### 1NC – T

#### Interp: Workers have certain employment rights endowed to them.

UK Government, ND

[UK Government: “Employment status,” no publication date. https://www.gov.uk/employment-status/worker]//AD

Employment rights

Workers are entitled to certain employment rights, including:

getting the National Minimum Wage

protection against unlawful deductions from wages

the statutory minimum level of paid holiday

the statutory minimum length of rest breaks

to not work more than 48 hours on average per week or to opt out of this right if they choose

protection against unlawful discrimination

protection for ‘whistleblowing’ - reporting wrongdoing in the workplace

to not be treated less favourably if they work part-time

#### “Employer” excludes government actors.

29 U.S. Code § 152

(<https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/29/1520>) BW

(2) The term “employer” includes any person acting as an agent of an employer, directly or indirectly, but shall not include the United States or any wholly owned Government corporation, or any Federal Reserve Bank, or any State or political subdivision thereof, or any person subject to the Railway Labor Act [45 U.S.C. 151 et seq.], as amended from time to time, or any labor organization (other than when acting as an employer), or anyone acting in the capacity of officer or agent of such labor organization.

#### Violations:

#### 1. No minimum wage – 1AC Fulcher

#### 2. Wage theft – 1AC Fulcher

#### 3. No rest breaks or paid leave – 1AC Eisen

#### 4. Involuntary servitude is allowed for prisoners.

Ourdocuments.gov, ND

[Government website: “Transcript of 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Abolition of Slavery (1865) ,” no publication date. [https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=40&page=transcript]//AD](https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=40&page=transcript%5d//AD)

AMENDMENT XIII

Section 1.

Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

#### Net benefits:

#### 1. Limits and Ground – no unifying core neg generics to expropriated and immaterial labor PLUS no reasonable answer to the “slavery shouldn’t exist” aff – you shouldn’t vote aff just because we have case defense – it is horrible to endorse a model of debate where students defend prisons.

#### Topicality must be a voting issue because it tells the neg what they do and don’t have to prepare – use competing interps because T is a yes/no question

### K

#### Their focus on prison labor is a diversionary tactic that normalizes broader forms of population control utilized by neoliberal governments. This is not a semantic point – this mindset informs of how they view non-prison labor and replicates class based racism.

Ertel 15 - JACOB ERTEL Jacob Ertel is a graduate of Oberlin College (Oberlin), where he studied Political Economy. Ertel was an organizer for Students for a Free Palestine (SFP), an affiliate of Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), on the Oberlin campus. AUGUST 10, 2015 https://www.counterpunch.org/2015/08/10/do-we-need-to-rethink-the-prison-industrial-complex/

As a rhetorical tool, the notion of the PIC has been central in galvanizing public interest in the country’s astounding incarceration boom—and the 2.2 million people enveloped by it, over 60 percent of who are people of color—since the 1980s. In self-referentially positioning itself in relation to the more widely known ‘military-industrial complex,’ moreover, the PIC effectively calls attention to the state’s capacity to reproduce itself through a range of disciplinary institutions crucial to capitalism’s functioning. Though the PIC is useful in its ability to accessibly demonstrate the conjoined interests of capital and the state, some have argued that the term glosses over key historical, theoretical, and material conditions that can negatively affect our ability to understand the prison system and ultimately act against it. French sociologist Loïc Wacquant is among the most brazen of the term’s critics. Though Wacquant obnoxiously dismisses the PIC as an “activist myth,” various elements of his critique should merit our attention, if for no other reason than their provocatively counterintuitive framing. First and perhaps most surprisingly, Wacquant explains that only a miniscule percentage of incarcerated people actually work for private firms. In 2009, for example, only 0.3 percent of inmates nation-wide were employed by such companies. Even if this trend were to develop exponentially in the coming years, it would still fail to account for the fundamental features of the prison system, as no single economic sector relies principally or even significantly on prison labor, however disturbing this dynamic may be. Prisons likewise do not actually constitute a significant boon to the United States’ economy; in fact, inmates are generally employed at a net loss to the government (though their activity is heavily subsidized and regulated), and US corrections-based spending at local, municipal, and federal levels constitutes only a small fraction of the GDP. None of this is to discount the disturbing reality of private prisons. And the private prison industry is growing: Corrections Corporation of America’s profits alone have increased by 500 percent in the past twenty years, and the three largest private prison corporations have spent over $45 million combined in lobbying efforts, giving some credence to Critical Resistance’s explication of the PIC. Yet despite increasing profit margins and appalling moral bankruptcy, private prisons are hardly the norm, and they likely won’t be anytime soon. One must also wonder whether the specific demonization of the private prison industry implicitly naturalizes the much larger and much more encompassing public prison nexus in the United States, one which has grown 790 percent since 1980 and which is not immune from the grave abuses (sexualized violence, correctional officer misconduct, food rationing, etc.) frequently cited as byproducts of the private prison industry. Such an analysis can tend towards a conspiratorial view of history that, regardless of whether or not it ultimately rings true, misses the central dynamic undergirding state involvement vis-à-vis both institutions of social welfare and institutions of imprisonment, detention, and poverty under neoliberalism. Wacquant identifies such a dynamic in Punishing the Poor as a “paradox of neoliberal rationality” in which “the state stridently reasserts its responsibility, potency, and efficiency in the narrow register of crime management at the very moment when it proclaims and organizes its own impotence on the economic front, thereby revitalizing the twin historical-cum-scholarly myths of the efficient police and the free market.” This trend is illustrated by dramatically changing state expenses—for instance, by 1995 US corrections budget appropriations exceeded funding for public housing by a factor of three, resembling the inverse relationship of 1980 funding allocations. In other words, explains Wacquant, the prison system has over time become the United States’ largest public housing initiative for the poor. This reframing of the PIC thus positions the state in a slightly different light, portraying the heightened capacity for incarceration within a frankly more grotesque functionality. If, as opposed to the traditional PIC framing in which labor done in both private and public prisons is conceived as a major economic boon, Black labor (which alone disproportionally constitutes roughly 36 percent of the prison population) is even more ineluctably characterized as surplus labor under post-Fordism, then the state can simply endow itself with the power to hyper-criminalize without pretext in order to deal with those who both serve no use to the economy and frustrate the largely white middle class whose labor does provide such a benefit. The heightening of aggressive, ‘zero-tolerance’ policing functions associated with gentrification is case in point, as those who are shut out of the deteriorating welfare system and forced to turn to informal economies become even more vulnerable to warehousing or police brutality, thus aiding in the production of ‘renewed’ urban space for the gentrifying middle-class. These critiques of the contemporary framing of the ‘prison-industrial complex’ are not simply a practice in detached pseudo-intellectualization; they are important because they frame the role of Black labor to the US economy in a fundamentally different way, one that can be instructive for current struggles and movements. Rather than assuming that the hyper-exploited production process occurring in prisons is central to the growth of the economy and the private corporations that contribute to it, for example, perhaps it is worthwhile to consider prison labor’s actual relative lack of productivity as symptomatic of a post-Fordist economy that deals with its “relatively redundant population of laborers…of greater extant than suffices for the average needs of the self-expansion of capital” (in the words of Marx) through mass warehousing. Contrary to the popular slogan then, ontologically speaking, Black lives cannot matter under neoliberalism because they have been cast as inessential to the quotidian functioning of the economy. Any critique of the current iteration of the PIC, however, must seriously reckon with the not at all insignificant rise of privatized detention centers. Private prison companies are responsible for 62 percent of the beds used by the Department of Homeland Security’s Immigrations and Customs Enforcement branch, and private firms such as the Corrections Corporation of America and GEO Group operate nine out of ten of the country’s largest immigration detention centers. Both of these companies have lobbied the Department of Homeland Security on immigration policy, and thus constitute a formidable force in shaping the fate of undocumented migrants largely driven to cross the border due to free trade agreements and the drug war. For this reason, the PIC as depicted by Critical Resistance may more accurately describe a ‘security-industrial’ or ‘detention-industrial’ complex. One might incorrectly read this imputation as implying that the recent success of Columbia Prison Divest’s campaign is ultimately inessential or futile. One might also infer that a call to reframe the prison-industrial complex may necessarily entail solely Keynesian or social democratic solutions, as opposed to the explicitly abolitionist stance put forth by radical groups such as Critical Resistance. On the contrary, such a reframing affirms the importance of (for now) symbolic initiatives such as divestment from the private prison industry, and is in fact entirely compatible with the notion of abolition and the prescriptions for restorative and transformative justice platforms often associated with radical adherents to the traditional usage of the PIC. For one, if for no other purpose, the PIC is useful in its function as effective political propaganda that has and should continue to pique a widespread interest in, at the very least, prison expansion. The primary short-term goal of any abolitionist movement must be to call attention to injustice, and there is no reason why the PIC should be abandoned, even if its empirical grounding may be questioned and readjusted. Likewise, the movement to divest from the private prison industry carries not merely symbolic import, but the potential to unify a range of (unfortunately) often-disparate divestment movements. For instance, Group4Securicor (more commonly referred to as G4S), which was targeted by Columbia’s private prison divestment campaign, operates in 125 countries and manages prisons and detention centers in Israel and the occupied West Bank, often in contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention. One can thus read a refreshingly global and intersectional element into the prison divestment movement, one that makes use of the traditional and incomplete formulation of the PIC. While the success of private prison divestment at Columbia should certainly be seen as a tremendous victory for all divestment movements, reframing the prison-industrial complex as suggested above could prove useful in the seemingly perennial and fraught struggle to build a unified Left in the United States. Such potential exists because this reframing of the prison system cuts across multiple dimensions of neoliberalism to explicitly address the rise of incarceration rates and prison expansion within the context of economic deregulation and the state’s reneging on social protections since the 1980s. It prompts us not to be satisfied when Obama mentions the ‘school-to-prison pipeline’ once every seven years, to strive beyond incomplete iterations of abolition that might inadvertently limit themselves to ultimately reformist paradigms, and above all to form stronger connections between the prison abolition movement and the labor movement, between the immigration movement and the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

#### Our critique independently outweighs the case - neoliberalism causes extinction and massive social inequalities – the affs single issue legalistic solution is the exact kind of politics neolib wants us to engage in so the root cause goes unquestioned. Farbod 15

( Faramarz Farbod , PhD Candidate @ Rutgers, Prof @ Moravian College, Monthly Review, http://mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2015/farbod020615.html, 6-2)

Global capitalism is the 800-pound gorilla. The twin ecological and economic crises, militarism, the rise of the surveillance state, and a dysfunctional political system can all be traced to its normal operations. We need a transformative politics from below that can challenge the fundamentals of capitalism instead of today's politics that is content to treat its symptoms. The problems we face are linked to each other and to the way a capitalist society operates. We must make an effort to understand its real character. The fundamental question of our time is whether we can go beyond a system that is ravaging the Earth and secure a future with dignity for life and respect for the planet. What has capitalism done to us lately? The best science tells us that this is a do-or-die moment. We are now in the midst of the 6th mass extinction in the planetary history with 150 to 200 species going extinct every day, a pace 1,000 times greater than the 'natural' extinction rate.1 The Earth has been warming rapidly since the 1970s with the 10 warmest years on record all occurring since 1998.2 The planet has already warmed by 0.85 degree Celsius since the industrial revolution 150 years ago. An increase of 2° Celsius is the limit of what the planet can take before major catastrophic consequences. Limiting global warming to 2°C requires reducing global emissions by 6% per year. However, global carbon emissions from fossil fuels increased by about 1.5 times between 1990 and 2008.3 Capitalism has also led to explosive social inequalities. The global economic landscape is littered with rising concentration of wealth, debt, distress, and immiseration caused by the austerity-pushing elites. Take the US. The richest 20 persons have as much wealth as the bottom 150 million.4 Since 1973, the hourly wages of workers have lagged behind worker productivity rates by more than 800%.5 It now takes the average family 47 years to make what a hedge fund manager makes in one hour.6 Just about a quarter of children under the age of 5 live in poverty.7 A majority of public school students are low-income.8 85% of workers feel stress on the job.9 Soon the only thing left of the American Dream will be a culture of hustling to survive. Take the global society. The world's billionaires control $7 trillion, a sum 77 times the debt owed by Greece to the European banks.10 The richest 80 possess more than the combined wealth of the bottom 50% of the global population (3.5 billion people).11 By 2016 the richest 1% will own a greater share of the global wealth than the rest of us combined.12 The top 200 global corporations wield twice the economic power of the bottom 80% of the global population.13 Instead of a global society capitalism is creating a global apartheid. What's the nature of the beast? Firstly, the "egotistical calculation" of commerce wins the day every time. Capital seeks maximum profitability as a matter of first priority. Evermore "accumulation of capital" is the system's bill of health; it is slowdowns or reversals that usher in crises and set off panic. Cancer-like hunger for endless growth is in the system's DNA and is what has set it on a tragic collision course with Nature, a finite category. Secondly, capitalism treats human labor as a cost. It therefore opposes labor capturing a fair share of the total economic value that it creates. Since labor stands for the majority and capital for a tiny minority, it follows that classism and class warfare are built into its DNA, which explains why the "middle class" is shrinking and its gains are never secure. Thirdly, private interests determine massive investments and make key decisions at the point of production guided by maximization of profits. That's why in the US the truck freight replaced the railroad freight, chemicals were used extensively in agriculture, public transport was gutted in favor of private cars, and big cars replaced small ones. What should political action aim for today? The political class has no good ideas about how to address the crises. One may even wonder whether it has a serious understanding of the system, or at least of ways to ameliorate its consequences. The range of solutions offered tends to be of a technical, legislative, or regulatory nature, promising at best temporary management of the deepening crises. The trajectory of the system, at any rate, precludes a return to its post-WWII regulatory phase. It's left to us as a society to think about what the real character of the system is, where we are going, and how we are going to deal with the trajectory of the system -- and act accordingly. The critical task ahead is to build a transformative politics capable of steering the system away from its destructive path. Given the system's DNA, such a politics from below must include efforts to challenge the system's fundamentals, namely, its private mode of decision-making about investments and about what and how to produce. Furthermore, it behooves us to heed the late environmentalist Barry Commoner's insistence on the efficacy of a strategy of prevention over a failed one of control or capture of pollutants. At a lecture in 1991, Commoner remarked: "Environmental pollution is an incurable disease; it can only be prevented"; and he proceeded to refer to "a law," namely: "if you don't put a pollutant in the environment it won't be there." What is nearly certain now is that without democratic control of wealth and social governance of the means of production, we will all be condemned to the labor of Sisyphus. Only we won't have to suffer for all eternity, as the degradation of life-enhancing natural and social systems will soon reach a point of no return**.**

#### The alternative is to affirm the model of the Communist Party – only party organizing can provide effective accountability mechanisms to correct chauvinist tendencies, educate and mobilize marginalized communities, and connect local struggles to a movement for global liberation.

Escalante, Philosophy @ UOregon, 18

[Alyson, M.A., is a Marxist-Leninist, Materialist Feminist and Anti-Imperialist activist. “PARTY ORGANIZING IN THE 21ST CENTURY” September 21st, 2018 <https://theforgenews.org/2018/09/21/party-organizing-in-the-21st-century/>] rVs

I would argue that within the base building movement, there is a move towards party organizing, but this trend has not always been explicitly theorized or forwarded within the movement. My goal in this essay is to argue that base building and dual power strategy can be best forwarded through party organizing, and that party organizing can allow this emerging movement to solidify into a powerful revolutionary socialist tendency in the United States. One of the crucial insights of the base building movement is that the current state of the left in the United States is one in which revolution is not currently possible. There exists very little popular support for socialist politics. A century of anticommunist propaganda has been extremely effective in convincing even the most oppressed and marginalized that communism has nothing to offer them. The base building emphasis on dual power responds directly to this insight. By building institutions which can meet people’s needs, we are able to concretely demonstrate that communists can offer the oppressed relief from the horrific conditions of capitalism. Base building strategy recognizes that actually doing the work to serve the people does infinitely more to create a socialist base of popular support than electing democratic socialist candidates or holding endless political education classes can ever hope to do. Dual power is about proving that we have something to offer the oppressed. The question, of course, remains: once we have built a base of popular support, what do we do next? If it turns out that establishing socialist institutions to meet people’s needs does in fact create sympathy towards the cause of communism, how can we mobilize that base? Put simply: in order to mobilize the base which base builders hope to create, we need to have already done the work of building a communist party. It is not enough to simply meet peoples needs. Rather, we must build the institutions of dual power in the name of communism. We must refuse covert front organizing and instead have a public face as a communist party. When we build tenants unions, serve the people programs, and other dual power projects, we must make it clear that we are organizing as communists, unified around a party, and are not content simply with establishing endless dual power organizations. We must be clear that our strategy is revolutionary and in order to make this clear we must adopt party organizing. By “party organizing” I mean an organizational strategy which adopts the party model. Such organizing focuses on building a party whose membership is formally unified around a party line determined by democratic centralist decision making. The party model creates internal methods for holding party members accountable, unifying party member action around democratically determined goals, and for educating party members in communist theory and praxis. A communist organization utilizing the party model works to build dual power institutions while simultaneously educating the communities they hope to serve. Organizations which adopt the party model focus on propagandizing around the need for revolutionary socialism. They function as the forefront of political organizing, empowering local communities to theorize their liberation through communist theory while organizing communities to literally fight for their liberation. A party is not simply a group of individuals doing work together, but is a formal organization unified in its fight against capitalism. Party organizing has much to offer the base building movement. By working in a unified party, base builders can ensure that local struggles are tied to and informed by a unified national and international strategy. While the most horrific manifestations of capitalism take on particular and unique form at the local level, we need to remember that our struggle is against a material base which functions not only at the national but at the international level. The formal structures provided by a democratic centralist party model allow individual locals to have a voice in open debate, but also allow for a unified strategy to emerge from democratic consensus. Furthermore, party organizing allows for local organizations and individual organizers to be held accountable for their actions. It allows criticism to function not as one independent group criticizing another independent group, but rather as comrades with a formal organizational unity working together to sharpen each others strategies and to help correct chauvinist ideas and actions. In the context of the socialist movement within the United States, such accountability is crucial. As a movement which operates within a settler colonial society, imperialist and colonial ideal frequently infect leftist organizing. Creating formal unity and party procedure for dealing with and correcting these ideas allows us to address these consistent problems within American socialist organizing. Having a formal party which unifies the various dual power projects being undertaken at the local level also allows for base builders to not simply meet peoples needs, but to pull them into the membership of the party as organizers themselves. The party model creates a means for sustained growth to occur by unifying organizers in a manner that allows for skills, strategies, and ideas to be shared with newer organizers. It also allows community members who have been served by dual power projects to take an active role in organizing by becoming party members and participating in the continued growth of base building strategy. It ensures that there are formal processes for educating communities in communist theory and praxis, and also enables them to act and organize in accordance with their own local conditions. We also must recognize that the current state of the base building movement precludes the possibility of such a national unified party in the present moment. Since base building strategy is being undertaken in a number of already established organizations, it is not likely that base builders would abandon these organizations in favor of founding a unified party. Additionally, it would not be strategic to immediately undertake such complete unification because it would mean abandoning the organizational contexts in which concrete gains are already being made and in which growth is currently occurring. What is important for base builders to focus on in the current moment is building dual power on a local level alongside building a national movement. This means aspiring towards the possibility of a unified party, while pursuing continued local growth. The movement within the Marxist Center network towards some form of unification is positive step in the right direction. The independent party emphasis within the Refoundation caucus should also be recognized as a positive approach. It is important for base builders to continue to explore the possibility of unification, and to maintain unification through a party model as a long term goal. In the meantime, individual base building organizations ought to adopt party models for their local organizing. Local organizations ought to be building dual power alongside recruitment into their organizations, education of community members in communist theory and praxis, and the establishment of armed and militant party cadres capable of defending dual power institutions from state terror. Dual power institutions must be unified openly and transparently around these organizations in order for them to operate as more than “red charities.” Serving the people means meeting their material needs while also educating and propagandizing. It means radicalizing, recruiting, and organizing. The party model remains the most useful method for achieving these ends. The use of the party model by local organizations allows base builders to gain popular support, and most importantly, to mobilize their base of popular support towards revolutionary ends, not simply towards the construction of a parallel economy which exists as an end in and of itself. It is my hope that we will see future unification of the various local base building organizations into a national party, but in the meantime we must push for party organizing at the local level. If local organizations adopt party organizing, it ought to become clear that a unified national party will have to be the long term goal of the base building movement. Many of the already existing organizations within the base building movement already operate according to these principles. I do not mean to suggest otherwise. Rather, my hope is to suggest that we ought to be explicit about the need for party organizing and emphasize the relationship between dual power and the party model. Doing so will make it clear that the base building movement is not pursuing a cooperative economy alongside capitalism, but is pursuing a revolutionary socialist strategy capable of fighting capitalism. The long term details of base building and dual power organizing will arise organically in response to the conditions the movement finds itself operating within. I hope that I have put forward a useful contribution to the discussion about base building organizing, and have demonstrated the need for party organizing in order to ensure that the base building tendency maintains a revolutionary orientation. The finer details of revolutionary strategy will be worked out over time and are not a good subject for public discussion. I strongly believe party organizing offers the best path for ensuring that such strategy will succeed. My goal here is not to dictate the only possible path forward but to open a conversation about how the base building movement will organize as it transitions from a loose network of individual organizations into a unified socialist tendency. These discussions and debates will be crucial to ensuring that this rapidly growing movement can succeed.

### Fire PIC

#### Text: The 49 United States excluding California ought to recognize an unconditional right for incarcerated workers to strike. California should recognize a right for incarcerated workers, except those in the prison firefighter program, to strike.

#### Firefighter programs decidedly better than prison and solve megafires – saves numerous preventable deaths.

Hahn, 21

[Matthew Hahn, union electrician and meditation teacher who writes about his time in prison and issues related to criminal justice: “Sending us to fight fires was abusive. We preferred it to staying in prison.” Published by Washington Post on 10-15-21. https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/prison-firefighter-california-exploit/2021/10/15/3310eccc-2c61-11ec-8ef6-3ca8fe943a92\_story.html]//AD

On the perimeter of the smoldering ruins of Lassen National Forest in Northern California this summer, an orange-clad crew of wildland firefighters worked steadily to contain the Dixie Fire, the largest single wildfire in state history. Using rakes, axes and chain saws, they literally moved the landscape, cleaving burned from unburned to contain the flames. This work was dangerous, and they made just a few dollars per hour, working 24-hour shifts.

But it was better than being in prison.

I used to be one of the incarcerated people whom California employs to fight wildfires, and I was fortunate. During my nine years in prison for drug-related burglaries, ending in 2012, I never met a fellow prisoner who didn’t want to be in “fire camp,” as the program is known. Some dreamed of going but knew they would never be allowed to live in such a low-security facility. Others, like me, did everything in their capacity to ensure that they got there as soon as humanly possible. For the most part, this meant being savvy and lucky enough to stay out of trouble during the first few years of my incarceration.

Though the program is voluntary, some well-meaning people on social media and in activist circles like to compare fire camp to slavery. Every fire season, they draw attention to its resemblance to chain gangs of the past, its low wages and its exploitative nature. Some argue that incarcerated firefighters face insurmountable barriers to careers in that field after parole, though this has started to change in recent years. Others argue that the voluntary nature of fire camp is a ruse, that consent cannot be offered by the coerced.

There is some truth to these objections, but they ignore the reality of why people would want to risk life and limb for a state that is caging them: The conditions in California prisons are so terrible that fighting wildfires is a rational choice. It is probably the safest choice as well.

I’m from a long line of California ranchers. Now we flee fires all the time.

California prisons have, on average, three times the murder rate of the country overall and twice the rate of all American prisons. These figures don’t take into account the sheer number of physical assaults that occur behind prison walls. Prison feels like a dangerous place because it is. Whether it’s individual assaults or large-scale riots, the potential for violence is ever-present. Fire camp represents a reprieve from that risk.

Sure, people can die in fire camp as well — at least three convict-firefighters have died working to contain fires in California since 2017 — but the threat doesn’t weigh on the mind like the prospect of being murdered by a fellow prisoner. I will never forget the relief I felt the day I set foot in a fire camp in Los Angeles County, like an enormous burden had been lifted.

The experience was at times harrowing, as when my 12-man crew was called to fight the Jesusita Fire, which scorched nearly 9,000 acres and destroyed 80 homes in the Santa Barbara hills back in 2009. I distinctly remember our vehicle rounding an escarpment along the coast when the fire revealed itself, the plume rising and then disappearing into a cloud cover of its own making. Bright orange fingers of flame danced along the top of the mountains.

The fire had been moving in the patches of grass and brush between properties, so we zigzagged our way between homes, cutting down bushes, beating away flames and leaving a four-foot-wide dirt track in our wake. I was perpetually out of breath, a combination of exertion and poor air quality. My flame-resistant clothing was soaked with sweat, and I remember seeing steam rise from my pant leg when I got too close to the burning grass.

The fire had ignited one home’s deck and was slowly burning its way to the structure. We cut the deck off the house, saving the home. I often fantasize about the owners returning to see it still standing, unaware and probably unconcerned that an incarcerated fire crew had saved it. There was satisfaction in knowing that our work was as valuable as that of any other firefighter working the blaze and that the gratitude expressed toward first responders included us.

#### The program reduces recidivism and violent crime by ingraining first-responder logic.

Lockheart, 20

[Rasheed, former prisoner, 10-1-2020, "Being a Prison Firefighter Taught Me to Save Lives," Marshall Project, https://www.themarshallproject.org/2020/10/01/being-a-prison-firefighter-taught-me-to-save-lives]//AD

There’s a full-fledged firehouse equipped with engines at San Quentin Prison. To work for the department, which serves the facility and over 100 units of mostly employee housing on the grounds, prisoners have to interview with the fire chief and captains and go before a panel composed of the warden and other staff.

You have to be a good fit and know how to work in a team. And they only consider people who have a record of good behavior within the last five years—that means few or no disciplinary write-ups or infractions. You cannot have been convicted of arson, sex offenses, murder or attempted escape, and you have to be at the lowest security level.When I applied in 2016, I had five years left in my sentence. Dozens of guys were trying to get into the firehouse, but they only take nine to 12 at a time. I thought I was in great shape—I was on the San Quentin A’s baseball team, and I played football. But I was nowhere close to being in firefighting shape. We had to be able to hike more than a mile with a 75-pound hose on our backs. I didn’t think I was going to make it at first.It wasn’t really the act of firefighting that made me want to join. Initially, I just wanted the job because I would get to sleep in a room by myself, eat good and train dogs. Plus those guys just look cool. Who as a kid didn’t think firefighters were awesome? Joining the department was also an opportunity to escape the politics and culture of prison. I wouldn't be confined to a cell or have COs hanging over my shoulder all the time; I would be treated like a human being. After years of incarceration I was sold. I didn’t expect it, but firefighting would be the most influential thing I’d ever taken part in. Being a member of the department meant being available 24/7 for calls inside and outside the prison. On the outside, we had house fires, medical emergencies, car accidents and grass fires. Inside we responded to cell fires, provided CPR and transported bodies from housing units to the hospital. In my nearly three years on the job, I did CPR almost 50 times. Only four people lived. The sad truth is that San Quentin has an aging population of people either dying of old age or giving up. There were suicides and a fentanyl outbreak. Sometimes we’d get five overdoses in a week. In 2017, almost 20 people died of various causes. I did CPR on every one of them. On one call, a gentleman had fallen off his bunk and hit his head. He went through three rounds of CPR and two with the defibrillator. On the third round of CPR, I felt him gasp for breath and I could feel his heartbeat underneath my hands. I said to my captain, “Holy shit, I think he's breathing!” He lived and was back on the yard two days later. I can't explain what it feels like to have someone come back to life under your hands. There's nothing like it.

One thing I noticed early on was the difference between the mentalities of people on death row and those in the general population. When we were doing CPR or taking a dead body off the tier, the men on death row had a look of resignation, like ‘Damn, he made it out.’ There was one guy on death row who committed suicide. He always sticks with me because he had his beard trimmed and his hair lined up. He died perfectly groomed but with a look on his face like, I think this is a mistake. People in the general population avoided watching us carry out dead bodies. If you have a life sentence in California, it doesn’t necessarily mean you’ll be incarcerated forever. If you do all the right things and invest in yourself, there is a possibility that you will make it out. With the chance of release, the men in general population didn’t want to think about their own mortality. At times I did feel survivor's guilt about being at the firehouse living the good life. When I was responding to a call, I didn’t have time to be in an emotional space with it. The guilt would kick in when I came back from a call involving one of my incarcerated peers. These were guys I hung out with and played basketball with. But contrary to popular belief about prison culture being dominated by envy, people loved to see me rising above incarceration. I regularly had guys I didn't even know saying they were proud of me and thanking me for representing them. It was like, That’s one of ours. When I was about to be released, I already knew I couldn’t be a firefighter on the outside because my armed robbery felony would exclude me from getting a license. But in September, Gov. Newsom signed AB 2147, a law that puts me on a path to expunging my record and getting my EMT certification. It’s not a fix-all, but it makes the pathway a little bit easier .Once you're a first responder, you're always a first responder. It never leaves your system. There's not a day that goes by that I don't smell smoke. Once you've lived that life, it's a hard thing to leave behind.

#### Megafires kill biodiversity.

Stevens, 12

[Bonnie, 5-15-2012, "An era of mega fires," Arizona Daily Sun, https://azdailysun.com/news/science/an-era-of-mega-fires/article\_a14f3c7d-7a36-5c12-a48e-75a8ea4e3fff.html]//AD

"Mega fires are huge, landscape-scale fires in excess of 100-thousand acres," said Covington, executive director of the Ecological Restoration Institute (ERI) at Northern Arizona University. "We're seeing this throughout the West, but Arizona is on the leading edge."

Covington says mega fires are symptoms of an unhealthy forest caused by a century of actions -- mostly fire suppression, and overgrazing during the late 1800s -- that have changed the structure and function of ponderosa pine and dry mixed conifer forests.

"We need to stop being surprised by the types of fires we're having," said Summerfelt, wildland fire management officer for the city of Flagstaff. "My first fire was on the North Kaibab and it was considered huge. It was 20 acres. A 20-acre fire now means nothing. So in those three-and-a-half decades in my career, I've been able to watch fire change in size and intensity to levels today that even a decade ago would have been unthinkable. And we're not done breaking records."

Covington says Arizona is set up for three more enormous crown fires across the Mogollon Rim that burn through the tops of old growth trees and can ignite spot fires as far as 3 miles ahead of the blaze. "There's the Payson to Winslow corridor, the Sedona to Flagstaff corridor and the Prescott corridor. If we don't get out in front of these and do restoration treatments, it's just going to be a matter of time before we have three more major landscapes burn up."

As we approach the 10th anniversary of the Rodeo-Chediski Fire, scientists, firefighters and natural resource managers are examining today's forest conditions and reviewing lessons learned from the state's two largest fires.

To compare, both fires were started by people on warm, dry, windy days.

"With the Wallow Fire, we knew we were in extreme conditions. We had fuel everywhere and our probability of ignition for any fire that hit the ground was 100 percent. With 62 mph wind gusts, it was blowing so hard it was tough to walk," said Zornes.

Former Forest Service ranger and firefighter Jim Paxon, now Arizona Game and Fish Department spokesperson, describes the 468,000-acre Rodeo-Chediski Fire as a plume-dominated fire.

"It was pretty much fuels related, fed by the millions of excess trees in our overcrowded forests. It had extremely high energy. When I started fighting fire in the late'60s we didn't have these big columns of plumes that would build up, collapse in an explosion on the ground and create hurricane winds. This didn't happen until the '90s."

As a result, 49 percent of the area in the Rodeo-Chediski Fire was considered severely burned. For the 538,000-acre Wallow Fire, that figure is 28 percent.

"It could take a couple hundred years for these forests to return back to what they were," said Alpine District Ranger Rick Davalos. "Some of the severely burned area includes older growth trees."

ERI researchers say crown fires that kill old growth trees also destroy critical wildlife habitat.

"The Mexican spotted owl is the biggest concern we have as an endangered species that we're trying to help out," Paxon said. "The Forest Service is under extreme pressure not to do any cutting around the nesting sites. So between the two fires we lost 20 percent of the Mexican spotted owl nests that exist in the world."

In addition, heat from the Wallow Fire baked streams and killed aquatic life. Then floods, from monsoon rains after the fire, moved silt into rivers and lakes making matters worse.

"The problem with these fires is they remove so much of the vegetation they can create hydrophobic soils. The water won't penetrate the soil. It runs across the surface so all that ash and sediment ends up in streams and rivers. In the Wallow Fire it ruined the habitat for the re-introduced Apache trout," Covington said. "So, whether you look at fish or you look at birds or you look at mammals, the impact of these mega fires over the long haul is very negative."

#### Biodiversity loss causes extinction and turns climate change

Phil Torres, Scholar at the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies, 5-20-2016, "Biodiversity Loss: An Existential Risk Comparable to Climate Change," Future of Life Institute, https://futureoflife.org/2016/05/20/biodiversity-loss/

Biodiversity Loss: An Existential Risk Comparable to Climate Change

According to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, the two greatest existential threats to human civilization stem from climate change and nuclear weapons. Both pose clear and present dangers to the perpetuation of our species, and the increasingly dire climate situation and nuclear arsenal modernizations in the United States and Russia were the most significant reasons why the Bulletin decided to keep the Doomsday Clock set at three minutes before midnight earlier this year.

But there is another existential threat that the Bulletin overlooked in its Doomsday Clock announcement: biodiversity loss. This phenomenon is often identified as one of the many consequences of climate change, and this is of course correct. But biodiversity loss is also a contributing factor behind climate change. For example, deforestation in the Amazon rainforest and elsewhere reduces the amount of carbon dioxide removed from the atmosphere by plants, a natural process that mitigates the effects of climate change. So the causal relation between climate change and biodiversity loss is bidirectional.

### NC – Climate

#### The court’s considering but unlikely to eliminate EPA climate change regulations – SCOTUS caution reflects pro-EPA precedent and concerns of backlash from Biden and agencies

De Vogue 10/29 – - Ariane de Vogue is a journalist covering the Supreme Court for *CNN* and a former reporter for *ABC News*, the article was written with Ella Nilsen who is a climate reporter for *CNN*, “Supreme Court to Review EPA's Ability to Regulate Greenhouse Gases and Address Climate Crisis,” *CNN Politics*, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/29/politics/supreme-court-climate-crisis-epa/index.html>

The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear a case from Republican-led states and coal producers challenging the Environmental Protection Agency's authority to regulate greenhouse gases and address the climate crisis.

The news comes as President Joe Biden prepares to travel to Glasgow, Scotland, for a major climate conference where he will try to extract commitments from major world leaders to combat climate change. Biden's EPA is crafting more stringent rules to limit emissions from power plants that produce electricity from fossil fuels, including coal and natural gas. The electricity sector accounts for 25% of US greenhouse gas emissions, according to the EPA.

Crafting strong environmental regulations is a key part of Biden's climate agenda, in addition to a major climate bill the White House is hoping will pass Congress in the coming weeks. The EPA is also soon expected to issue new proposed regulations limiting methane emissions from oil and gas producers around the country.

Congress' power

The Supreme Court's decision to hear the case is another sign that the conservative majority is eager to seek limits for when Congress can delegate its authority to federal agencies.

In asking the court to take up the case, GOP-led states said a federal appeals court had granted the EPA "unbridled power" with "no limits" to mandate standards that would be "impossible for coal and natural gas power plants to meet."

"For years, conservatives have been pressuring the court to reinvigorate long-dormant limits on Congress' power to delegate regulatory authority to administrative agencies," said Steve Vladeck, CNN Supreme Court analyst and professor at the University of Texas School of Law.

"One of the questions the Court has agreed to take up in these cases is whether, in delegating the power to the EPA to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, Congress exceeded those limits," Vladeck said. "If the Court says yes, that will not just curtail the EPA's power to respond to climate change in a moment in which it's hard to imagine that Congress will fill the gap; it would have enormous implications for -- and impose far greater limits on -- the federal government's regulatory power writ large."

Clean Air Act authority

This is the latest legal showdown in a years-long case over the EPA's authority to issue regulations under the landmark 1970 Clean Air Act.

The current controversy dates to 2016 when a 5-4 Supreme Court stepped in to temporarily block the Obama administration's effort to regulate emissions from coal-fired power plants. In June 2019, the Trump administration sought to ease limits on emissions. A federal appeals court in January 2021 ruled against the Trump administration's rule holding that it rested "critically on a mistaken reading of the Clean Air Act."

It's this January appeals court ruling that states and coal companies are now challenging -- prompting a review of the case by the Supreme Court.

In a statement, West Virginia Attorney General Patrick Morrisey -- who leads a 19 state coalition -- said he was "extremely grateful" for the court's willingness to hear the case and that he believed a "significant portion" of the court "shares our concern that the DC Circuit granted EPA too much authority."

"How we respond to climate change is a pressing issue for our nation, yet some of the paths forward carry serious and disproportionate costs for States and countless other affected parties," Morrisey had written in court briefs.

The Biden administration had urged the justices not to step in at this juncture but to wait for the Biden EPA to complete its new clean air regulations.

EPA Administrator Michael Regan said the agency will "will continue to advance new standards to ensure that all Americans are protected from the power plant pollution that harms public health and our economy."

In a tweet, Regan added: "Power plant carbon pollution hurts families and communities, and threatens businesses and workers. The Courts have repeatedly upheld EPA's authority to regulate dangerous power plant carbon pollution."

David Doniger of the Natural Resources Defense Council said the group would "vigorously defend EPA's authority to curb power plants' huge contribution to the climate crisis."

"Coal companies and their state allies are asking the Court to strip EPA of any authority under the Clean Air Act to meaningfully reduce the nearly 1.5 billion tons of carbon pollution spewed from the nation's power plants each year -- authority the Court has upheld three times in the past two decades " he said.

#### Plan builds court capital

Little 2k (Laura Little, Professor of Law – Temple University, Beasley School of Law, November 2000, 52 Hastings L.J. 47, Lexis)

Other scholars bolster Redish's position by pointing out that judicial review of both federalism and separation of powers questions presents something of a self-fulfilling prophesy. Through review of these sensitive issues of power, the judiciary bolsters its own position or amasses "political capital" and, thereby, legitimates its own power to engage in such review . 237 The judiciary has therefore established [\*98] itself as an effective watchdog to ensure that governmental structures are functioning appropriately. n237. Perry, supra note 11, at 57 (Supreme Court has "amassed a great deal of the political capital it now enjoys ... precisely by resolving problems arising under the doctrines of federalism and of the separation-of-powers "); see also Archibald Cox, The Role of the Supreme Court in American Government 30 (1972) (explaining that "history legitimated the power [of judicial review], and then habit took over to guide men's actions so long as the system worked well enough").

#### That provides coverage for conservative justices to vote as a bloc without fanning partisan flames

Ruger 7/1/21 (Todd, Legal Affairs Staff Writer with BA in Journalism from Drake University, Roll Call, "Supreme Court sidesteps controversy in term punctuated by politics and pandemic," https://www.rollcall.com/2021/07/01/supreme-court-sidesteps-controversy-in-term-punctuated-by-politics-and-pandemic/)

The justices also faced political pressure: a bill from several Democratic lawmakers to expand the number of justices, a White House commission to study that and other possible structural changes to the court, and President Donald Trump’s long-shot request to have them overturn election results in states key to President Joe Biden’s win. The Supreme Court, in move after move, did not fan those partisan flames. But on the last day, it issued two sharply divided rulings on cases about voting rights and money in politics. Up until then, the justices rarely decided cases with the six Republican appointees on one side and the three Democratic appointees on the other, David Cole, the legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union, said Wednesday at a panel discussion. And they reached “remarkable consensus” on many of the most controversial cases in a way that limited the scope of the decision’s impact, Cole said. “I think what we’ve seen is the court has confounded all the commentators, it has really avoided partisan division,” Cole said. “This is not a court that has divided, like the rest of the country has, along partisan lines on controversial issues.” The term started in October with only eight justices because of the death of liberal icon Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, amid the political uproar about Senate Republicans racing to fill the vacancy ahead of the Nov. 6 presidential election. That confirmation fight followed Justice Amy Coney Barrett to the bench, since Democrats argued she would join other conservatives to side with Trump in cases to wipe out the 2010 health care law or challenge the election results. The Supreme Court did neither. The justices left alone the health care law, in a 7-2 decision in June written by liberal Justice Stephen G. Breyer and joined by Barrett. It was the widest margin for the law’s three wins in Republican-led challenges at the court since 2012, in a ruling that avoided the most contentious legal issues in the case. And when Trump and Republican-led states asked the Supreme Court to step into the election in four states key to Biden’s win — a move Trump called “the big one” that “everyone has been waiting for” and “a chance to save our Country from the greatest Election abuse in the history of the United States” — the justices in December succinctly rejected it. Roberts declined to preside over the second Senate impeachment trial that took place after Trump left office in January. And Biden’s win meant the Supreme Court did not have to decide the House Judiciary Committee’s push to see grand jury materials in former special counsel Robert S. Mueller III’s investigation into interference in the 2016 presidential election. Several of the major contentious cases of the term were unanimous. One struck down the Federal Trade Commission’s power to seek restitution for unfair or deceptive acts. And the court sided with a Catholic foster care agency over Philadelphia’s non-discrimination requirement in a case about placing children in same-sex households. In the foster care case, the opinion did not broadly bolster religious rights across the country as many LGBTQ rights activists feared — though three of the more conservative justices indicated they would have done if they had the votes. “If your starting assumption about the court was that this is a partisan, politicized body that votes their political preferences and that's really what they're all about, this term completely undercuts that thesis,” said Roman Martinez, a Supreme Court litigator at Latham & Watkins law firm who clerked for Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. Still, the court moved in a conservative direction on some key issues over the past nine months. Among them, they sided with religious rights in cases related church closures in COVID-19 lockdown orders, and allowed business owners to exclude union organizers from their property. Melissa Murray, a law professor at New York University who clerked for Justice Sonia Sotomayor when she was a lower court judge, said unanimity on some cases could be deceptive, and the court still showed an overall conservative drift. “The theme is: The court is going exactly where people predicted it would go when three Trump appointees were added to it,” Murray said. And the justices, as usual, saved the most contentious cases for the last day of the term to divide 6-3 on ideological lines. Over the strenuous dissents of the three liberal justices, the court Thursday upheld Arizona voting policies in a ruling that likely will make it harder for voting rights advocates to prove that election laws should be struck down as discriminatory. And another ruling might lead to toppling laws related to campaign finance disclosure or other money in politics. Strange bedfellows Many other cases featured unpredictable lineups on decisions that cut across ideological lines, hinting at a court in flux. For example, conservative Justice Clarence Thomas twice joined with the three liberal justices on the liberal wing to dissent in cases that were decided 5-4, such as one about separation of powers that limited Congress’s ability to give people a right to file lawsuits. “I don't think anyone had that on their SCOTUS bingo card, right?” said Sarah Harris, a Supreme Court litigator at Williams & Connelly law and former Thomas clerk. Other cases featured a lot of fractured rulings, where some justices wrote separately or noted their objections to parts of the opinion. Those writings sometimes voiced support for a more aggressive holding, even though what the court could actually agree on was more limited, Harris said. “I do think it just reflects that the justices are in very different places on lots of different issues and feel comfortable kind of testing out their views to each other and sort of laying down markers,” Harris said. When they return in three months to start a new term, the conservative majority will be tested on how far and how fast they might rule on two major issues where states and local governments are active and Congress has stalled.

#### Unchecked climate change exacerbates structural violence, sparks global instability and conflict, and risks planetary destruction – slowing the rate is vital

Klare 11/3/15 (Michael, ﻿professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College and the defense correspondent of The Nation, author of 14 books on international energy and security affairs, including most recently, The Race for What’s Left, "The Future of Climate Change Is Widespread Civil War," http://www.thenation.com/article/the-future-of-climate-change-is-widespread-civil-war/)

A﻿t the end of November, delegations from nearly 200 countries will convene in Paris for what is billed as the most important climate meeting ever held. Officially known as the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP-21) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (the 1992 treaty that designated that phenomenon a threat to planetary health and human survival), the Paris summit will be focused on the adoption of measures that would limit global warming to less than catastrophic levels. If it fails, world temperatures in the coming decades are likely to exceed 2 degrees Celsius (3.5 degrees Fahrenheit), the maximum amount most scientists believe the Earth can endure without experiencing irreversible climate shocks, including soaring temperatures and a substantial rise in global sea levels. A failure to cap carbon emissions guarantees another result as well, though one far less discussed. It will, in the long run, bring on not just climate shocks, but also worldwide instability, insurrection, and warfare. In this sense, COP-21 should be considered not just a climate summit but a peace conference—perhaps the most significant peace convocation in history. To grasp why, consider the latest scientific findings on the likely impacts of global warming, especially the 2014 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). When first published, that report attracted worldwide media coverage for predicting that unchecked climate change will result in severe droughts, intense storms, oppressive heat waves, recurring crop failures, and coastal flooding, all leading to widespread death and deprivation. Recent events, including a punishing drought in California and crippling heat waves in Europe and Asia, have focused more attention on just such impacts. The IPCC report, however, suggested that global warming would have devastating impacts of a social and political nature as well, including economic decline, state collapse, civil strife, mass migrations, and sooner or later resource wars. These predictions have received far less attention, and yet the possibility of such a future should be obvious enough since human institutions, like natural systems, are vulnerable to climate change. Economies are going to suffer when key commodities—crops, timber, fish, livestock—grow scarcer, are destroyed, or fail. Societies will begin to buckle under the strain of economic decline and massive refugee flows. Armed conflict may not be the most immediate consequence of these developments, the IPCC notes, but combine the effects of climate change with already existing poverty, hunger, resource scarcity, incompetent and corrupt governance, and ethnic, religious, or national resentments, and you’re likely to end up with bitter conflicts over access to food, water, land, and other necessities of life. THE COMING OF CLIMATE CIVIL WARS Such wars would not arise in a vacuum. Already existing stresses and grievances would be heightened, enflamed undoubtedly by provocative acts and the exhortations of demagogic leaders. Think of the current outbreak of violence in Israel and the Palestinian territories, touched off by clashes over access to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (also known as the Noble Sanctuary) and the inflammatory rhetoric of assorted leaders. Combine economic and resource deprivation with such situations and you have a perfect recipe for war. The necessities of life are already unevenly distributed across the planet. Often the divide between those with access to adequate supplies of vital resources and those lacking them coincides with long-term schisms along racial, ethnic, religious, or linguistic lines. The Israelis and Palestinians, for example, harbor deep-seated ethnic and religious hostilities but also experience vastly different possibilities when it comes to access to land and water. Add the stresses of climate change to such situations and you can naturally expect passions to boil over. Climate change will degrade or destroy many natural systems, often already under stress, on which humans rely for their survival. Some areas that now support agriculture or animal husbandry may become uninhabitable or capable only of providing for greatly diminished populations. Under the pressure of rising temperatures and increasingly fierce droughts, the southern fringe of the Sahara desert, for example, is now being transformed from grasslands capable of sustaining nomadic herders into an empty wasteland, forcing local nomads off their ancestral lands. Many existing farmlands in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East will suffer a similar fate. Rivers that once supplied water year-round will run only sporadically or dry up altogether, again leaving populations with unpalatable choices. As the IPCC report points out, enormous pressure will be put upon often weak state institutions to adjust to climate change and aid those in desperate need of emergency food, shelter, and other necessities. “Increased human insecurity,” the report says, “may coincide with a decline in the capacity of states to conduct effective adaptation efforts, thus creating the circumstances in which there is greater potential for violent conflict.” A good example of this peril is provided by the outbreak of civil war in Syria and the subsequent collapse of that country in a welter of fighting and a wave of refugees of a sort that hasn’t been seen since World War II. Between 2006 and 2010, Syria experienced a devastating drought in which climate change is believed to have been a factor, turning nearly 60 percent of the country into desert. Crops failed and most of the country’s livestock perished, forcing millions of farmers into penury. Desperate and unable to live on their land any longer, they moved into Syria’s major cities in search of work, often facing extreme hardship as well as hostility from well-connected urban elites. Had Syrian autocrat Bashar al-Assad responded with an emergency program of jobs and housing for those displaced, perhaps conflict could have been averted. Instead, he cut food and fuel subsidies, adding to the misery of the migrants and fanning the flames of revolt. In the view of several prominent scholars, “the rapidly growing urban peripheries of Syria, marked by illegal settlements, overcrowding, poor infrastructure, unemployment, and crime, were neglected by the Assad government and became the heart of the developing unrest.” A similar picture has unfolded in the Sahel region of Africa, the southern fringe of the Sahara, where severe drought has combined with habitat decline and government neglect to provoke armed violence. The area has faced many such periods in the past, but now, thanks to climate change, there is less time between the droughts. “Instead of 10 years apart, they became five years apart, and now only a couple years apart,” observes Robert Piper, the United Nations regional humanitarian coordinator for the Sahel. “And that, in turn, is putting enormous stresses on what is already an incredibly fragile environment and a highly vulnerable population.” In Mali, one of several nations straddling this region, the nomadic Tuaregs have been particularly hard hit, as the grasslands they rely on to feed their cattle are turning into desert. A Berber-speaking Muslim population, the Tuaregs have long faced hostility from the central government in Bamako, once controlled by the French and now by black Africans of Christian or animist faith. With their traditional livelihoods in peril and little assistance forthcoming from the capital, the Tuaregs revolted in January 2012, capturing half of Mali before being driven back into the Sahara by French and other foreign forces (with US logistical and intelligence support). Consider the events in Syria and Mali previews of what is likely to come later in this century on a far larger scale. As climate change intensifies, bringing not just desertification but rising sea levels in low-lying coastal areas and increasingly devastating heat waves in regions that are already hot, ever more parts of the planet will be rendered less habitable, pushing millions of people into desperate flight. While the strongest and wealthiest governments, especially in more temperate regions, will be better able to cope with these stresses, expect to see the number of failed states grow dramatically, leading to violence and open warfare over what food, arable land, and shelter remains. In other words, imagine significant parts of the planet in the kind of state that Libya, Syria, and Yemen are in today. Some people will stay and fight to survive; others will migrate, almost assuredly encountering a far more violent version of the hostility we already see toward immigrants and refugees in the lands they head for. The result, inevitably, will be a global epidemic of resource civil wars and resource violence of every sort. WATER WARS Most of these conflicts will be of an internal, civil character: clan against clan, tribe against tribe, sect against sect. On a climate-changed planet, however, don’t rule out struggles among nations for diminished vital resources—especially access to water. It’s already clear that climate change will reduce the supply of water in many tropical and subtropical regions, jeopardizing the continued pursuit of agriculture, the health and functioning of major cities, and possibly the very sinews of society. The risk of “water wars” will arise when two or more countries depend on the same key water source—the Nile, the Jordan, the Euphrates, the Indus, the Mekong, or other trans-boundary river systems—and one or more of them seek to appropriate a disproportionate share of the ever-shrinking supply of its water. Attempts by countries to build dams and divert the water flow of such riverine systems have already provoked skirmishes and threats of war, as when Turkey and Syria erected dams on the Euphrates, constraining the downstream flow. One system that has attracted particular concern in this regard is the Brahmaputra River, which originates in China (where it is known as the Yarlung Tsangpo) and passes through India and Bangladesh before emptying into the Indian Ocean. China has already erected one dam on the river and has plans for more, producing considerable unease in India, where the Brahmaputra’s water is vital for agriculture. But what has provoked the most alarm is a Chinese plan to channel water from that river to water-scarce areas in the northern part of that country. The Chinese insist that no such action is imminent, but intensified warming and increased drought could, in the future, prompt such a move, jeopardizing India’s water supply and possibly provoking a conflict. “China’s construction of dams and the proposed diversion of the Brahmaputra’s waters is not only expected to have repercussions for water flow, agriculture, ecology, and lives and livelihoods downstream,” Sudha Ramachandran writes in The Diplomat, “it could also become another contentious issue undermining Sino-Indian relations.” Of course, even in a future of far greater water stresses, such situations are not guaranteed to provoke armed combat. Perhaps the states involved will figure out how to share whatever limited resources remain and seek alternative means of survival. Nonetheless, the temptation to employ force is bound to grow as supplies dwindle and millions of people face thirst and starvation. In such circumstances, the survival of the state itself will be at risk, inviting desperate measures. LOWERING THE TEMPERATURE There is much that undoubtedly could be done to reduce the risk of water wars, including the adoption of cooperative water-management schemes and the introduction of the wholesale use of drip irrigation and related processes that use water far more efficiently. However, the best way to avoid future climate-related strife is, of course, to reduce the pace of global warming. Every fraction of a degree less warming achieved in Paris and thereafter will mean that much less blood spilled in future climate-driven resource wars. This is why the Paris climate summit should be viewed as a kind of preemptive peace conference, one that is taking place before the wars truly begin. If delegates to COP-21 succeed in sending us down a path that limits global warming to 2 degrees Celsius, the risk of future violence will be diminished accordingly. Needless to say, even 2 degrees of warming guarantees substantial damage to vital natural systems, potentially severe resource scarcities, and attendant civil strife. As a result, a lower ceiling for temperature rise would be preferable and should be the goal of future conferences. Still, given the carbon emissions pouring into the atmosphere, even a 2-degree cap would be a significant accomplishment. To achieve such an outcome, delegates will undoubtedly have to begin dealing with conflicts of the present moment as well, including those in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Ukraine, in order to collaborate in devising common, mutually binding climate measures. In this sense, too, the Paris summit will be a peace conference. For the first time, the nations of the world will have to step beyond national thinking and embrace a higher goal: the safety of the ecosphere and all its human inhabitants, no matter their national, ethnic, religious, racial, or linguistic identities. Nothing like this has ever been attempted, which means that it will be an exercise in peacemaking of the most essential sort—and, for once, before the wars truly begin.

#### This turns the case- Prisoners suffer the brunt of the climate crisis.

Kelly 19

(Kim, journalist, 9-18, <https://newrepublic.com/article/155092/climate-disaster-inside-americas-prisons>) BW

“When we think about the increasingly genocidal climate crisis, it’s important to understand that prisoners and detainees are literally on the front lines,” says prison abolitionist and organizer Jay Ware. It’s the imprisoned who suffer the greatest blows of climate-related catastrophe, he notes, “whether this is families fleeing climate change in the Global South being detained and separated into immigrant detention facilities or other black, brown, and poor white prisoners from typically toxic neighborhoods ecologically who are held in toxic prisons.” Climate vulnerabilities continue to intensify as paralyzing natural disasters multiply and occur with greater frequency, all while the U.S. government does nothing to curb the breakdown of the climate. “Every single day is a climate, weather, and environmental related disaster for people in prison,” said a member-organizer of the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee (IWOC) who requested anonymity to minimize their risk of retaliation from prison officials. IWOC is a prisoner-led section of the Industrial Workers of the World that coordinates inside and outside of prison walls to support incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people and abolish prison slavery.

### Case:

#### Prisons would go down fighting – causes legal lobbying to extend prison sentences to secure the labor pool – turns case.

Serwer, 14

[Adam, Buzzfeed News National Editor: "California AG "Shocked" To Learn Her Office Wanted To Keep Eligible Parolees In Jail To Work," BuzzFeed News, 11-18-2014. https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/adamserwer/some-lawyers-just-want-to-see-the-world-burn]//AD

Lawyers for California Attorney General Kamala Harris argued in court this fall against the release of eligible nonviolent prisoners from California's overcrowded prisons — because the state wanted to keep them as a labor force.

Harris, a rising star in the Democratic Party, said she learned about the argument when she read it in the paper.

"I will be very candid with you, because I saw that article this morning, and I was shocked, and I'm looking into it to see if the way it was characterized in the paper is actually how it occurred in court," Harris told BuzzFeed News in an interview Monday. "I was very troubled by what I read. I just need to find out what did we actually say in court."

The Supreme Court found California's prisons were so overcrowded in 2011 that the conditions violated the Constitution's prohibition on cruel and unusual punishment. Since then, California has been under federal court supervision as it seeks to comply with the order that the state reduce its prison population. In February, the state had agreed to reduce its population by releasing nonviolent prisoners with only two felonies who had served half their sentences.

Last week, the Los Angeles Times reported that attorneys in Harris' office had unsuccessfully argued in court that the state could not release the prisoners it had agreed to release because "if forced to release these inmates early, prisons would lose an important labor pool." Those prisoners, the Times reported, earn wages that range from "8 cents to 37 cents per hour."

In a Sept. 30 filing in the case, signed by Deputy Attorney General Patrick McKinney but under Harris' name, the state argued, "Extending 2-for-1 credits to all minimum custody inmates at this time would severely impact fire camp participation — a dangerous outcome while California is in the middle of a difficult fire season and severe drought."

Approximately 4,400 California prisoners help the state battle wildfires, at wages of about $2 a day. There is an exception in the agreement that allows the state to retain firefighters — but only firefighters — who are otherwise eligible for release.

Like incarcerated firefighters, inmates who perform "assignments necessary for the continued operation of the institution and essential to local communities" draw from the same pool of inmates who pose a limited threat to public safety, the state argued in a September filing. Therefore, reducing that population would require the prisons to draw more incarcerated workers away from its firefighting crews.

#### Vote Neg on presumption: allowing prisoners to strike doesn’t mean that there will be radical reforms in wages+ better conditions, the PIC still holds most of the power

#### 1ac HRW shows prisons strikes exist already; vote neg on presumption b/c they can’t bolster the effectiveness

#### No solvency: Alt causes: the prison industrial complex includes broken, racist court systems; corrupt policing; biased juries

#### The plan can’t solve for dangerous work; 1ac Fulcher says that prisoners forced to work regardless

#### Alt causes to recidivism; no employment, no training skills, all of which the aff can’t solve

#### Prison wages and conditions are minuscule solving for racial injustice and structural violence

#### NS, they have no ev that prisoners are ready to strike right now and can’t and also no ev that specifically states that prisoners would go out on strike after the plan passes

#### No firefighter violence, ev outdated and doesn’t account for new laws + better than prisons

#### UV: Hydridizing legitimizes state

#### The alt is radical change with real improvement