how to **foster** a robust U.S. labor market and strengthen institutions that would make collective action more **successful**. Emblematic of this is Harvard Law’s Labor and Worklife Program’s Clean Slate Project, led by Sharon Block and Ben Sachs of Harvard University, which gathers academic experts and labor organizers to develop strong proposals that would increase worker bargaining power. Multiple 2020 presidential campaigns have followed suit, with new proposals to boost unions. Conclusion **Unions** in the United States are at their lowest level of density since they became legal around 80 years ago, with 6.4 percent of private-sector workers in unions today. Yet there is increasing **energy** for **bringing back** this **crucial force** to balance the power of capital and ensure the fruits of economic growth are more **broadly shared** among **everyone** who creates it. Strikes are a **compelling tool** for **dealing** with rising U.S. **income and wealth inequality**—just as they were in an earlier era of economic **inequality**, when unions first gained their legal **stature** in the U.S. labor market.

#### And they’re labor’s strongest weapon

**Press 18** [Alex Press is an assistant editor at Jacobin and a freelance writer based in New York. "It’s time to acknowledge that strikes work." https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/posteverything/wp/2018/05/31/its-time-to-acknowledge-that-strikes-work/]

While labor **activists** refer to the ability to **strike** as “**labor’s strongest weapon**,” Americans’ willingness to strike has drastically subsided in the past few decades. As economic analyst Doug Henwood recently pointed out, the average number of days of “idleness” — the official term for days lost to work stoppages — was nearly 24,550,000 between 1947 and 1979. In the years since 2010, the average is 708,000, a 97 percent drop. The steep decline is a sign of a labor movement on the back foot, as union membership declines, wages stagnate, and job instability increases. Throw in a conciliatory regime of labor law, one that prioritizes “labor peace” and outlaws secondary strikes — not to mention the incorporation of no-strike clauses into contracts, which stipulate high fines and even imprisonment should workers strike anyway — and you get our recent, largely strikeless, present.

But strikes **work for a reason**. As Chris Brooks, a Labor Notes staff member, put it, workers’ power lies in their ability to withdraw their labor. “The only reason our **communities function** is because workers **show up** every day,” Brooks said. But, he added, in the wake of the recent strike wave, “workers are recognizing they have **leverage**” when they withdraw their labor. The recent successful strikes bear out that argument: In those states where teachers have struck, they’ve won **concessions** from GOP-dominated legislatures that would never have otherwise been willing to budge.

#### The productivity costs are offset by inequality and democratic decline – both turn econ and outweigh the link

**Doucouliagos 19** [Chris Doucouliagos Professor of Economics, Department of Economics, Deakin Business School and Alfred Deakin Institute for Citizenship and Globalisation, Deakin University. "Unions do hurt profits, but not productivity, and they remain a bulwark against a widening wealth gap." https://theconversation.com/unions-do-hurt-profits-but-not-productivity-and-they-remain-a-bulwark-against-a-widening-wealth-gap-107139]

Some advocates of **laissez-faire capitalism** argue that trade unions are bad for **productivity**. “With few exceptions,” according to one American economist, George Reisman, “unions openly combat the rise in the productivity of labour.”

Other **economists disagree**. “Unionisation and **high** worker **productivity** often go hand-in-hand,” say Harley Shaiken and David Madland. “**Fairness** on the job and **wages** that reflect marketplace success contribute to more **motivated workers**.”

So who’s right?

To answer this question, my colleagues Richard **Freeman** and Patrice **Laroche** and I surveyed the **global evidence** from more than **300 studies** on the **economic impact** of unionisation.

We conclude that unions do not, overall, **reduce productivity**, though it varies according to specific circumstances.

Unionisation does make businesses less profitable for the owners. But importantly, it also reduces income **inequality**, a useful social function given the problems that flow from a widening **wealth gap**.

National differences

Productivity refers to the efficiency of turning inputs into outputs. It’s a key measure of economic performance. A nation’s productivity raises its per capita GDP.

The evidence from Australia is too thin to draw a credible conclusion (there are just a handful of studies), so our overall findings reflect evidence from other nations.

That evidence is mixed. In Britain, for example, union influence has reduced company productivity. In the US, unionisation appears to be associated with higher productivity in the construction and education sectors, but has made no difference in manufacturing. In developing countries, the overall effect is generally positive.

Such differences can be explained by variations in labour market institutions. These include employment protections, minimum wages and unemployment benefits. Laws influence social attitudes, and vice versa, which in turn affect relative negotiating power and whether unions and employers value cooperation over conflict.

In theory, the more labour and capital **cooperate**, the more **productive** an enterprise is likely to be, providing higher **wages** and greater **job security** to workers and higher profits to shareholders. Less cooperation means **lower productivity**.

Taking a share of profits

The evidence shows **unionisation** is associated with **lower profits**, because unions secure higher wages and benefits for their members.

By reducing the profitability of an investment, unions may discourage further investment as owners of capital seek higher profits elsewhere.

Further, unions can hurt business when they exercise their power to disrupt (through strikes and other industrial action). Union corruption might also add to business costs.

But unions are by no means **all bad for business**. In representing worker interests, they can help make a company a more **attractive** place to work, reducing **turnover** and increasing employees’ commitment to business success. Higher union **wages** and **benefits** also attract more job applicants, allowing **management** to select the **best workers**.

But a benefit to society

Most importantly, from a societal point of view, unions reduce pay **inequalities**. They increase the relative pay of lower skilled workers. They help to establish pay norms that extend beyond **unionised companies**.

**Inequality** is **bad** for economic **growth**, because it discourages **investment** in **education** and **innovation**.

It is bad for **democracy**. It widens social divisions within societies and reduces participation and political **engagement**. It drives the rich to oppose democratic reforms that might lead to **wealth redistribution**.

#### Inequality-driven collapse escalates global hotspots. It’s existential.

Mathew **Maavak 21**, Author at Atlas Institute for International Affairs, external researcher (PLATBIDAFO) at the Kazimieras Simonavicius University in Vilnius, Lithuania, “Horizon 2030: Will Emerging Risks Unravel Our Global Systems?,” Salus Journal, Vol. 9, No. 1, April 2021, pp 2-17

But what exactly is a global system? Our planet itself is **a**n 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**-20**20s**. This will lead to a trickle-down **melt**down, impacting **all areas of human activity**.

The economist John Mauldin (2018) similarly warns that the “20**20s** 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 20**08** 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 threat**s **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**, **contaminate**d **food** and a general **lower**ing 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 Calabria-based ‘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** sentiment**s**. 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 S**outh **C**hina **S**ea; **No**rth **Ko**rean **prolif**eration 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-interactionadaptivity equation in the Middle East. Soleimani was simply a cog who got replaced.

#### Income inequality drives climate change and environmental collapse

**Holmberg 17** – Susan Holmberg, Fellow at the Roosevelt Institute ("Boiling Points: The Inextricable Links Between Inequality and Climate Change," *Roosevelt Institute*, May 8th, <http://rooseveltinstitute.org/boiling-points/>)

Nevertheless, there is ample research showing a clear and positive relationship between climate change and economic and social inequality, which has enormous implications for changing our climate conversation and **building alliances across two siloed movements and agendas**. After providing some background on how researchers arrived at this result, this section describes the research evidence and asks whether inequality is a cause of environmental damage, including the higher levels of greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming, or whether inequality is only correlated with environmental degradation, meaning that societies with high inequality levels are also likely to pollute their environments more. We argue that both statements are true: **Drivers of inequality** —such as financialization and corporate short-termism— also **produce environmental harm** and there are specific mechanisms by which inequality itself damages our environment. We discuss both of these dynamics and then the messaging potential of these findings. Since the early 1990s, the academic conversation on the relationship between socio-economic factors and the environment has mainly focused on the effect of economic growth on pollution levels, with the debate pivoting on what economists call the Environmental Kuznets Curve (EKC). The EKC stems from the 1991 paper that economists Gene Grossman and Alan Krueger wrote on the environmental impacts of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); it was a cross-country study that they argued demonstrated pollution would initially rise from NAFTA, but that rising incomes would, over time, improve air and water quality. Economists swiftly picked up the discussion from Grossman and Krueger, developing what Papanyotou (1993) first coined the EKC, an inverted u-shaped curve that illustrates a hypothesized relationship between economic growth and environmental quality. The logic of the EKC is that as the economy grows, environmental pollution increases until it reaches a certain threshold, at which point society can afford measures that change this trajectory, for example environmental regulations or technological innovation. While there was much enthusiasm for the EKC initially, there have been many challenges to its results, particularly that there are missing variables necessary to accurately understand he relationship between income growth and environmental quality (Shafik 1994; Stern 2003). Recognizing the limitations of the EKC, a group of social scientists have turned to economic and social inequality to explain variations in environmental quality measures like pollution levels, biodiversity, consumption pressure, etc. The following provides a brief overview of the main available research evidence—presented in chronological order—and then delves into how scholars explain the causality of this relationship. Economist James Boyce (1994) was the first to theorize that income distribution affects society’s ability to demand environmental quality. His central thesis is that when power and wealth are distributed more unequally, the rich and powerful (who gain more than others from environmentally degrading activities) are more able to impose environmental harm on the poorer and less powerful (who bear disproportionate costs). Boyce and Torras (1998) tested this hypothesis by conducting a study of international variations in seven indicators of air and water quality, including the same variables used in the original EKC study by Grossman and Krueger, and observed that **inequalities in income** and the distribution of power, measured by levels of literacy, political rights, and civil liberties, **are significantly correlated with worse environmental outcomes**. According to the authors, these indicators “are found to have particularly strong effects on environmental quality in low-income countries.” They found that once these inequality variables are included in a multivariate analysis, the apparent EKC relationship between pollution and per capita income largely disappears. Mikkelson et al. (2007) conducted the first study that looks at the impacts of inequality on biodiversity loss. They found that among countries and U.S. states, the “number of species that are threatened or declining increases substantially with the Gini ratio of income inequality.” This is after controlling for factors like biophysical conditions, human population size, and per capita GDP. “Our results suggest that economic reforms would go hand in hand with, if not serving as a prerequisite for, effective conservation.” Holland et al. (2009) ran a similar study with similar results. “Our results confirm that socioeconomic inequality is an important factor to consider when predicting rates of anthropogenic biodiversity loss.” Boyce et al. (1999) looked at environmental quality across the 50 states and asked why it’s better in some states than others. Boyce explains: “Where income equality was greater, where educational equality was greater, and where the fairness of fiscal policy in terms of both the tax system **and access to services like Medicaid was greater**, **you** tended to **find less environmental degradation**.” UK geographer Danny Dorling (2010) conducted a study that looked at the world’s 25 riches countries, looking at behaviors like consumption of meat, water use, production of waste, flights, and overall effects on ecology. He found that “in all these affluent countries there are inequalities, and in those where inequalities are the greatest it is now becoming evident that people, on average, pollute much more.” Ash et al. (2010) conducted a study comparing industrial air pollution across U.S. metro areas. The authors looked at the distribution of air pollution impacts across income levels and racial groups and found that in cities where the gaps in pollution exposure between people of color and whites are larger, there tended to be much more pollution in general. Australian researchers Andrich et al. (2010) identify inequality’s impacts on the “stability of major systems including the social, terrestrial, water and mineral industry.” Finally, economist Jungho Baek and his coauthors (2013) find that more equal income distribution in the U.S. results in better environmental quality in both the short and long run. Another causal linkage between inequality and sustainability that social scientists have identified is the role of trust. Specifically, when a society or a community has high levels of inequality, this fosters less overall trust among people, which affects the environment in two ways. First, as Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) argue, higher levels of trust and social cohesion—social capital—foster public engagement and a civic awareness that is necessary for demanding policy protections for the environment. Second, levels of trust predict the success of sustainable group management and use of natural resources, which is an often-neglected topic in policy discussions. While the first role of trust—fostering social cohesion and civic awareness—is more intuitive, the second requires some explanation. Garret Hardin’s 1968 “The Tragedy of the Commons” article made the case that groups of self-interested humans, left to their own devices, would inevitably destroy natural resources. Elinor Ostrom, however, won the Nobel Prize in economics in 2009 for her work demonstrating that groups can, in fact, successfully manage common pool resources (e.g. community-managed fisheries, irrigation systems, and even the community-controlled energy utilities mentioned above) through carefully designed and evolving rules and practices. Ostrom (1990) argued that one of the key ingredients for successful common pool resource (CPR) management is the presence of trust within the group. While Ostrom herself didn’t address economic and power disparities in her work on CPRs (Holmberg 2011), other scholars have added it to her analysis, arguing that inequality degrades trust levels among groups, which undermines CPR efforts and outcomes. For example, Cardenas (2006) writes that groups can find it difficult to cooperate “if, for instance, there are wealth distances in the group that limit the possibility of getting group communication to be effective for building trust, cooperation, and a commonly shared goal.” Justino (2015) also argues that “group level-trust and cooperation” are central mechanisms for understanding how inequality affects collective action. Since he first hypothesized the causal influence of inequality on the environment in 1994, Boyce has emphasized the role of political power in this relationship. Specifically, he posits that wealth and income translate into political power that then allows people to use their influence both to demand more goods that impose pollution on others and to demand more environmental protections for themselves. The result is environmental injustice whereby exposure to pollution and other hazards is concentrated disproportionately in less influential communities. Boyce also argues that the total magnitude of environmental harm depends on the magnitude of inequality. This is because, in unequal societies, the individuals and companies that benefit from environmental “bads” tend to be more powerful than those who bear the costs. Therefore, the greater the inequality, the greater the incentive and ability for the wealthy and powerful to produce more environmental harm for which others pay the price. Even seemingly benign environmental regulatory mechanisms can play a role in leveraging wealth and power in environmental outcomes. The Reagan administration long ago mandated that cost-benefit analysis would be the primary tool for EPA regulatory decisions such as an allowable amount of pesticide use or exact levels of resource extraction. The belief was, and still is, that cost-benefit analysis is the most objective, transparent, and efficient method to make policy decisions. But in addition to the fact that cost-benefit analyses are often criticized for being widely inaccurate and politically biased, benefits are typically measured, via survey, by communities’ “willingness to pay” for environmental improvements, a procedure that diminishes the political voices of marginalized groups. For example, wealthy respondents say they are willing to pay more than the poor for keeping a landfill incinerator out of their communities. Thus, despite the fact that common sense tells us impoverished and disempowered communities would just as much like to live in a clean and safe environment as the more wealthy and powerful, cost-benefit analyses conclude otherwise. The end result is that a cost- benefit survey can recommend a higher level of allowable pollution than if the survey results were based on a more equitable income distribution (Ackerman and Heinzerling 2004). The world is filled with examples of outsized political and corporate forces creating environmental destruction while its victims have little power to stop or minimize it. The protests at Standing Rock Sioux Reservation remind us how vulnerable native groups, for example, are to exploitation on their own lands. As Winona LaDuke writes in a report for the White House: The toxic legacy left by fossil fuel and uranium development on tribal lands remains today and will persist for generations, even without additional development. Mines and electrical generation facilities have had devastating health and cultural impacts in Indian country at all stages of the energy cycle – cancer from radioactive mining waste to respiratory illness caused by coal-fired power plant and oil refinery air emissions on and near Native lands. Native communities have been targeted in all proposals for long-term nuclear waste storage. The protests at Standing Rock also remind us that it takes enormous mobilization and political will to push back against the powers that be and stop them from perpetrating further climate injustice. It would be incredibly useful to have more studies on this particular intersection—and to explore the causation more specifically, in the way that Boyce and Torras (1998) identified political variables and their relationship to environmental harm. One specific project that would be very helpful is to replicate Boyce et al.’s 1999 research, which linked relative income inequality with environmental quality across the 50 states. Given the current political landscape in which climate activists are turning to states to develop policy, it would be especially useful to have a sense of how state-level economic conditions and policies are connected to environmental outcomes. In addition to more academic research, the idea of inequality as a driver of climate change must also be fully integrated into our public debates around both climate change and inequality. We have long siloed these conversations because so many of us buy into the idea that there is a tradeoff between them. Thus the left has been distracted by a misguided debate about whether it is possible to pursue robust economic growth while protecting the environment. Since the Reagan administration, Republicans have exploited this confusion by arguing that protecting the environment is a job killer, something the press has also parroted over the years. Our inequality debate has advanced enormously since the first tents were pitched in Zuccotti Park. We have made enormous headway in our understanding of inequality’s drivers and, thanks to the Movement for Black Lives, have improved our understanding of the racial dimensions of inequality. We are sorely lacking, however, in incorporating any analysis of climate change and sustainability into that analysis. Similarly, our climate discussion has lacked a strong, cohesive narrative. The false dichotomy of the economy and the environment has made environmental arguments disjointed, and too focused on countering climate denialism. Climate justice, while a powerful and absolutely essential message, does not necessarily address that dichotomy. The evidence that inequality both correlates with and drives environmental harm empowers us to shed our awkwardness in trying to solve these two issues simultaneously. When we discuss the issue of corporate short-termism or financial regulation, we can incorporate into our arguments the fact that tackling these is essential for our environment. More broadly, **recognizing that solving inequality is actionable climate policy** builds on the foundation of climate justice, providing an **incredibly strong narrative for designing good policy** and **mobilizing a massive, multi-interest climate movemen**t. This argument also tells us that that we must not ignore the distribution issues of climate policies, which are the subject of the next section. **Climate policies that exacerbate inequality ultimately will not solve our climate problems**.

**And it ruins the economy – closing gaps solves**

**Collins 17**, (senior scholar at the Institute for Policy Studies, where he directs the Program on Inequality and coedits Inequality.org. His newest book is Born on Third Base: A One Percenter Makes the Case for Tackling Inequality, Bringing Wealth Home, and Committing to the Common Good (Chelsea Green, 2016). He is coauthor, with Bill Gates Sr., of Wealth and Our Commonwealth: Why America Should Tax Accumulated Fortunes (Beacon, 2004). He is coauthor with Mary Wright of The Moral Measure of the Economy (Orbis, 2008), about Christian ethics and economic life. His previous books include 99 to 1: How Wealth Inequality is Wrecking the World and What We Can Do About It (Berrett-Koehler, 2012). He is also the cofounder of Wealth for the Common Good that has merged with the Patriotic Millionaires, two efforts to organize members of the 1 percent to advocate for fair tax policy. He is coauthor of the August 2016 report, Ever Growing Gap, about the racial wealth divide and author of Gilded Giving: Top Heavy Philanthropy in an Age of Extreme Inequality, a November 2016 report on the impact of inequality on philanthropy, Reversing Inequality: Unleashing the Transformative Potential of an Equitable Economy, https://thenextsystem.org/inequality#inequality-trends)

The conventional economic wisdom is that we should tolerate high levels of inequality to foster economic growth. But do policies that increase equality slow economic growth? And do aggressive pro-growth policies worsen inequality? New research reveals the opposite, increasingly showing that excessive **inequality** undermines **economic stability** and slows traditional measures of economic **growth** while fostering **volatility**, **bubbles**, and punishing cycles of **booms and busts**.

The strong parallels between 1929, on the eve of the Great Depression, and the 2008 economic meltdown are instructive here. Both economic recessions came on the heels of a decade when rewards were divvied up extremely inequitably. Before both downturns, private corporations and government encouraged the lower and middle classes to borrow, extending easy access to credit. Also during both, household debt nearly doubled. Wages stagnated for most workers while the wealthiest 1 percent captured a huge percentage of income gains. And then as now, when financial markets experience inequality-induced volatility, investors of capital become cautious. Many understand that rigged rules favor inside actors and politically connected financiers, and, so, if they lack insider information they’ll think better of investing it back into the economy.

Our economic history doesn’t have to be our economic destiny. Research by the International Monetary Fund (**IMF**) and the National Bureau of Economic Research finds that more equal societies have stronger rates of **growth**, enjoy longer economic **expansions**, and **recover** from economic downturns faster.33 The flipside: unequal societies are less **resistant** to both financial crises and political instability—a possible explanation for the sluggish and uneven recovery from the Great Recession of 2008.34

Growing inequality’s toll on economic stability and private markets has enormous consequences. According to the IMF, unequal income trends in the US mean that future economic expansions will be just one third as long as in the 1960s, before the income divide widened, if we stay on our current path.35

#### Ensuring the right to strike solves democracy and inequality

**Kiai 17** [Mr. Maina Kiai, Special Rapporteur on freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, took up his functions as the first Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in May 2011. He is appointed in his personal capacity as an independent expert by the UN Human Rights Council. "UN rights expert: “Fundamental right to strike must be preserved”." https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21328&LangID=E]

The **right to strike** is also an intrinsic **corollary** of the fundamental right of **freedom of association**. It is **crucial** for millions of women and men around the world to assert collectively their rights in the workplace, including the right to just and favourable conditions of work, and to work in dignity and without fear of intimidation and persecution. Moreover, protest action in relation to government social and economic policy, and against negative corporate practices, forms part of the basic **civil liberties** whose respect is **essential** for the meaningful exercise of trade union rights. This right enables them to engage with companies and governments on a more equal footing, and Member States have a positive obligation to protect this right, and a negative obligation not to interfere with its exercise.

Moreover, **protecting** the right to **strike** is not simply about States fulfilling their **legal obligations**. It is also about them creating **democratic** and equitable **societies** that are sustainable in the long run. The concentration of power in **one sector** – whether in the hands of government or business – inevitably leads to the **erosion of democracy**, and an increase in **inequalities** and **marginalization** with all their attendant consequences. The right to strike is a check on this **concentration of power**.

I deplore the various attempts made to erode the right to strike at national and multilateral levels. In this regard, I welcome the positive role played by the ILO’s Government Group in upholding workers’ right to strike by recognizing that ‘without protecting a right to strike, freedom of association, in particular the right to organize activities for the purpose of promoting and protecting workers’ interests, cannot be fully realized.’

I urge all stakeholders to ensure that the **right to strike** be fully **preserved** and **respected** across the globe and in all arenas”, the expert concluded.

#### Capitalism is sustainable and humanity’s only hope against catastrophic climate change

Shi-Ling Hsu 21, D'Alemberte Professor of Law at the Florida State University College of Law, Sept 2021, Capitalism and the Environment, Cambridge University Press, p. 50-52

2.8 CHOOSING CAPITALISM TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT: LARGE-SCALE DEPLOYMENT Finally, a third reason that capitalism is suited to the job of environmental restoration and protection is its ability to undertake and complete projects at very large scales. In keeping with a major thesis of this book, construction at very large scales should give us a little pause, because of the propensity of capital to metastasize into a source of political resistance to change. But some global problems, especially climate change, may require very large-scale enterprises. For example, because greenhouse gas emissions may already have passed a threshold for catastrophic climate change, technology is almost certainly needed to chemically capture carbon dioxide from ambient air. But carbon dioxide is only about 0.15% of ambient air by molecular weight, and a tremendous amount of ambient air must be processed just to capture a small amount of carbon dioxide. This technology has often been referred to as "direct air capture," or "carbon removal." Given that inherent limitation, direct air capture technology must be deployed at vast scales in order to make any appreciable difference in greenhouse gas concentrations. There is certainly no guarantee that direct air capture will be a silver bullet. But if it is to be an effectual item on a menu of survival techniques, it will more assuredly be accomplished under the incentives of a capitalist economy. Capitalism might also help with the looming crisis of climate change by helping to ensure the supply of vital life staples such as food, water, and other basic needs in future shortages caused by climate-change. In a climate-changed future, there is the distinct possibility that supplies of vital life staples may run short, possibly for long periods of time. Droughts are projected to last longer, with water supplies and growing conditions increasingly precarious. Capitalist enterprise could, first of all, provide the impetus to finally reform a dizzying multitude of price distortions that plague water supply and agriculture worldwide. Second, capitalist enterprise can undertake scale production of some emergent technologies that might alleviate shortages. Desalination technology can convert salty seawater into drinkable freshwater.54 A number of environmental and economic issues need to be solved to deploy these technologies at large scales, but in a crisis, solutions will be more likely to present themselves. A technology that is already being adopted to produce food is the modernized version of old-fashioned greenhouses. The tiny country of the Netherlands, with its 17 million people crowded onto 13,000 square miles, is the second largest food exporter in the world,55 exporting fully three-quarters that of the United States in 2017.56 The secret to Dutch agriculture is its climate-controlled, low-energy green-houses that project solar panel-powered artificial sunlight around the clock. Dutch greenhouses produce lettuce at ten times the yield57 and tomatoes at fifteen times the yield outdoors in the United States58 while using less than one-thirteenth the amount of water,59 very little in the way of synthetic pesticides and, of course, very little fertilizer given its advanced composting techniques. Sustained shortages in a climate-changed future might require that a capitalist take hold of greenhouse growing and expand production to feed the masses that might otherwise revolt. 2.9 CHOOSE CAPITALISM Clearly, the job in front of humankind is enormous, complex, and many-faceted. The best hope is to be able to identify certain human impacts that are clearly harmful to the global environment, and to disincentivize them. Getting back to notions of institutions in capitalism, what is crucial is aligning the right incentives with profit-making activity. What capitalism does so well — beyond human comprehension — is coordinate activity and send broad signals about scarcity. Information about a wide variety of environmental phenomena is extremely difficult to collect and process. If a set of environmental taxes can help establish a network of environ-mental prices, then an unfathomably large and complex machinery will have been set in motion in the right direction. Also, because of the need for new scientific solutions to this daunting list of problems, new science and technology is desperately needed. Capitalism is tried and true in terms of producing innovation. Again drawing upon the study of institutions, it is not so much that individuals need a profit-motive in order to tinker, but the prospect of profit-making has to be present in order for institutions, including corporations, to devote resources, attention, and energy towards the development of solutions to environmental problems. Corporations can and should demonstrate social responsibility by attempting to mitigate their impacts on the global environment, but a much more conscious push for new knowledge, new techniques, and new solutions are needed. Finally, the scale of needed change is profound. Huge networks of infrastructure centered upon a fossil fuel-centered economy must somehow be replaced or adapted to new ways of generating, transmitting, consuming, and storing energy. A global system of feeding seven billion humans (and counting), unsustainable on its face, must be morphed into something else that can fill that huge role. About a billion and a half cars and trucks in the world must, over time, be swapped out for vehicles that must be dramatically different. This is a daunting to-do list, but look a bit more carefully among the gloomy news. Elon Musk, a freewheeling, pot-smoking entrepreneur shows signs of breaking into not one, but two industries dominated by behemoths with political power. Thanks to California emissions standards, automobile manufacturers have developed cars that emit a fraction of what they did less than a generation ago. Hybrid electric vehicles have thoroughly penetrated an American market that powerful American politicians had tried to cordon off for American manufacturers only. At least two companies have developed meat substitutes that are now widely judged to be indistinguishable from meat, and have established product outposts in the ancient power centers of fast food, McDonald's and Burger King. The tiny country of the Netherlands, about half the size of West Virginia, exports almost as much food as the United States, able to ship fresh produce all the way to Africa. At bottom, all of these accomplishments and thousands more are and were capitalist in nature. While they collectively repre-sent a trifle of what still needs to be accomplished, they were also undertaken without the correct incentives in place, and thus also represent the tremendous promise of capitalism.

#### Growth is sustainable and no environment impact – it’s totally safe

Bailey 18 [Ronald Bailey, shortlisted by the editors of Nature Biotechnology as one of the personalities who have made the "most significant contributions" to biotechnology. From 1987 to 1990, Bailey was a staff writer for Forbes magazine, covering economic, scientific and business topics. His articles and reviews have appeared in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, Commentary, The Public Interest, Smithsonian, and many other publications. Prior to joining Reason in 1997, Bailey produced several weekly national public television series including Think Tank and TechnoPolitics, as well as several documentaries for PBS television and ABC News. In 1993, he was the Warren T. Brookes Fellow in Environmental Journalism at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. Climate Change Problems Will Be Solved Through Economic Growth. March 12, 2018. https://reason.com/blog/2018/03/12/climate-change-problems-will-be-solved-t]

In an essay for The Breakthrough Journal, Pinker notes that such optimism "is commonly dismissed as the 'faith that technology will save us.' In fact, it is a skepticism that the status quo will doom us—that knowledge and behavior will remain frozen in their current state for perpetuity. Indeed, a naive faith in stasis has repeatedly led to prophecies of environmental doomsdays that never happened." In his new book, Enlightenment Now, Pinker points out that "as the world gets richer and more tech-savvy, it dematerializes, decarbonizes, and densifies, sparing land and species." Economic growth and technological progress are the solutions not only to climate change but to most of the problems that bedevil humanity.

Boisvert, meanwhile, tackles and rebuts the apocalyptic prophecies made by eco-pessimists like Wallace-Wells, specifically with regard to food production and availabilty, water supplies, heat waves, and rising seas.

"No, this isn't a denialist screed," Boisvert writes. "Human greenhouse emissions will warm the planet, raise the seas and derange the weather, and the resulting heat, flood and drought will be cataclysmic. Cataclysmic—but not apocalyptic. While the climate upheaval will be large, the consequences for human well-being will be small. Looked at in the broader context of economic development, climate change will barely slow our progress in the effort to raise living standards."

Boisvert proceeds to show how a series of technologies—drought-resistant crops, cheap desalination, widespread adoption of air-conditioning, modern construction techniques—will ameliorate and overcome the problems caused by rising temperatures. He is entirely correct when he notes, "The most inexorable feature of climate-change modeling isn't the advance of the sea but the steady economic growth that will make life better despite global warming."

Horgan, Pinker, and Boisvert are all essentially endorsing what I have called "the progress solution" to climate change. As I wrote in 2009, "It is surely not unreasonable to argue that if one wants to help future generations deal with climate change, the best policies would be those that encourage rapid economic growth. This would endow future generations with the wealth and superior technologies that could be used to handle whatever comes at them including climate change." Six years later I added that that "richer is more climate-friendly, especially for developing countries. Why? Because faster growth means higher incomes, which correlate with lower population growth. Greater wealth also means higher agricultural productivity, freeing up land for forests to grow as well as speedier progress toward developing and deploying cheaper non–fossil fuel energy technologies. These trends can act synergistically to ameliorate man-made climate change."

#### Democracy solves every impact by being comparatively more stable than autocracies

**Kroenig 20** Matt. 4/3. Professor of government and foreign service at Georgetown University – you know who he is. “Why the U.S. Will Outcompete China” <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/04/why-china-ill-equipped-great-power-rivalry/609364/>) 1/20/2021

National-security analysts see China as one of the greatest threats facing the United States and its allies. According to an emerging conventional wisdom, China has the leg up on the U.S. in part because its authoritarian government can strategically plan for the long term, unencumbered by competing branches of government, regular elections, and public opinion. **Yet this faith in autocratic ascendance and democratic decline is contrary to historical fact. China may be able to put forth big, bold plans**—the kinds of projects that analysts think of as long term—**but the visionary projects of autocrats don’t usually pan out**. Watch White Noise, the inside story of the alt-right The Atlantic’s first feature documentary ventures into the underbelly of the far-right movement to explore the seductive power of extremism. Stream Now Yes, democratic governments are obligated to answer to their citizens on regular intervals and are sensitive to public opinion—t**hat’s actually democracies’ greatest source of strength. Democratic leaders have a harder time advancing big, bold agendas, but the upside of that difficulty is that the plans that do make it through the system have been carefully considered and enjoy domestic support**. Historically speaking, **once a democracy comes up with a successful strategy, it sticks with the plan**, even through a succession of leadership. Washington has arguably followed the same basic, three-step geopolitical plan since 1945. First, the United States built the current, rules-based international system by providing security in important geopolitical regions, constructing international institutions, and promoting free markets and democratic politics within its sphere of influence. Second, it welcomed into the club any country that played by the rules, even former adversaries, like Germany and Japan. And, third, the U.S. worked with its allies to defend the system from those countries or groups that would challenge it, including competitors such as Russia and China, rogue states such as Iran and North Korea, and terrorist networks. **America can pursue long-term strategy in part because it enjoys domestic political stability**. While new politicians seek to improve on their predecessor’s policies, the United States is unlikely to see the drastic shifts in strategy that come from the fall of one political system and the rise of another. Democratic elections may be messy, but they’re not as messy as coups or civil wars. Daniel Blumenthal: The Unpredictable Rise of China **Open societies** have many other advantages as well. They **facilitate innovation**, **trust in financial markets**, and economic growth. Because **democracies** tend to be more reliable partners, they **are typically skillful alliance builders**, and they can accumulate resources without frightening their neighbors. **They tend to make thoughtful, informed decisions on matters of war and peace, and to focus their security forces on external enemies, not their own populations. Autocratic systems simply cannot match this impressive array of economic, diplomatic, and military attributes.** David Leonhardt recently wrote in The New York Times, “Chinese leaders stretching back to Deng Xiaoping have often thought in terms of decades.” Commonly cited examples of that long-term thinking include the Belt and Road Initiative, a program that invests in infrastructure overseas; Made in China 2025, an effort to subsidize China’s giant tech companies to become world leaders in 21st-century technologies, such as artificial intelligence; and Beijing’s promise to be a global superpower by 2049. Since putting in place sound economic reforms in the 1970s, China has seen its economy expand at eye-popping rates, to become the world’s second largest. Many economists predict that China could even surpass the United States within the decade, and some have suggested that China’s model of state-led capitalism will prove more successful, in terms of economic growth, than the U.S. template of free markets and open politics. I doubt these predictions. Because autocratic leaders are unconstrained and do not have to contend with a legislature or courts, they have an easier time taking their countries in new and radically different directions. Then, when the dictator changes his mind, he can do it again. Mao’s autocratic China ricocheted from one failed policy to another: the Great Leap Forward, then the Hundred Flowers Campaign, then the Cultural Revolution. Mao aligned with the Soviet Union in 1950 only to nearly fight a nuclear war with Moscow in the next decade. Beginning in the time of Deng Xiaoping, China pursued a fairly constant strategy of liberalizing its economy at home and “hiding its capabilities and biding its time” abroad. But President Xi Jinping abandoned these dictums when he took over. As the most powerful leader since Mao—he has changed China’s constitution to set himself up as dictator for life—he could once again jerk China in several new directions, according to his whims, and back again. According to the Asia Society, he has stalled or reversed course on eight of 10 categories of economic reform promised by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) itself. Moreover, Xi is baring China’s teeth militarily, taking contested territory from neighbors in the South China Sea and conducting military exercises with Russia in Europe. The problem for Beijing is that stalled reforms will stymie its economic potential and its confrontational policies are provoking an international coalition to contain them. The 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy declared great-power competition with China the foremost security threat to the U.S.; the European Union labeled China a “systemic rival”; and Japan, Australia, India, and the United States have formed a new “quad” of powers to balance China in the Pacific. Furthermore, the plans often cited as evidence of China’s farsighted vision, the Belt and Road Initiative and Made in China 2025, were announced by Xi only in 2013 and 2015, respectively. Both are way too recent to be celebrated as brilliant examples of successful, long-term strategic planning. A certain level of domestic political stability is a prerequisite for charting a steady strategic course in foreign and domestic affairs. **But autocratic regimes are notoriously brittle. While institutionalized political successions in democracies typically lead to changes of policy, political successions in autocracies are likely to result in regime collapse and war**. China’s “5,000 years of history” were pockmarked by rebellion, revolution, and new dynasties. Fearing internal threats to domestic political stability—consider the protests this year in Hong Kong and Xinjiang—the CCP spends more on domestic security than on its national defense**. If you follow the money, the CCP is demonstrating that the government is more afraid of its own people than of the Pentagon. This domestic fragility will frustrate China’s efforts to design and execute farsighted plans. If threats to Chinese domestic stability were to materialize and the CCP were to collapse tomorrow**, for example, Chinese grand strategy could undergo another seismic shift, including possibly opting out of competition with the United States altogether. Shadi Hamid: China Is Avoiding Blame by Trolling the World Autocracies have other vulnerabilities as **well. State-led planning has never produced high rates of economic growth over the long term. Autocrats are poor alliance builders** who fight with their supposed allies more than with their enemies. And the highest priority of autocratic security forces is repressing their own people, not defending the country. The world has undergone drastic changes in just the past few years, but these enduring patterns of international affairs have not. Some fear that Trump’s nationalist tendencies will erode the U.S. position, but the momentum of America’s successful grand strategy has kept the country on a fairly steady course. Despite Trump’s criticism of NATO, for example, two new countries have joined the alliance on his watch, including North Macedonia this week. The coronavirus has upended a sense of security in the U.S., leading many people into the familiar trap of lauding autocratic China’s firm response in contrast to the halting and patchwork measures in the United States. But there is good reason to believe that this assessment will be updated in America’s favor with the benefit of hindsight. Already we are seeing evidence that conditions are much worse in China than CCP officials are letting on and that China’s attempts at international “disaster diplomacy” are backfiring. It has been revealed that the CCP has continually misrepresented the numbers of COVID-19 infections and deaths in China, and European nations have rejected and returned faulty Chinese coronavirus testing kits.

#### Unions can offset populism by lessening inequality

**Scherrer 19** [Peter Scherrer conducts research on the issue of Radical Right-extremist Parties. He supports the ETUC as an expert on European Social Dialogue. He was General Secretary (GS) of the European Metalworkers’ Federation and Deputy GS of the ETUC. He was educated as a metal worker and as an Historian at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Berlin and Bielefeld University (M.A.) "Trade unions and radical right-wing populism." https://www.transform-network.net/en/focus/overview/article/radical-far-and-populist-right/trade-unions-and-radical-right-wing-populism/]

**Trade unions** must **lead** the discussion on the future shape of the European internal market and **globalization** more openly and assertively. We see not only **threats** but also **opportunities**. Fair and **sustainable globalisation** can lead to a socially **equitable** increase in **wealth** among trading partners and in the countries of the European Union. But for that we need a fundamental policy change. The European Union, and in particular the European Parliament, as the legitimate representative of European citizens, has the task of setting rules for economic and social fairness and sustainability and demanding their enforcement across Europe.

The “prosperity promise” of the European Union must **apply to all**, not just the strong ones. In Germany, too, we have to admit that we are only well if our European neighbours are doing well too. There cannot be a lasting split in the Union between globalisation winners and globalisation losers. The project “justice in distribution” must start now, here and today. For example, campaigns such as the ETUC campaign “Europe needs a pay-rise” must be set up again and more decisively supported by national trade union organisations than ever before.[2] An excellent example on the sectoral level is the recently launched campaign „Togehter at Work“ of „industriAll“, the umbrella organisation of the manufacturing/raw material industries trade unions in Europe.[3]

Rural areas need special **attention** and **help**. Public services of general interest, access to education and participation in social developments must be available **to all citizens**, no matter where they live. An efficient and well-functioning public service is an indispensable pillar for a democratic society. Digitalisation can make many things **easier**. Access to modern means of communication has to be accessible for everybody. The objectives of regional policies must be set with the **broad participation** of **stakeholders** and actions implemented quickly – and their fulfillment must be monitored **transparently**. This transcends the framework of traditional regional policy, because it covers both the fields of action and of the actors as a whole. **Trade unions** need to readjust and strengthen their regional **presence**. Especially in the regions trade unions must be at the forefront and by this trade **unions** (and **democracy** in general) can build lasting **credibility**.

Because union members are not **immune** to **xenophobic** and **nationalist propaganda,** the European Trade Union Confederation (**ETUC**) and its institute (ETUI) have recently explored the question why “attractiveness” in particular right-wing populist parties has grown.[4] The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) has very recently published an interesting study on EU Trade Union Strategies to address trade union members’ and workers’ growing propensity to vote for right-wing populists and nationalists.[5] It clearly underlines the **need for trade unions** to be more **active** and in direct **contact** with their **members** regarding the means (i.e. racism, xenophobia, exclusion…) populist parties apply to gain attraction.

#### Offsetting domestic inequality solves nativism