## 1AC

### Adv 1: Squid Game

#### 1. Capitalism has produced shocking global inequality-the public is ready for action

Abdelmahmoud 10-1-21

(Elamin, https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/elaminabdelmahmoud/squid-game-netflix-review-lupin-international)

The dizzying success of Squid Game and the triumph of other non-English shows may finally kill the unfounded idea that North American viewers — the largest share of Netflix’s audience — are not interested in watching foreign shows. That is significant by itself. But these shows also share a common throughline: They all deal with inequality, capture the despair of poverty, and dissect class anxiety. Regardless of the country or language, capitalism is the shared villain in Netflix’s global successes. It’s a villain viewers everywhere can identify. In case you’re among the eight people who have yet to watch Squid Game, the premise is simple: Hundreds of people living with oppressive debt are approached to take part in a series of games — all variations of childhood favorites like Red Light, Green Light, but with, uh, deadly modifications — with the promise of a cash prize that might change their lives. It’s like if the playground games you played as a kid suddenly turned into the Hunger Games. Squid Game is effective at pulling you in. By the middle of the first episode, viewers are plunged into a world that’s as repulsive as it is gripping, complete with masked villains and hapless antiheroes who do not know what’s in store for them. The “game” sequences are breathtaking — in creator Hwang Dong-hyuk’s hands, a game as familiar as tug of war is transformed into an exhilarating, high-stakes contest. At the center of it all is Seong Gi-hun, a chauffeur addicted to gambling and self-sabotage, played brilliantly by Lee Jung-jae. In Lee’s performance, we see all the big and small humiliations of capitalism: the feeling of your worth being tethered to your productivity; the magical thinking that once you’re rich, you’ll be a different person; the embarrassments we are willing to endure to afford what we think we deserve. As we become invested in Gi-hun, we watch him as he lets us down over and over again. He steals from his mother and forgets his daughter’s birthday. When he is handed a financial lifeline, he gambles it away. The first episode sets up the tension by slowly luring you into its shocking climax, when players discover the true cost of playing. No matter how much you read about it, you will not be ready for the rules of the game. But Squid Game is at its most effective in the second episode, where the contestants briefly find themselves back in their regular lives. Here, the show cycles through the horrors they all exist in: the pickpocket desperate to secure enough money to rescue her little brother; the business graduate who can’t confront the ways he has let down his mother; the young migrant worker who cannot provide for his wife and his newborn. And in the case of Gi-hun, the reality that his debt has not only driven his daughter away, but also put him in a position where he is unable to help his sick mother. Through the course of the episode — aptly entitled “Hell” — we learn of the various chokeholds these characters are in, which are cruel enough that they might even prefer to go back to wagering with their lives. Their debts — and circumstances — are treated with tenderness and compassion. These are desperate people, willing to do anything to get out of their own personal hells. Their desperation may be familiar to viewers in Korea, where household debts are snowballing, but it is universal, too: in the US, Americans have more debt than ever before. In Canada, household debts are at worrying levels. Beyond the indignities of working only to keep your head above water, debt has devastating health consequences like depression and anxiety. Forty percent of Americans would struggle to handle an unexpected $400 expense because of debt. Meanwhile, even though inequality was already high, the pandemic made it even worse. Hell, that cuts both ways, and inequality made the pandemic worse, too. That growing wealth gap is not an accidental outcome of capitalism — it is rather predictable. The games are made up, the pot of money is fictional, and Squid Game is a drama, but its honest exploration of the weight of debt and inequality could not be more timely. Squid Game fully understands the crushing consequences of being in debt, and it’s easy for viewers to see themselves in it. “We are simply here to give you a chance,” the masked villains say, and you understand their meaning to be more sinister than that. Squid Game deals with these themes explicitly, but it is hardly the only Netflix property to dive into the horrors of capitalism. In Lupin, Assane Diop, the noble thief, is struggling to pay the bills and is forced to rely on loan sharks in order to pull off an elaborate heist. We see Tokyo, the protagonist of Money Heist, begin from a place of desperation too as she is left shattered after a botched robbery before she’s taken in by the mysterious Professor. Even the Spanish-language hit Elite takes on class anxiety, as three lower-income students begin life at a wealthy school and struggle to fit in with their new classmates. In all of these shows, the poverty and precariousness of the protagonists are the entry points for viewers, the vectors of relatability. We cheer for them because we understand that they are up against the same forces as the rest of us. All of these shows are thrilling and well paced, with impeccable writing. But more to the point, the fact that it is these shows that Netflix viewers have gravitated to suggests a universal center of gravity. No matter the language or location, capitalism makes us all desperate.

#### 2. Income inequality undermines democracy making action on existential problems like climate change impossible- it’s the biggest global risk and the US is the worst example

Lingis, PhD, 9-29-21

(Alphonso Lingis, a professor emeritus of philosophy at Pennsylvania State University, https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/465571/Inequality-of-wealth-is-greater-in-the-U-S-than-in-any-other)

“Inequality of wealth is greater by far in the United States than in any other developed country and increasing,” Lingis tells the Tehran Times. “One percent of the population in the United States holds 42.5 percent of the national wealth. Just three men—Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, Microsoft founder Bill Gates, and investor Warren Buffett—hold combined fortunes worth more than the total wealth of the poorest half of Americans.” Since wealth means political power in the United States, the gap between tycoons and ordinary people reflects a defect in the political system. Critics say capitalism in the U.S. is going to marginalize democracy. Mass media plays a key role in this regard. “As wealth becomes increasingly concentrated in an ever smaller number of individuals and corporations, so does the potential political power of the wealthiest,” Lingis notes. Meanwhile “the median White family has 10 times more wealth than the median Black family and 7.5 times more wealth than the median Latino family. This increasing economic inequality is damaging to the health, education, job opportunities, and home ownerless possibilities of a growing number of people in the nation,” the professor of philosophy adds. Following is the text of the interview: Q: How do you see the political fallout of Trump's presidency in America and its impact on U.S. democracy? A: Lawyers for President Trump identified 62 incidences of alleged voter fraud in the 2020 election, which the courts individually examined and rejected. Nonetheless, Trump continues to claim that massive voter fraud invalidated the election, a claim shared by more than half of Republican voters. This does undermine public trust in the essential institutions of democracy in the country. Q: U.S. officials claim to defend democratic values, but apparently giant corporations, lobbies, and money have a big influence on U.S. democracy. Is American democracy in favor of the majority or just a tool in the hands of the elites? A: As wealth becomes increasingly concentrated in an ever-smaller number of individuals and corporations, so does the potential political power of the wealthiest. In 2020 candidates for the U.S. Congress spent $8,703,050,547 on their campaigns. Individual candidates spent up to $270 million on a campaign. The greater part of the money spent was donated by a small number of very rich individuals and corporations. One-fifth of the money spent on campaigns was donated by just 2635 individuals. Their influence makes President Trump’s numerous actions against climate change control, environmental protection, and his massive tax reduction for the rich difficult to reverse. Q: What is your comment on Republicans' efforts to restrict voting rights in some states? Do you think the American establishment can protect democracy? A: Since the 2020 election, nine Republican-dominated states have passed new laws that restrict access to voting for poorer people and minorities. Seventeen states have passed laws to expand access to voting for their citizens. A national voting rights law is presently being blocked by Republicans in Congress. Q: Is there any correlation between defending democracy at home and supporting democracy abroad? Apparently, the U.S. has failed to realize this goal in foreign policy. For example, America is a great sponsor of tyrannical regimes in the Persian Gulf. A: President Trump openly admired authoritarian regimes, and leaders such as Bolsonaro in Brazil, Duterte in the Philippines, and Orban in Hungary copied Trump’s rhetoric and domestic policies. President Biden, addressing the United Nations General Assembly, affirmed that his government will exercise “relentless diplomacy” in favor of democratic regimes. He called for international cooperation to address the coronavirus pandemic, global climate change, and cyber threats. He said the United States will double its financial commitment to climate aid and spend $10 billion to fight hunger. He also announced a donation of 1.1 billion doses of the Covid vaccine to poor countries, “for everyone shot we’ve administered to date in America we have now committed to doing three shots to the rest of the world.” Q: Some critics like Bernie Sanders believe that capitalism may push the U.S. and its democracy towards an abyss. What is your comment? A: Inequality of wealth is greater by far in the United States than in any other developed country and increasing. One percent of the population in the United States holds 42.5 percent of the national wealth. Just three men—Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, Microsoft founder Bill Gates, and investor Warren Buffett—hold combined fortunes worth more than the total wealth of the poorest half of Americans. The median White family has 10 times more wealth than the median Black family and 7.5 times more wealth than the median Latino family. This increasing economic inequality is damaging to the health, education, job opportunities, and home ownerless possibilities of a growing number of people in the nation. In 2014, The World Economic Forum based in Davos, Switzerland released its “Global Risks 2014” report, listing income disparity first of the most likely five global risks, followed by extreme weather events, unemployment and underemployment, climate change, and cyber-attacks. Noted economist Thomas Piketty and others have argued that the growing economic inequality is also economically unsustainable.

#### 3. *Striketober* has seen a massive increase in labor activity but it’s not sustainable

Greenhouse 10-23-21

(Steven, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/oct/23/striketober-unions-strikes-workers-lasting-change)

US labor unions have been on the defensive for decades but this October there has been a surprising burst of worker militancy and strikes as workers have gone on the offensive to demand more. Experts are predicting more actions to come but whether “Striketober” can lead to permanent change remains an open question. The scale of industrial action is truly remarkable. Ten thousand John Deere workers have gone on strike, 1,400 Kellogg workers have walked out, as well as a walkout threatened by more than 30,000 Kaiser Permanente workers, all inflamed by a profound disconnect between labor and management. Many frontline workers – after working so hard and risking their lives during the pandemic – say they deserve substantial raises along with lots of gratitude. With this in mind and with myriad employers complaining of a labor shortage, many workers believe it’s an opportune time to demand more and go on strike. It doesn’t hurt that there’s a strongly pro-union president in the White House and there’s more public support for unions than in decades. But some corporations are acting as if nothing has changed and they can continue corporate America’s decades-long practice of squeezing workers and demanding concessions, even after corporate profits have soared. This attitude doesn’t sit well with Chris Laursen, who earns $20.82 an hour after 19 years at Deere’s farm equipment factory in Ottumwa, Iowa. Laursen is upset that Deere is offering just a one-dollar-an-hour raise and wants to eliminate pensions for future hires even when Deere anticipates a record $5.7bn in profits this year, more than double last year’s earnings. “We were deemed essential workers right out of the gate,” Laursen said, noting that many workers racked up lots of overtime during the pandemic. “But then they came with an offer that was appallingly low. It was a slap in the face of the workers who created all the wealth for them.” Many Deere workers complain that the company offered only a 12% raise over six years, which they say won’t keep pace with inflation, even as the CEO’s pay rose 160% last year to $16m and dividends were raised 17%. Deere’s workers voted down the company’s offer by 90% before they went on strike at 14 factories on 14 October, their first walkout in 35 years. “We really showed up during the pandemic and kept building equipment for them,” Laursen said. “Now we want something back. The stars are finally lined up for us, and we had to bring the fight.” Thomas Kochan, an MIT professor of industrial relations, agreed that it was a favorable time for workers – many corporations have substantially increased pay in response to the labor shortage. “It’s clear that workers are much more empowered,” he said. “They’re empowered because of the labor shortage.” Kochan added: “These strikes could easily trigger more strike activity if several are successful or perceived to be successful.” Robert Bruno, a labor relations professor at the University of Illinois, said workers have built up a lot of grievances and anger during the pandemic, after years of seeing scant improvement in pay and benefits. Bruno pointed to a big reason for the growing worker frustration: “You can definitely see that American capitalism has reigned supreme over workers, and as a result, the incentive for companies is to continue to do what’s been working for them. It’s likely that an arrogance sets in where companies think that’s going to last for ever, and maybe they don’t read the times properly.” Kevin Bradshaw, a striker at Kellogg’s factory in Memphis, said the cereal maker was being arrogant and unappreciative. During the pandemic, he said, Kellogg employees often worked 30 days in a row, often in 12-hour or 16-hour shifts. In light of this hard work, he derided Kellogg’s contract offer, which calls for a far lower scale for new hires. “Kellogg is offering a $13 cut in top pay for new workers,” Bradshaw said. “They want a permanent two-tier. New employees will no longer receive the same amount of money and benefits we do.” That, he said, is bad for the next generation of workers. Bradshaw, vice-president of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union local, noted that it made painful concessions to Kellogg in 2015. “We gave so many concessions, and now they’re saying they need more,” he said. “This is a real smack in the face during the pandemic. Everyone knows that they’re greedy and not needy.” Kellogg said its compensation is among the industry’s best and its offer will help the company meet competitive challenges. Deere said it was determined to reach an agreement and continue to make its workers “the highest paid employees in the agriculture industry”. There are many strikes beyond Deere and Kellogg. More than 400 workers at the Heaven Hill bourbon distillery in Kentucky have been on strike for six weeks, while roughly 1,000 Warrior Met coalminers in Alabama have been on strike since April. Hundreds of nurses at Mercy hospital in Buffalo went on strike on 1 October, and 450 steelworkers at Special Metals in Huntington, West Virginia, also walked out that day. More than 30,000 nurses and other healthcare professionals at Kaiser Permanente on the west coast have voted to authorize a strike. Sixty thousand Hollywood production employees threatened to go on strike last Monday, unhappy that film and TV companies were not taking their concerns about overwork and exhaustion seriously. But seeing that the union was serious about staging its first-ever strike, Hollywood producers flinched, agreed to compromises, and the two sides reached a settlement. Noting that Kaiser Permanente, a non-profit, had amassed $45bn in reserves, Belinda Redding, a Kaiser nurse in Woodland Hills, California, said, “We’ve been going all out during the pandemic. We’ve been working extra shifts. Our lives have been turned upside down. The signs were up all over saying, ‘Heroes Work Here’. And the pandemic isn’t even over for us, and then for them to offer us a 1% raise, it’s almost a slap in the face.” Redding is also fuming that management has proposed hiring new nurses at 26% less pay than current ones earn – which she said would ensure a shortage of nurses. “It’s hard to imagine a nurse giving her all when she’s paid far less than other nurses,” Redding said. Kaiser said that its employees earn 26% more than average market wages and that its services would become unaffordable unless it restrains labor costs. On a smaller scale but in an industry in increasing demand, striking workers at one of the world’s largest bourbon producers were scheduled to vote on a new contract on Saturday, a day after announcing a tentative agreement with Heaven Hill, the producer of Evan Williams bourbon. About 420 members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 23D went on strike about six weeks ago, forming picket lines at the company’s operations in Bardstown, Kentucky, with the dispute revolving around healthcare and scheduling. Meanwhile, many non-union workers – frequently dismayed with low pay, volatile schedules and poor treatment – have quit their jobs or refused to return to their old ones after being laid off during the pandemic. In August, 4.2 million workers quit their jobs, part of what has been called the Great Resignation. Some economists have suggested this is a quiet general strike with workers demanding better pay and conditions. “People are using exit from their jobs as a source of power,” Kochan said. As for unionized workers, some labor experts see parallels between today’s burst of strikes and the much larger wave of strikes after the first and second world wars. As with the pandemic, those catastrophic wars caused many Americans to reassess their lives and jobs and ask: after what we’ve been through, don’t we deserve better pay and conditions? Professor Bruno said that in light of today’s increased worker militancy, unionized employers would have to rethink their approach to bargaining “and take the rank and file pretty seriously”. They can no longer expect workers to roll over or to strong-arm them into swallowing concessions, often by threatening to move operations overseas. Bruno questioned whether the surge in strikes will be long-lasting. He predicts that the improvements in pay and job quality will be long-lasting, adding that that was more likely than unions substantially increasing their membership. He said that if workers see others winning better wages and conditions through strikes, that will raise unions’ visibility and lead to more workers voting to join unions. Despite the recent turbulence, Ruth Milkman, a sociologist of labor at City University of New York, foresees a return to the status quo. “I think things will go back to where they were once things settle down,” she said. “The labor shortage is not necessarily going to last.” She sees the number of strikes declining once the labor shortage ends. In her view, union membership isn’t likely to increase markedly because “they’re not doing that much organizing. “There’s a little” – like the unionization efforts at Starbucks in Buffalo and at Amazon – “but it’s not as if there’s some big push.” A big question, Milkman said, was how can today’s labor momentum be sustained? She said it would help if Congress passed the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, which would make it easier to unionize workers. That law would spur unions to do more organizing and increase their chances of winning union drives. “That would be a real shot in the arm,” Milkman said.

#### 4. The right to strike is crucial to stop decline of labor unions, the vital internal link to economic inequality

Pope et al. 17

(James Gray Pope Professor of Law and Sidney Reitman Scholar at Rutgers University.Ed Bruno is the former director of the United Electrical Radio and Machine Workers of America, Peter Kellman is past president of the Southern Maine Labor Council and is currently working with the Movement Building/Education Committee of the Maine AFL-CIO https://bostonreview.net/forum/james-gray-pope-ed-bruno-peter-kellman-right-strike , 5-22)

In December 2005 more than 30,000 New York City transit workers walked out over economic issues despite the state of New York’s Taylor Law, which prohibits all public sector strikes. Not only did the workers face the loss of two days’ pay for each day on strike, but a court ordered that the union be fined $1 million per day. Union president Roger Toussaint held firm, likening the strikers to Rosa Parks. “There is a higher calling than the law,” he declared. “That is justice and equality.” The transit strike exemplified labor civil disobedience at its most effective. The workers were not staging a symbolic event; they brought the city’s transit system to a halt. They claimed their fundamental right to collective action despite a statute that outlawed it. For a precious moment, public attention was riveted on the drama of workers defying a draconian strike ban. How did national labor leaders react? AFL-CIO president John Sweeney issued a routine statement of support, while most others did nothing at all. To anybody watching the drama unfold, the message was clear: there is no right to strike, even in the House of Labor. About a decade earlier in 1996, Stephen Lerner, fresh from a successful campaign to organize Los Angeles janitors, had warned in Boston Review that private sector unions faced an existential crisis: density could soon drop from 10.3 percent to 5 percent if unions did not expand their activity beyond the limits imposed by American law. He called for unions to develop broad organizing strategies—industry-wide and regional—and to engage in civil disobedience. Few embraced these radical strategies. Today private sector union density is about 6.5 percent, not quite as low as Lerner predicted, but down from a high of over 30 percent in the mid-1950s. Union decline matters. For half a century, it has moved in lock step with the increase in income inequality. According to an International Monetary Fund study of twenty advanced economies, . In the heyday of American unionism, CEOs made about 25 times the annual compensation of the average worker; today, the multiple is more than 350. Meanwhile, as Thomas Edsell and others have warned for decades, the decline of unions has deprived the Democratic Party of its strongest link to white workers. The overwhelming majority of unions continue to endorse Democratic candidates (including Hillary Clinton in the 2016 election), but with ever-diminishing effect. Until two decades ago it was possible to blame union decline on backward labor leaders, such as George Meany, who were so steeped in business unionism that they could not see the need to organize broadly, much less to ally with other social movements across lines of race, gender, and immigration status. Since then, however, we have seen continued shrinkage under leaders who are, for the most part, well intentioned and savvy. The problem is structural. National union officials are not well positioned to lead a challenge to corporate power. Institutions with big treasuries and tit-for-tat relations with establishment politicians cannot be expected to undertake risky and polarizing actions. Although leaders might see the need to build working-class power, the immediate incentives all point toward the narrow needs of their particular union’s members. This constraint is rooted in the American system of exclusive representation, which divides workers into thousands of bargaining unit boxes, gives unions property interests in particular boxes, and penalizes unions for doing anything other than defending existing boxes and acquiring new ones. The prospects for union revival may seem bleaker than ever during the Trump administration, even as the triumph of right-wing populism makes more urgent what was already apparent: the need to build a labor movement that can fight for the interests of the working class in the face of corporate power. But prospects are not as grim as they appear. Over the past decade, there has been an undeniable shift toward class politics, most visibly evidenced by Occupy Wall Street, the Bernie Sanders campaign, the Fight for Fifteen, and the rise of a Black Lives Matter movement that supports economic justice demands, including the right to organize. Building the labor movement in this period of danger and opportunity will require not only heeding Lerner’s call for a strategic shift and extralegal action; labor must also reclaim the right to strike and confront the deep structural disabilities that impede unions from challenging corporate power.

#### 5. Statistically economic inequality outweighs war

Richter, PhD/EMT, 15

(Roxane, *Disaster Types and their Consequences for Women* in Medical Outcasts: Gendered and Institutionalized Xenophobia in Undocumented Forced Migrant’s Emergency Health Care)

As we see above in Galtung’s “Typology of Violence" from 1969 (Table 2.1), the “need groups” may be disadvantaged to such an extent that they starve, become terminally ill from the result of illness or disease, or die. The second category. Exploitation B, leaves the underprivileged in a constant involuntary state of poverty, usually comprising malnutrition and illness. These effects all occur within and at the culmination of multifaceted social and economic structures, and obscured legislative cycles. A noted successor of Galtung’s benchmark work in structural violence, James Gilligan began a quest to look closely at the ties between structural violence and its effects on individuals' health, violent behavior, and society. As a prison psychiatrist and director of the Center for the Study of Violence at Harvard Medical School. Gilligan observed that structural violence differs from behavioral violence in three major respects: In addition to its virtual invisibility, structural violence functions more or less independently of individual behaviors: further, its problematic effects operate continuously, not just sporadically (1996). In his book Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic. James Gilligan defines structural violence as “the increased rates of death and disability suffered by those who occupy the bottom rungs of society, as contrasted with the relatively lower death rates experienced by those who are above them” (1996, 192). Gilligan largely describes these “excess deaths” as “non-natural" and attributes them to the stress, shame, discrimination, and denigration that results from lower status. Gilligan paralleled the worldwide summations of structural violence to direct (armed conflict, military or political wars) violence thusly: Every fifteen years, on the average, as many people die because of relative poverty as would be killed in a nuclear war that caused 232 million deaths: and every single year, two to three times as many people die from poverty throughout the world as were killed by the Nazi genocide of the Jews over a six-year period. This is. in effect, the equivalent of an ongoing, unending, in fact accelerating, thermonuclear war. or genocide on the weak and poor every year of every decade, throughout the world. .. . The question as to which of the two forms of violence—structural or behavioral—is more important, dangerous, or lethal is moot, for they are inextricably related to each other, as cause to effect. (Gilligan 1996. 195-96) When we fix and focus our view on structural violence through the lens of healthcare, we see that every country is marked by suffering, illnesses, and death, to one extent of another. But it is the distribution of the preventable and manageable illnesses and diseases in underprivileged countries that tip the scales of parity in suffering. It is these “social conditions"—these imbalances of influence—if you will, that affect and influence social justice in healthcare, and creates a poverty of lifesaving access to medication, supplies, treatment, training, and equipment to stave off human suffering from avoidable and unnecessary illness and disease. Didier Fassin in his book Humanitarian Reason quotes Margaret Lock concerning social sentiment on human suffering: “Efforts to reduce suffering have habitually focused on control and repair of individual bodies. The social origins of suffering and distress, including poverty and discrimination, even if fleetingly recognized, are set aside” (2012, 21). (24-5)

### Adv 2: Shutdown

#### 6. Shutdown threats have become the standard republican tactic during democratic administrations- they will never stop and threaten the economy

Leonhardt and Philbrick 9-23-21

(David Leonhardt and Ian Prasad Philbrick https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/23/briefing/government-shutdown-debt-ceiling-brinkmanship.html)

It has become the norm during a Democratic presidency: Republicans in Congress threaten to shut down the federal government or even allow the U.S. to default on its debts. These threats used to be much rarer. For most of the 20th century, the raising of the debt ceiling and the funding of the federal government’s operations tended to be sleepy, technical subjects. Members of Congress would fight over how to spend money rather than the basic mechanics of enacting that spending. The new era began in the 1990s, when Newt Gingrich, then the House speaker, tried to force Bill Clinton to cut Social Security and other programs. Although Gingrich failed, congressional Republicans adopted his tactics during Barack Obama’s presidency and did win significant cuts to domestic programs. Now the pattern is repeating itself. Republicans say they will not provide enough votes to lift the debt ceiling before the federal government hits its legal cap on borrowing next month. And because Democrats have packaged a debt-ceiling increase together with a bill to extend funding for the federal government beyond Sept. 30 (the end of the fiscal year), a possible government shutdown also looms. The standoff could have ripple effects. Economists are worried the uncertainty could hurt financial markets, while Democrats — already facing a packed congressional agenda — now have yet another legislative problem to solve. This time, Republicans have a different goal than they did during the Clinton and Obama administrations. With Democrats controlling both the House and the Senate, Republicans recognize they cannot force spending cuts. Mitch McConnell, the Senate minority leader, is instead trying to force Democrats to lift the debt ceiling with no Republican help.

#### 7. Shutdown tanks cybersecurity---that causes attacks.

Whittaker 19, reporter for Tech Crunch, 1/9/19 (Zack, “How Trump’s government shutdown is harming cyber and national security”, https://techcrunch.com/2019/01/09/trump-shutdown-harming-cyber-national-security/)//GA

But while most of the core government departments — State, Treasury, Justice and Defense — are still operational, others — like Homeland Security, which takes the bulk of the government’s cybersecurity responsibility — are suffering the most. And the longer the shutdown goes on, the greater chance of tighter budgets and that more staff could be furloughed. Here’s a breakdown: Homeland Security’s new cybersecurity unit got off to a rough start: The newly established Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, a division of Homeland Security, has only been operational since November 16, but about more than half of its staff have been furloughed, according to Homeland Security. The division is designed to lead the national effort to defend critical national infrastructure from current, ongoing threats. By our count at the time of writing, the CISA has been shut down for one in 10 days of its two-month tenure. Threat intelligence sharing will take a hit: A little-known program inside Homeland Security, known as the Automated Indicator Sharing, has also sent home more than 80 percent of it staff, according to Duo Security. AIS allows private industry and government agencies to share threat intelligence, which is shared with Homeland Security’s government partners, to ensure that any detected attack can only ever be used once. The shutdown is going to heavily impact the data exchange program. New NIST standards to face delays: More than 85 percent of National Institute of Standards and Technology employees have been sent home without pay, leaving just a handful of essential staff to keep NIST’s new advice and guidance work going. NIST is responsible for giving all government departments necessary and up-to-date security advice. It also means that FIPS testing, used to grant devices and new technologies security certifications to run on government networks, has completely stopped during the shutdown. Underpaid TSA agents are now entirely unpaid: The TSA, found at every U.S. airport security screening area, is still working despite the shutdown. More than 90 percent of the TSA’s workforce of 60,078 employees will go unpaid — on top of already low pay, which has resulted in a high turnover rate. Despite Trump’s remarks to the contrary, several news agencies say TSA workers are calling out sick in droves. And that’s going to harm airport security. Many worry that the already low morale could put airline security at risk. One traveler/passenger at Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport tweeted this week: “I asked TSA agent if I should take out my laptop out of its case and she said, ‘I don’t care, I’m not getting paid’.” Secret Service staff are working unpaid: And, whether you like them or not, keeping the president and senior lawmakers and politicians alive is a paramount national security concern, yet the vast majority of front-line and back office Secret Service agents currently protecting senior administration staff are going unpaid during the shutdown. And that’s just some of the larger departments. The shutdown isn’t only hampering short-term efforts, but could result in long-lasting damage. “Cyber threats don’t operate on Washington’s political timetable, and they don’t stop because of a shutdown,” Lisa Monaco, former homeland security advisor to the president, told Axios on Wednesday. And security firm Duo said that trying to keep all of the cyber-plates spinning at once while not at full-strength is “risky,” especially given nobody knows how long the shutdown will last.

#### 8. States will exploit US vulnerability---a single attack goes nuclear.

Andrew Nolan 15, Legislative Attorney at the Congressional Research Service, former Trial Attorney at the United States Department of Justice, holds a J.D. from George Washington University, “Cybersecurity and Information Sharing: Legal Challenges and Solutions,” CRS Report to Congress, March 16th, Available Online at http://fas.org/sgp/crs/intel/R43941.pdf, p.1-3

The high profile cyberattacks of 2014 and early 2015 appear to be indicative of a broader trend: the frequency and ferocity of cyberattacks are increasing,11 posing grave threats to the national interests of the United States. Indeed, the attacks on Target, eBay, Home Depot, J.P. Morgan-Chase, Sony Pictures, and Anthem were only a few of the many publicly disclosed cyberattacks perpetrated in 2014 and 2105.12 Experts suggest that hundreds of thousands of other entities may have suffered similar incidents during the same period,13 with one survey indicating that 43% of firms in the United States had experienced a data breach in the past year.14 Moreover, just as the cyberattacks of 2013—which included incidents involving companies like the New York Times, Facebook, Twitter, Apple, and Microsoft15—were eclipsed by those that occurred in 2014,16 the consensus view is that 2015 and beyond will witness more frequent and more sophisticated cyber incidents.17 To the extent that its expected rise outpaces any corresponding rise in the ability to defend against such attacks, the result could be troubling news for countless businesses that rely more and more on computers in all aspects of their operations, as the economic losses resulting from a single cyberattack can be extremely costly.18 And the resulting effects of a cyberattack can have effects beyond a single company’s bottom line. As “nations are becoming ever more dependent on information and information technology,”19 the threat posed by any one cyberattack [end page 2] can have “devastating collateral and cascading effects across a wide range of physical, economic and social systems.”20 With reports that foreign nations—such as Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea—may be using cyberspace as a new front to wage war,21 fears abound that a cyberattack could be used to shut down the nation’s electrical grid,22 hijack a commercial airliner,23 or even launch a nuclear weapon with a single keystroke.24 In short, the potential exists that the United States could suffer a “cyber Pearl Harbor,” an attack that would “cause physical destruction and loss of life”25 and expose—in the words of one prominent cybersecurity expert—“vulnerabilities of staggering proportions.”26

#### 9. Shutdown collapses outbreak response.

Charles Bethea 18. Staff writer at The New Yorker. 1-22-2018. “What’s Scary About Shutting Down the C.D.C.” https://www.newyorker.com/news/as-told-to/whats-scary-about-shutting-down-the-cdc. DOA: 9-10-2020. kyujin

This past Thursday, Dr. Tom Frieden, the recently departed director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, tweeted about the last shutdown of the United States government, which took place during Barack Obama’s second term. “The 2013 government shutdown was like a scene from a science fiction movie—empty labs and offices at CDC,” he wrote. “Shutdowns are not safe.” The C.D.C. serves as the country’s national reference laboratory, defining the extent and nature of disease outbreaks. During that shutdown, C.D.C. employees who tracked food-borne illness had to be brought back from furlough to belatedly contain a nationwide salmonella outbreak, which left seventy-six people hospitalized in eighteen states. Since 2010, seasonal flu outbreaks alone have killed between twelve thousand and fifty-six thousand Americans annually, and the current flu outbreak is widely acknowledged as one of the worst in years. Reportedly, some two-thirds of the national public-health institute’s employees—approximately eight thousand people—will stay home until the government reopens. Last night, as the third day of the current government shutdown loomed, I spoke to a furloughed employee at the C.D.C, in Atlanta, who is familiar with the public-health institute’s influenza-related activities. This employee, who requested anonymity, explained what the C.D.C. can and can’t do during a shutdown, and what’s frightening about even a brief stoppage in its work. This account has been edited and condensed. “During a bad influenza season, tens of thousands of Americans die from influenza, hundreds of thousands are hospitalized, and millions become ill. We’re having one of the worst flu seasons in recent years. And we’re right in the middle of it. It’s an H3N2 virus year, which tends to hit older people and younger children really hard. We tend to have a higher number of deaths and hospitalizations in H3N2 years. And we can’t communicate to clinicians, health departments, and the public in the way that we would like because of the shutdown. We can’t provide accurate information and the tools they need to prevent deaths from flu. When most of our workforce is sent home, we can’t do our jobs effectively. That’s scary. “The day-to-day operations, in large part, ground to a halt during a shutdown. Particularly in the flu division. We have multiple surveillance systems that are gathering information from different sources. We have outpatient clinics reporting the proportion of influenza-like illness. We have state public-health labs reporting the kinds of flu that they’re tracking. Clinicians around the country use that information to know if flu is circulating locally. Some of those surveillance people were kept on during the last shutdown. But I think they stopped reporting weekly information. “The last shutdown, it was in October, which wasn’t the height of flu season. But they were gearing up for people to get their flu vaccines. We’re farther in this time. The flu division, if the government were open, would be doing a lot of communications activities—talking to people who are at high risk for getting seriously ill from flu about going to their doctor promptly, outreach to clinicians to make sure they’re following guidelines about prescribing influenza antiviral drugs, and other public-health-outreach campaigns. These grind to a halt during a shutdown. “The surveillance systems kind of keep going in a limited way, but there certainly isn’t the same amount of staff that usually work on them. And the information probably won’t be reported publicly this Friday, as it usually is. “After the last shutdown, at a C.D.C. event, some employees did skits about what C.D.C. people did during the shutdown: bowling in the cubicles, things like that. It was pretty depressing. “The big influenza labs at the C.D.C. aren’t just looking at the giant epidemic of seasonal flu. They’re also looking for novel influenza viruses, because there’s always a pandemic threat from an influenza virus out there that hasn’t yet been studied. Often these are zoonotic viruses, like avian flu or a swine flu, that can be transferred from animals to humans, who have no population immunity to it. Also, they look for unusual mutations or activity in certain states. Having less lab capacity may impact those critical activities. Pandemic preparedness and monitoring will still happen during a shutdown, but our capacity is very limited. That’s scary. “The everyday work the C.D.C. does saves lives, and when those activities are limited, we aren’t able to do that work. And I think having the government shut down—particularly during a bad flu season, in a setting of outbreaks—could very well cost American lives. “If there’s any really unusual activity, the C.D.C. can mobilize people to come back. There’s a fair number of people—like everyone who’s in the U.S. Public Health Service—that are exempt from government shutdowns. So a fair number of people will be there this week. But, if anything major happened, they wouldn’t have the administrative support that they need to get people out in the field quickly, to do the general monitoring of things. Most of the lab people are furloughed, so the labs are being shut down and the normal testing we do for many different diseases—like, if the states get an unusual result or need further testing—we are the reference lab and that activity won’t happen. So things will be delayed or missed that are potentially really important. “People are frustrated and nervous at the C.D.C. About the shutdown, of course. But also by the possibility of budget cuts and not even having a budget yet. There’s a clear feeling about blame, but I don’t want to say specifically. You can probably guess. “It went on for a long time last time. The fact is, none of us know how long it will last this time. The uncertainty with the budget has been challenging, in general. But not knowing how long this will last is hard, too. It makes it very hard to plan. If the furlough goes on for a while, basic scientific evidence about what’s actually going on from a public-health point of view may not get out to Americans in a timely manner.”

#### 10. Extinction.

Walsh 20 – Bryan Walsh covers emerging technology and geopolitics for Axios, internally citing a 2018 pandemic simulation put on by the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security, Richard Pilch of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, and Kevin Esvelt, a biologist at the MIT Media Lab and a member of the CDC's Biological Agent Containment Working Group. [The coronavirus pandemic reawakens bioweapon fears, 5-14-2020, https://www.axios.com/coronavirus-pandemic-pathogen-bioweapon-45417c86-52aa-41b1-8a99-44a6e597d3a8.html]//BPS

The immense human and economic toll of the COVID-19 pandemic only underscores the threat posed by pathogens that could be deliberately engineered and released. Why it matters: New technology like gene editing and DNA synthesis has made the creation of more virulent pathogens easier. Yet security and regulation efforts haven't kept pace with the science. What's happening: Despite some claims by the White House, overwhelming scientific evidence indicates that the novel coronavirus was not accidentally released from a lab or deliberately engineered, but naturally spilled over from an animal source. That doesn't mean the threat from bioweapons isn't dire. Along with AI, engineered pandemics are widely considered the biggest existential risk facing humanity. That's in part because a pathogen could be engineered in a lab for maximum contagiousness and virulence, well beyond what would arise through natural selection. Case in point: a 2018 pandemic simulation put on by the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security featured a fictional engineered virus called Clade X that combined the contagiousness of the common cold with the virulence of the real-life Nipah virus, which has a mortality rate of 40-75%. The resulting simulated global outbreak killed 150 million people. COVID-19 isn't anywhere near that fatal, but the pandemic has shown the vulnerability of the U.S. and the world to biological threats both natural and manmade. "Potential adversaries are of course seeing the same things we’re seeing," says Richard Pilch of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. "Anyone looking for a radical leveling approach — whether a state actor like North Korea or a motivated terrorist organization — may be influenced by COVID-19 to consider pursuing a biological weapons capability." Background: Bioweapons were officially banned by the Biological Weapons Convention in 1975, though North Korea is suspected of maintaining an offensive bioweapons program. A particular concern about biowarfare and bioterror, though, is that many of the tools and methods that could be used to create a weaponized virus are largely indistinguishable from those used in the course of legitimate scientific research. This makes biotechnology "dual-use" — and that much more difficult to safely regulate without cutting off research that could be vitally important. While earlier bioweapons fears focused on the possibility that a state or terror group could try to weaponize a known dangerous agent like smallpox — which would require somehow obtaining restricted pathogens — new technology means that someone could obtain the genetic sequence of a germ online and synthesize it in the lab. "If you've been trained in a relevant technical discipline, that means you can make almost any potentially harmful agent that you're aware of," says Kevin Esvelt, a biologist at the MIT Media Lab and a member of the CDC's Biological Agent Containment Working Group. That would include the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19, which was recently synthesized from its genetic sequence in a study published in Nature. How it works: Currently, synthetic DNA is ordered through commercial suppliers. But while most suppliers screen DNA orders for the sequences of dangerous pathogens, they're not required to — and not all do, which means safety efforts are "incomplete, inaccurate, and insecure," says Esvelt. Screening efforts that look for the genetic sequences of known pathogens also wouldn't necessarily be able to detect when synthetic DNA was being used to make something entirely novel and dangerous. In the near future, desktop DNA synthesizers may be able to generate synthetic DNA in the lab, cutting out the need for commercial suppliers — and potential security screenings. The democratization of biotechnology could unleash a wave of creativity and innovation, just as the democratization of personal computing did. But it also increases the number of people who could potentially make a dangerous engineered virus, whether deliberately or by accident.

### Solvency

#### Plan: The United States ought to recognize an unconditional right to strike.

#### 1. The right to strike is a political statement that rejects the commodification of human labor—this is the vital internal link

Burns , JD, 11

(Joe, veteran union negotiator and labor lawyer Reviving the Strike: How Working People Can Regain Power and Transform America)

For the traditional labor movement, the notion that human beings were like objects, to be used up during the production process, was highly offensive. As Samuel Gompers melodramatically stated, “You cannot weigh the human soul in the same scales with a piece of pork. You cannot weigh the heart and soul of a child with the same scales upon with you weigh any commodity.”10 Traditional trade unionists believed that workers had rights unrelated to the price they could command on the open market for their labor. This view was supported by the Clayton Act, passed in 1914 after years of agitation by the labor movement, which contained the simple declaration that, “The labor of a human being is not a commodity or article of commerce.”11 When signing the Act into law, then President Woodrow Wilson declared that “a man’s labor is not a commodity but a part of his life, and that, therefore, the courts must treat it as if it were a part of his life. I am sorry that there were any judges in the United States who had to be told that.”12 As James Pope explains, the idea that labor is not a commodity is vital one for the labor movement, as it provides the intellectual justification for successful strike tactics: The treatment of labor as a commodity subject to the rules of the marketplace is a defining feature of capitalism. The claim of a constitutional right to strike—a right to interdict the free competition of individuals in the buying and selling of labor power— obviously imperiled the ideology and practice of commodity labor. The right to strike could not be justified without addressing the question of labor liberty per se.13 Well into the 1950s, labor leaders defended union activity based on the assertion that labor was not a commodity. For example, with employers complaining of national pattern or multi-employer agreements, and conservative members of Congress investigating whether labor unions were a monopoly, Arthur Goldberg, the legal counsel for the CIO and later a Supreme Court Justice, testified in 1955 that The charge that national or regional or pattern bargaining is “monopolistic” and “a restraint of trade” reverts, of course, to the basic fallacy that human labor is to be treated as a commodity, and that organizations of those who have nothing to sell but the use of their minds and bodies constitute restraints of trade.14 Likewise, Walter Reuther, the leader of the United Autoworkers, testifying at a congressional hearing in 1953, bristled at the notion that labor could be considered a commodity: Well, you see, labor is not a commodity which you go and shop for in the free market place. Labor is something different than a commodity, and if you want to give American labor the status of another commodity you can go out and shop for on the free market place, you have missed the whole point.”15 The fiery words of Goldberg and Reuther reveal the belief, held by generations of trade unionists, that treating labor as a commodity would undermine the very foundation of the labor movement, and lead to a number of conclusions favoring management. First, if labor is just like any other commodity, then it logically follows that the “free market” should determine the price of a worker’s labor, just as it does with any other input into the production process. However, one of the main tenets of traditional trade unionism was that workers could not allow the market to determine wages and working conditions, as the market, unrestrained, will continually drive workers toward poverty, injury, and even death. Part of the reason for this attitude was that traditional trade unionists had witnessed firsthand how the courts applied laws intended to regulate commerce to trade union activity. For example, while Congress passed the Sherman Antitrust Act in 1890 to regulate the power of massive corporations, the Courts soon subverted the intent of the Act, using it instead to justify sweeping injunctions against trade unionists, including an injunction in 1894 against Eugene Debs during the great Pullman railroad strike.16 As Samuel Gompers said, “Labor power is a human attribute. … Both the injunction and the anti-trust law were intended to apply only to property. When courts put human labor power and commodities in the same category, they laid the foundation for serious injustice.”17 If a worker’s labor is treated like commerce, than it can be “sold” as with any other commodity, with management becoming the “owner” of that labor. Then, just as management owns a pile of lumber for example, once the purchase of human labor is complete, the employer would theoretically control the mind and body of the worker for the period of time they were on the job. Legal scholar Karl Klare expands on this idea, explaining how a labor contract is “more than a legal relationship” because it …establishes an entire system of social relations in the workplace whereby the employer is entitled to control the worker’s actions and choices during the major portions of his waking hours. Thus, labor contractualism functions as the institutional basis of domination in the workplace.18 To the extent that the labor movement accepts this “wagebargain” as the natural order, the more difficult it becomes to justify the fight for power on the shop floor, as once the commodity (whether oil or pork or human labor) has been used in the production process, management becomes the owner of the final product. Once workers sell their labor, they have no further interest in the enterprise, as the employer now owns the final product and all profits derived from its sale. Ultimately, the notion that human labor is not a commodity brings to the forefront the proposition that the rights of workers must trump market considerations. Whether one is arguing that courts cannot enjoin workers from striking, that bankruptcy law should not apply to labor contracts, or that unions should be able to monopolize labor markets, the phrase “labor is not a commodity” cuts through a host of employer arguments. On a deeper level, if the commodity status of labor is indispensable to a capitalist economy, then to say that human labor is not a commodity is quite radical in its implications. According to Karl Marx, wages were “a commodity which its possessor, the wage worker, sells to the capitalist. Why does he sell it? It is in order to live.”19 Thus, the rejection of the commodity status of human labor is also a rejection of the idea that the market should govern every sphere of human activity.

#### 2. Alternatives short of the right to strike fail—only withholding labor can grind capitalism to a halt

Nolan 21

(Hamilton, Labor Journalist for In These Times, <https://inthesetimes.com/article/no-strike-clause-labor-peace-union-contracts>, 5-4)

In post WWII America, union contracts work more or less like this: The company guarantees workers certain wages and benefits, and the workers agree to give up their right to strike for the term of the contract. This fundamental agreement — material gains in exchange for labor peace — defines modern labor relations. And where has this arrangement gotten the labor movement? Near death. For decades, union membership has declined, wages have stagnated, and capital has gained more and more power over working people. This devastating collapse in the power of organized labor has coincided with the post ​“Treaty of Detroit” period in which a very dangerous idea was cemented and enshrined as conventional wisdom. That is the idea that employers agree to union contracts in order to purchase labor peace—that the incentive for a company to bargain and sign a contract with its workers is to receive, in turn, a guarantee that those workers will be quiescent. Today, the belief in the necessity of this arrangement prevails among management-side attorneys, labor-side attorneys, and union leaders alike. Indeed, it is embodied very well in this quote that the Sacramento Bee got from labor attorney Tim Yeung when asking about the proposal to get rid of no-strike clauses: ​“It’s all about labor peace,” Yeung said. ​“When we agree to a contract, we’re agreeing that for the next three years or whatever, we’re not going to have a strike. If you can walk out at any time, that defeats much of the purpose of what we’re trying to do.” Let me suggest a different, more reasonable framework for labor relations between an employer and its employees. The employer signs a union contract in order to buy the work the employees do. Labor peace is something that the employer purchases separately, by being a good employer, and not fucking the employees over. The basic act of enshrining a mundane agreement on wages and working conditions in a contract should rightly be seen as a normal part of doing business, not as something that working people have to fight to gain at the expense of their own rights. What a business gets in return for a union contract is a work force. What the workers get is freedom from having the terms of their employment radically upended at any moment. To our jobs, we should be obligated to give our time and our effort, but not our souls. The right to strike is, at the end of the day, the only thing that gives working people power. The only thing! Withholding our labor is the one and only weapon we have that can match the power that capital has — the economic power to render people destitute, a fearsome power that is every bit as threatening as guns and bombs. Any working person individually can be destroyed by that power. Collectively, however, working people can match that power by striking and forcing capital to grind to a halt. No set of laws, regulations, or contractual provisions will ever change the fact that this is the only balance of power that exists in a capitalist workplace. We are fed the illusion that giving up the right to strike in exchange for material gains is an even trade. But that’s not true. For a little bit of money, businesses gain freedom from the one thing that can make them negotiate evenly with their workers. They maintain their own economic weapons over their workers, while we willingly lay down ours and tell ourselves that we have won something.

#### 3. Empirics prove strikes can end government shutdowns-the right is key

Featherstone 19

(Liza, <https://jacobinmag.com/2019/02/flight-attendants-union-sara-nelson-shutdown>, 2-8)

On Sunday, January 20, speaking at an AFL-CIO dinner honoring Martin Luther King, Jr, Sara Nelson, president of the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA), called for a general strike to end Trump’s government shutdown. The following Friday, Nelson, a United Airlines flight attendant since 1996, told the media that flight attendants were “mobilizing immediately” for a strike of their own. A couple hours later, President Trump agreed to provisionally reopen the government for three weeks. Nelson’s power moves have a backstory — and a future. She was raised to serve the public, in Corvallis, Oregon, in the 1970s and 1980s, an era when the earning power of public servants had already begun to wane. Her mother was a teacher, but her father, though trained as a physical education teacher, never found a job in that field due to budget cuts in the public school system. He worked first in a lumber mill, then selling lumber. In college, Nelson majored in English and education. She did her student teaching in inner-city St Louis. “I really would have loved to be a teacher,” she said. But she struggled to make ends meet after graduation, facing student loans. One of her best friends became a flight attendant. “We sort of thought it was funny, and that she would do it for a year or two,” Nelson recalls. Not long after, her friend called from a beach in Miami, toes in the ocean, announcing firmly that it was time to stop laughing at her new career: among other benefits and perks, the money was better than Nelson’s first-year teacher salary. Nelson drove to Chicago the next day to interview with United Airlines, and was hired. After weeks of unpaid training, her first paycheck was delayed by several more weeks. She ate nothing but plane food and Ramen, her bank balance at zero. She went to United’s Boston office to beg for help and was met with indifference. Standing in the office weeping, she felt a tap on the shoulder. “And there was someone standing there who looked just like me. I’d never seen her before. She was in the same uniform, holding her checkbook and asking me how to spell my name. She hands me a check for $800 and she says, ‘Number one, you take care of yourself, and number two, you call our union.’” “And I always tell people, I called my union, and I had my paycheck the next day,” Nelson continues. “But, I learned everything I needed to know in that moment when she was standing in front of me with that check. And that is, that flight attendants are union members. There is almost nobody better at taking care of each other. And in our unions we are never alone.” Not long afterward, her local called her up. ‘We’d like you to get involved,’ they said. I was so honored,” she laughs, “I didn’t realize people said no.” Nelson’s union, the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA), which today represents nearly fifty thousand workers at twenty airlines, had an impressive history even before she joined. In the 1980s and 1990s, airline deregulation brought vicious assaults on labor. After Carl Icahn fired all the TWA strikers in 1986, he showed that flight attendants could be replaced within a few days. “We had to be able to fight back,” Nelson emphasizes. In response, AFA created a strike tactic called Create Havoc Around Our System (CHAOS), whose guiding principle is that “the strike is going to take any form and we are not going to give you any warning,” Nelson explains. CHAOS is deeply destabilizing to corporate management. “It could be a single flight, where there is no replacement. It could be shutting down an entire airport, or it could be everyone walking off the job for an hour,” says Nelson. “You don’t know where or when. And the effective result is that we control the schedule.” Alaskan Airlines’ executives were once driven to such confused desperation by CHAOS that they inadvertently gave many employees a 60 percent raise overnight. “There are no labor rights without the right to strike,” says Nelson. “You can’t have a collective bargaining process without the right to strike.” The reason is that without that threat, management has no incentive to reach an agreement with workers. When Ronald Reagan famously fired the striking air traffic controllers in 1981, he knew this, and his move had just the consequences that he and his right-wing backers desired. Making it harder for workers to go on strike has immeasurably complicated their efforts to build and exercise power, and union membership has steadily declined. But worker power is not just about having the legal right to strike. Power also lies in being organized and willing to strike. During negotiations, Nelson says, “You have to be able to show the company that your workforce is ready to act. You cannot lead on policy. You can’t lead by slamming your hand on the table. I’ve never seen management, when you walk in and make this impassioned argument at the table, that they sort of slap their head and go, ‘Oh you’re right! We should pay the flight attendants more!’ No, it’s when they know that you have a mobilized workforce who can go out.” Nelson’s call for a general strike last month was moved by solidarity with government workers who were going without pay. But the flight attendants’ strike preparations had an equally urgent motive: fear for their own safety. Air traffic controllers — unpaid but facing felony charges if they were to strike — were working but, Nelson says, “driving Ubers and Lyfts outside their shifts to try to provide for their families when they should have been getting rest. We said, ‘There’s going to be a breaking point here.’” Nelson insists, “We just could not continue to fly and ask the members to be put in harm’s way. It was increasingly clear that we were open to accident or attack.” Nelson’s strike mobilization was real, and industry and government alike knew it. “The airline industry knows me,” she says. “I think they know they had to take that threat seriously. It was very clear to the airline industry, to everyone on the Hill, that we were prepared to take action.” Also in the workers’ favor: the timing of a certain cultural ritual. “I think people were starting to recognize that the Super Bowl wouldn’t have happened,” says Nelson. “Private jets wouldn’t have been able to take off.” Indeed, almost all Georgia’s legislators voted to end the shutdown, and Republican Senator Johnny Isakson participated in bipartisan talks to do so. “He was very concerned about Atlanta and the shutdown,” Nelson observes. “Look, you have to understand where your leverage is and how to get people’s attention.” I ask Nelson what she and her members plan to do with all this power. “We cannot take day thirty-six of a lockout,” she insists quickly, explaining that the AFA-CWA is now wholly focused on preventing lawmakers from shutting down the government again when this temporary truce expires. “We are getting ready to take very fulsome action on February 16 to define what’s at stake if they don’t get to the table and resolve this,” she emphasizes. These antics by Trump represent, to Nelson, “an attempt to fundamentally unravel our government.” When people can’t get the goods and services they need, she explains, “there will be a tremendous outcry to just stop the bleeding, and if we allow it to get to that point, the White House and anyone else who has wanted to privatize all of our government functions will try to use [the crisis] to do exactly that. And that will lower standards.” This should terrify everyone. Nelson gives the example of air traffic controllers, who now train for three to five years to do their jobs. Private industry would have every incentive to ease such requirements. “It opens us up to tremendous risk,” Nelson warns. “Air traffic controllers have to get it right 100 percent of the time when they’re on the job. In any other workplace, if you have an efficiency of 99.5 percent, that is stellar. It’s unheard of. It’s unbelievable. If air traffic controllers got it 99.5 percent right, you’d have fifty aircraft accidents a day. This is what’s at stake.” Capitalists, in short, would be happy to privatize air traffic control, and let many of us die. “Unions are the last check against that kind of greed,” Nelson says. “And we are also there for the public good, because we are the public.” “We need to understand our power and never allow this to happen again,” she continues. “We need to encourage women to understand that they have power in their workplace, by joining unions and running unions. We will end the wage gap that way because everyone is equal in a union contract.” Nelson also sees such organizing as the best way to change our political system. “When labor has that power and density, politics will reflect working people. It changes everything.” Start in the workplace, she says, and “the politics will follow.”

#### 4. Public right to strike is essential to avoiding government shutdowns

Nolan 20

(Hamilton, a labor reporter for In These Times, <https://inthesetimes.com/article/bernie-biden-task-force-labor-public-sector-right-strike-nelson-saunders>, 7-9)

Perhaps the most notable part of the platform, however, is an omission. It asks to ​“ensure that all private-sector workers’ right to strike… is vigorously protected.” But for public sector workers, it asks only to ​“Provide a federal guarantee for public sector employees to bargain for better pay and benefits and the working conditions they deserve.” In other words, despite the fact that the public sector is much more heavily unionized than the private sector, and has been under legal attack from the right for decades, there is no demand that public sector workers be granted the right to strike — the single most potent weapon in any union’s toolbox. More remarkable is the fact that Lee Saunders, one of America’s most powerful public sector union leaders and an Obama confidante, represents the faction that was not seeking to give his own members the right to strike. ​“In the public sector, AFSCME has taken the position that… in order to come to a conclusion if there are difficult negotiations, we should have binding arbitration in place of the right to strike,” Saunders told In These Times. ​“Public sector unions believe binding arbitration is better because we provide valuable public services.” Saunders acknowledged that the issue of the public sector’s right to strike was discussed in the task force’s negotiations, but his view, unsurprisingly, carried the day. Sara Nelson, a leftist in the labor movement who is often mentioned as a future candidate to lead the AFL-CIO, pushed unsuccessfully for public workers to have the same right to strike as their counterparts in the private sector. ​“My mind wasn’t changed during this process on any issue we brought forward. I fundamentally believe in the right to strike. The strike is a necessary component of collective bargaining,” she told In These Times. ​“If federal workers had the right to strike, there would never be a government shutdown ever again.”