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#### **[1] Sustaining striketober momentum is k2 class consciousness and overhaul of capitalism**

Sims 10-22-21

Joe Sims (Joe Sims is co-chair of the Communist Party USA. He is also a senior editor of People's World and loves biking.), 10-22-2021, "Strike!," Communist Party USA, <https://www.cpusa.org/article/strike/> // Comrade AW

The class struggle is sharpening. Workers all across the country are striking and engaging in other job actions, large and small. Fed up with company attempts to impose two-tier wages, long hours, and inadequate pay, despite rising productivity and skyrocketing corporate profits, unions in several industries have had it. Now they’re marching on the picket lines. As late as last weekend, over 100,000 workers had voted to authorize strikes, and over 169 have occurred so far this year, the largest uptick since the wave of job actions in 2018–19. The AFL-CIO has aptly labeled this month #striketober. There is deep anger, unrest, and growing militancy among the working class. Why? Companies want more while labor is repeatedly asked to do with less. The Bureau of Labor Statistics [reported](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/prod2.nr0.htm) that “manufacturing sector labor productivity increased 8.0 percent in the second quarter of 2021, as output increased 5.5 percent and hours worked decreased 2.3 percent.” Overall, [productivity](https://www.ft.com/content/89098269-0889-4945-a120-2f8e7adf8cc4) “grew an average of 3 per cent in the first half of 2021. Unit labour costs fell 0.8 per cent during the same period.” But at what cost to the worker? Wages are too low to pay for the rising cost of housing, hours are too long to allow adequate time for caregiving, and lack of health care benefits force many to go to work sick. Workers are tired of supplying profits to billionaires like Jeff Bezos to fuel their rocket rides and egos. As the nation emerges from the pandemic, literally millions are so dissatisfied that they’re simply quitting in what some have described as a silent general strike. “The [seriousness of the situation](https://www.nakedcapitalism.com/2021/10/why-record-numbers-of-workers-are-quitting-and-striking.html) was confirmed by the latest Bureau of Labor Statistics report showing that a record 2.9 percent of the workforce quit their jobs in August, which is equivalent to 4.3 million resignations.” According to one poll, ”employees were so dissatisfied with their situation that more than one-quarter (28%) of all respondents left their jobs without another job lined up.” One of the main reasons workers are leaving is burnout, cited by 40% of the poll respondents. Big business is alarmed at the political significance of the resignations. The “Great Resignation,” [Forbes](https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2021/10/08/the-great-resignation-is-a-workers-revolution-heres-what-real-leaders-must-do-right-now/?sh=78bc2697514f) writes, “is a sort of workers’ revolution and uprising against bad bosses and tone-deaf companies that refuse to pay well and take advantage of their staff.” Contributing to the spike in labor activism is growing confidence in collective action and knowledge that you can strike and win. A glut in job openings despite still significant unemployment has improved the unions’ bargaining position and power. Pro-union sentiment among the broad public is at its highest level in several decades. A Gallup poll released in the beginning of July showed that 68% of Americans [approve of labor unions](https://time.com/6105109/workers-strike-unemployment/), up significantly from the 48% approval in 2009 during the throes of the Great Recession. In this regard, the Biden-Harris administration’s pro-union stance should not be underestimated, not the least of which is reflected by new appointments to the [National Labor Relations Board.](https://inthesetimes.com/article/striketober-right-to-strike-nlrb-legal-john-deere) The new general counsel, Jennifer Abruzzo, for example, has “signaled that she is willing to reconsider all kinds of twisted and outdated precedents that have vastly favored bosses during a nearly four-decades-long union-busting drive . . . she’s indicated a willingness to issue bargaining orders — not elections — for new unions when employers commit Unfair Labor Practices, to certify [minority members-only bargaining units](https://inthesetimes.com/article/members-only-minority-unions) to help unions establish a foothold, and to be more creative about ‘make whole’ financial remedies for terminated union activists.” As Peoplesworld.org reports, 10,000 workers at John Deere are among the latest to go out: “The strike wave that has hit John Deere has been building nationwide for more than a month. Last week [Kellogg workers went on strike](https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/kelloggs-forces-1400-cereal-plant-workers-to-strike/) and over the summer Mondelez, the maker of Nabisco Oreos walked out. [Coal miners in Alabama](https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/warrior-met-forces-1100-mine-workers-in-alabama-into-long-strike/) have been on strike for months.” While uneven, the working class and people’s forces in local communities and workplaces are gathering in strength for the class and democratic battles that lie ahead. Today they’re focused on bread-and-butter issues of survival. But with the GOP blocking everything from strengthening voting rights to spending on climate change and human infrastructure, these economic struggles are becoming political. When that material force takes off and as the mid-terms loom — watch out. Big days are coming. But it’s a mistake for friends of labor to sit around awaiting their arrival. Visit the picket lines and be sure to bring your walking shoes. A box of donuts and coffee would be appreciated but more important are the smiles and solidarity of friends. Talk, learn, listen, and afterwards share the experience. In so doing you’ll add to the growing class-consciousness and militancy that’s sweeping the nation. It will do everyone concerned a whole lot of good. Building community support for striking workers is vital, calling on local politicians, clergy, and neighborhood leaders to lend solidarity. Letters to the editor along with social media campaigns can help build pro-strike sentiment. Community pickets at retail outlets and dealerships might also be helpful. Solidarity should also include boycotts and other forms of public pressure against companies that refuse to provide good wages, health care, working conditions and rights in the workplaces. Yes, there’s a rising tide of struggle occurring deep within our class. Let’s give it our every support.

#### [2] Striketobershows strikes are possible and thump any disad link, but this burst will not last into any long-term change – the question of empowering the labor movement is whether strikes can be made 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.

#### [3] Capitalism has hurled the world towards climate change and no chance to self-correct

Dawson, 16 [author, activist and professor of English at the CUNY Graduate Center, and at the College of Staten Island, City University of New York, Extinction A Radical History, Chapter 3 ‘Capitalism and Extinction,’ 2016] -TB

Capitalism’s Ceaseless Expansion Capitalism is dependent on the conditions of production that it relentlessly degrades. By fecklessly consuming the environment, capital is figuratively sawing off the tree branch it is sitting on. But it does so because it must: it is a system based on ceaseless accumulation. Capitalists must constantly reinvest their accumulated profits if they are to survive against competitors, driving capital to expand at a compound rate.70 Every limit to capital’s expansion appears as an obstacle that it strives to overcome and fold into a new round of accumulation. But we live on a planet that is self-evidently finite. Capital’s logic is consequently that of a cancer cell, growing uncontrollably until it destroys the body that hosts it. The whaling industry is perhaps the best instance of this all-consuming drive to expand accumulation. Whales have endured the most prolonged and vicious attack by humans of any single species of animal.71 Prior to the rise of capitalism, whales were hunted in sustainable numbers by indigenous communities such as the Inuit in the Arctic, and by coastal-dwelling peoples such as the Basques, who intercepted immense but timid Bowhead and right whales as they made their annual migratory trek throug the Bay of Biscay.72 The Inuit and Basques killed whales in relatively limited numbers. But, as the industrial revolution took off, whales provided valuable commodities, including oil used for illumination and for greasing machinery in the factories of the period. As a consequence, the growing markets of early modern capitalism exhausted stocks of coastal whales, and by the late seventeenth century whalers had to take to the open ocean in search of prey.73 Maritime powers of the time such as the Dutch articulated a doctrine of freedom of the seas for their whaling fleets, opening the rich fisheries of the North Atlantic to commercial whaling by the competing European powers of the day.74 No efforts were made by the Europeans and their North American competitors to conserve stocks of whales. Instead, whalers acted as if their quarry was inexhaustible. European whaling took the industrialized slaughter of animals to the far reaches of the globe. Competition led to increasingly sophisticated techniques of slaughter, from the faster sailing ships of the late eighteenth century that hunted right whales to near extinction in several decades, to the invention in the midnineteenth century of the explosive harpoon gun and huge steam-powered factory ships, which allowed whalers to hunt faster fin and sperm whales in devastating numbers.75 Although it was clearly in the industry’s interest to limit the accelerating predation, the competitive dynamic of industrial capitalism made such forms of conservation impossible. Instead, whalers came up with far-fetched arguments to justify their monumentally shortsighted plunder of the oceans. For instance, in a chapter of Moby Dick entitled “Does the Whale’s Magnitude Diminish? Will He Perish?” Melville’s protagonist Ishmael ponders the question of the whale’s extinction. Although he admits that whales were once far more easy to find in the oceans, he concludes that this is because whales now travel in bigger but less numerous groups, and that they have moved to the Poles in order to escape the whaling industry. As Ishmael’s torturous reasoning suggests, whale populations had to be represented as limitless in order to justify the unsustainable competition of the industry. By the early twentieth century, humans had emptied the world’s oceans of so many whales that commercial whaling was no longer a viable major industry.76 The decimation of whales and the crash of the whaling industry also illustrate the folly of the economic doctrines that grew up to legitimate capitalism. Adam Smith’s Wealth of Nations (1776) is the clearest formulation of these doctrines. Smith believed that self-interested competition in the free market would generate beneficial outcomes for all by keeping prices low and creating incentives for a variety of goods and services. As Smith put it, “by pursuing his own interest [the individual] frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.”77 Private vices were purportedly transmuted into public virtues through the operation of what Smith described as the “invisible hand” of the market. Like many of his contemporaries, Smith believed in the inevitability of progress, which he assumed involved the production of greater material wealth. Yet, Smith’s invisible hand completely ignored the issue of depletion and even extinction of such natural “resources” as fur-bearing animals and whales. In fact, classical economics is blithely ignorant of the impact of turning the earth’s resources into capital, focusing only on the secondary problem of the distribution of resources between different competing ends.78 But the earth’s resources are not just scarce. They are finite. Like the whaling industry, classical economics is constitutively blind to this finitude, and consequently encourages both producers and consumers to use up resources as fast as possible in pursuit of greater profits and growth. Mainstream economics as formulated by Adam Smith and as practiced today celebrates values—selfishness, gluttony, competitiveness, and shortsightedness—that were once viewed as cardinal sins, and in the process provides intellectual justification for capitalism’s disastrous pillage of the planet. Capitalism’s Chaotic World If capitalism is based on the illusory hope that a mysterious “invisible hand” will reconcile ruthlessly self-interested competition with the common good, modern capitalist society is correspondingly organized around antagonistic nation-states whose competing interests, it is vainly hoped, will be attuned through various international forums. Yet, wracked by the periodic crises of over-accumulation that are a structural feature of capitalism, the bourgeoisie is impelled to seek markets abroad. Since their peers in other nations are driven to cope with system-wide crises through similar expansionary policies, the result is increasing inter-imperial competition and endemic warfare.79 Capitalism thus generates a chaotic world system that compounds ecological crises. In some cases, ecocide is a conscious strategy of imperialism, generating what might be termed ecological warfare. For example, the destruction of the great herds of bison that roamed the Great Plains of North America was European settlers proudly display skulls of slaughtered bison, carnage that was a key element in the campaign against Native Americans. a calculated military strategy designed to deprive Native Americans of the environmental resources on which they depended.80 When Europeans first arrived, the plains were inhabited by tens of millions of bison, providing indigenous peoples with resources that allowed them to maintain their autonomous, nomadic lifestyle. Commercial hunting of bison began in the 1830s, soon reaching a toll of two million animals a year.81 By 1891, there were less than 1,000 bison left on the continent, and the Native Americans had been crushed— defeated militarily and forced onto a series of isolated, barren reservations. Many of these reservations were subsequently turned into “national sacrifice zones” during the Cold War, when nuclear weapons were exploded in sites such as Nevada in order to perfect the US’s military arsenal.82 Similar ecological violence was meted out by the US military to other parts of the planet. During the Vietnam War, for instance, nearly twenty million gallons of pesticides were sprayed on the tropical forests of Vietnam in an effort to destroy the ecological base of the revolutionary Vietnamese forces. This virulent campaign of ecological warfare eventually generated a revolt among US scientists, who balked at what they called the systematic ecocide being carried out by the military in Vietnam.83 Despite this history of war resistance, the US military, with more than 700 bases worldwide, remains the single most polluting organization on the planet.84 In many cases, however, animals and plants simply suffer as collateral damage in the inter-imperial rivalries generated by capitalism. In a system of competing capitalist nations, no individual state has the power or responsibility to counteract the system’s tendencies toward ecological degradation. Indeed, inter-imperial competition impels individual states to shirk responsibility, seeking to score points by blaming their competitors for failing to address the environmental crisis. This fatal contradiction of capitalist society has been abundantly evident in the rounds of United Nations-sponsored climate negotiations during the last two decades. During these negotiations, advanced industrialized countries such as the United States and Great Britain have refused to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions significantly until developing nations such as China, India, and Brazil offer to cut their emissions as well. The industrializing nations respond by pointing out that their per capita emissions are still far lower than those of the wealthy nations of Europe and North America, and argue that these countries have benefited from two hundred years of industrial growth, effectively colonizing the atmosphere to the exclusion of formerly colonized nations. As a result of these antagonistic positions, no binding international agreement on emissions reductions has been reached, despite years of desperate pleas from scientists and civil society. It is not simply that the climate and extinction crises have arrived at a uniquely unpropitious moment when neoliberal doctrines of financial deregulation, corporate power, and emaciated governance are hegemonic.85 Rather, the deadlocked climate negotiations are a reflection of the fundamentally irrational, chaotic, violenceridden, and ecocidal world system produced by capitalism. Can capitalist society reform itself sufficiently to cope with the extinction crisis? This is not simply unlikely. It is impossible in the long run. While it is true that the environmental movement did manage to push corporations and the state into cleaning up local crises from the late 1960s onwards, climate change and extinction suggest that the capitalist system is destroying its ecological foundations when viewed on a longer temporal scale. Recall that capital’s solution to periodic systemic crises is to initiate a new round of accumulation. Capital essentially tries to grow itself out of its problems. But, as we have seen, the extinction crisis is precisely a product of unchecked, blinkered growth. In such a context, conservation efforts can never be more than a paltry bandage over a gaping wound. As laudable as they are, conservation efforts largely fail to address the deep inequalities that capitalism generates, which push the poor to engage in deforestation and other forms of over-exploitation. Many of today’s major conservation organizations were established in the last half of the twentieth century: the Nature Conservancy (1951), World Wildlife Fund (1961), Natural Resources Defense Council (1970), and Conservation International (1987). Yet during this same period, a new round of accumulation based on neoliberal principles of unrestrained hyper-capitalism has engulfed the planet. The neoliberal era has seen much of the global South become increasingly indebted, leading international agencies such as the World Bank to force debtor nations to harvest more trees, mine more minerals, drill for more oil, and generally deplete their natural resources at exponentially greater rates. The result has been a steeply intensifying deterioration in global ecosystems, including a massive increase in the rate of extinction.86 Despite this dramatic collapse of global ecosystems, the climate change crisis has unleashed a fresh round of accumulation, obscured by upbeat language about the investment opportunities opened up by the green economy. Neoliberal solutions to the climate crisis such as voluntary carbon offsets are not only failing to diminish carbon emissions, but are also dramatically augmenting the enclosure and destruction of the global environmental commons.87 Such programs allow polluting industries in wealthy nations to continue emitting carbon, while turning the forests and agricultural land of indigenous people and peasants in the global South into carbon dioxide “sinks” or biodiversity “banks.” Under the green economy, vast numbers of people, plants, and animals are being sacrificed as collateral damage in the ecocidal exploitation of the planet. Capitalism, it is clear, cannot solve the environmental crises it is causing.

#### [4] 2050 scenario highly plausible- traditional impact assessment systemically undervalues climate impacts and we need action now

Ahmed, PhD, 19

(Naveez, <https://www.vice.com/en/article/597kpd/new-report-suggests-high-likelihood-of-human-civilization-coming-to-an-end-in-2050>, 6-3)

A harrowing scenario analysis of how human civilization might collapse in coming decades due to climate change has been endorsed by a former Australian defense chief and senior royal navy commander. The analysis, published by the Breakthrough National Centre for Climate Restoration, a think-tank in Melbourne, Australia, describes climate change as “a near- to mid-term existential threat to human civilization” and sets out a plausible scenario of where business-as-usual could lead over the next 30 years. The paper argues that the potentially “extremely serious outcomes” of climate-related security threats are often far more probable than conventionally assumed, but almost impossible to quantify because they “fall outside the human experience of the last thousand years.” On our current trajectory, the report warns, “planetary and human systems [are] reaching a ‘point of no return’ by mid-century, in which the prospect of a largely uninhabitable Earth leads to the breakdown of nations and the international order.” The only way to avoid the risks of this scenario is what the report describes as “akin in scale to the World War II emergency mobilization”—but this time focused on rapidly building out a zero-emissions industrial system to set in train the restoration of a safe climate. The scenario warns that our current trajectory will likely lock in at least 3 degrees Celsius (C) of global heating, which in turn could trigger further amplifying feedbacks unleashing further warming. This would drive the accelerating collapse of key ecosystems “including coral reef systems, the Amazon rainforest and in the Arctic.” The results would be devastating. Some one billion people would be forced to attempt to relocate from unlivable conditions, and two billion would face scarcity of water supplies. Agriculture would collapse in the sub-tropics, and food production would suffer dramatically worldwide. The internal cohesion of nation-states like the US and China would unravel. ADVERTISEMENT “Even for 2°C of warming, more than a billion people may need to be relocated and in high-end scenarios, the scale of destruction is beyond our capacity to model with a high likelihood of human civilization coming to an end,” the report notes. The new policy briefing is written by David Spratt, Breakthrough’s research director and Ian Dunlop, a former senior executive of Royal Dutch Shell who previously chaired the Australian Coal Association. Read More: Scientists Warn the UN of Capitalism's Imminent Demise In the briefing’s foreword, retired Admiral Chris Barrie—Chief of the Australian Defence Force from 1998 to 2002 and former Deputy Chief of the Australian Navy—commends the paper for laying “bare the unvarnished truth about the desperate situation humans, and our planet, are in, painting a disturbing picture of the real possibility that human life on Earth may be on the way to extinction, in the most horrible way.” Barrie now works for the Climate Change Institute at Australian National University, Canberra. Spratt told Motherboard that a key reason the risks are not understood is that “much knowledge produced for policymakers is too conservative. Because the risks are now existential, a new approach to climate and security risk assessment is required using scenario analysis.” Last October, Motherboard reported on scientific evidence that the UN’s summary report for government policymakers on climate change—whose findings were widely recognized as “devastating”—were in fact too optimistic. While the Breakthrough scenario sets out some of the more ‘high end’ risk possibilities, it is often not possible to meaningfully quantify their probabilities. As a result, the authors emphasize that conventional risk approaches tend to downplay worst-case scenarios despite their plausibility. Spratt and Dunlop’s 2050 scenario illustrates how easy it could be to end up in an accelerating runaway climate scenario which would lead to a largely uninhabitable planet within just a few decades. “A high-end 2050 scenario finds a world in social breakdown and outright chaos,” said Spratt. “But a short window of opportunity exists for an emergency, global mobilization of resources, in which the logistical and planning experiences of the national security sector could play a valuable role.”

#### [6] Not only does capitalism cause climate change, communist movements actively solve it and alternatives can’t

Rennolds 18

Corey Rennolds (Biology PhD Candidate), 10-31-2018, "To combat climate change, communism is our only hope," <https://dbknews.com/2018/10/31/climate-change-ipcc-communism-environment/> // Comrade AW

It’s undeniable at this point that climate change is an extremely serious problem, and it’s [progressing much faster than we predicted](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/07/climate/ipcc-climate-report-2040.html). We’re also far beyond taking claims at face value that those who deny the reality of climate change — and it is reality — do so for anything other than political reasons, because to admit otherwise would threaten their bottom lines. [Climate change denial is profitable](http://www.dbknews.com/2018/10/12/climate-change-ipcc-report-temperature-rise-2040-capitalism-markets/). This will continue to be the case as long as capitalism — the economic order based on extracting surplus value from laborers and allocating it to a minority ruling class — remains the status quo. It’s not just that capitalism [can’t stop or even significantly mitigate climate change;](http://www.dbknews.com/2018/10/17/capitalism-climate-change-ipcc-report-economics/) **capitalism is the very cause of climate change. We should dare to accuse it of such in clear terms.** We should also dare to venture into more intellectually daunting territory: asking what the alternative to capitalism should actually be, and what could happen if we don’t make the change. So, what alternative to capitalism has even a polar bear’s chance of challenging the existential threat of climate change? Communism! The alternative is communism. Or socialism, if you’d like; I prefer the former term, because it refers to a more precise socioeconomic arrangement and thus less prone to (erroneous) conflation with [capitalist welfare states that profit immensely from fossil fuel extraction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norway). But both ultimately refer to the same principles, goals and capacity for addressing the problem at hand. Communism — and socialism, to some — is the economic system in which the means of production are owned collectively by workers, as opposed to capitalism, in which the means of production are owned by a few (mostly) dudes. Production under communism is carried out according to the principle “from each according to their ability, to each according to their needs,” a phrase made popular by the 19th-century economist Karl Marx. Under communism, we would grow food to feed the hungry and build housing to shelter the homeless. Under capitalism, we [routinely throw away good food](https://www.businessinsider.com/why-grocery-stores-throw-out-so-much-food-2014-10) while [millions of people go hungry](https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/facts) and [let hundreds of thousands of apartments sit vacant](https://www.6sqft.com/nearly-250000-nyc-rental-apartments-sit-vacant/) while as many people [remain homeless](http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/basic-facts-about-homelessness-new-york-city/). Capitalism is clearly not meeting our collective need to not be swallowed by the oceans. In communism, we could democratically determine how to address this need directly without considering whether it could be done at a profit. Democracy, along with common ownership, is one of the key principles of communism. In capitalist society, only a few absurdly wealthy people have real decision-making power; within communism, we all would equally. Communist theorists through history have proposed [many ways](https://www.philosophybasics.com/branch_communism.html) that democratic arrangement could look like, but all share the trait of mass enfranchisement. Communism wouldn’t be a panacea for climate change, because we’d still need to make the right decisions collectively. But the alternative is to keep letting just a few guys like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos make those decisions instead. We’ve already seen what happens when capitalist elites control all the resources. Ask anyone from Puerto Rico [how that’s been going](https://slate.com/technology/2018/06/an-interview-with-naomi-klein-about-puerto-ricos-recovery-and-the-disaster-capitalists-who-want-to-control-it.html). Or the people in Flint, who still don’t have clean water but do have the privilege of paying more than four times annually for their water bills than [Nestlé Waters North America](https://www.freep.com/story/news/2018/04/02/michigan-oks-nestle-permit-increased-water-withdrawal-bottled-water-plant/479896002/), which has been selling bottled water to Flint residents at a profit. [Under capitalism, the](https://theintercept.com/2016/11/21/medics-describe-how-police-sprayed-standing-rock-demonstrators-with-tear-gas-and-water-cannons/) [mismanagement](https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/a-14-year-long-oil-spill-in-the-gulf-of-mexico-verges-on-becoming-one-of-the-worst-in-us-history/2018/10/20/f9a66fd0-9045-11e8-bcd5-9d911c784c38_story.html) [and](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/24/business/energy-environment/deforestation-brazil-bolivia-south-america.html) [exploitation](http://fortune.com/big-chocolate-child-labor/) [are](https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?httpsredir=1&article=1476&context=lawpapers) [endless](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/jan/18/india.tsunami2004). We could wait and see what happens when those resources start to run out; when global agriculture struggles; when more people are displaced from their homes. Millions of climate refugees already know [how welcoming capitalist states can be](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/24/italian-police-water-cannon-refugees-rome-square). How will massive corporations such as Amazon, which is rapidly [monopolizing pretty much everything](https://www.thenation.com/article/amazon-doesnt-just-want-to-dominate-the-market-it-wants-to-become-the-market/) and whose workers [piss in bottles](https://www.businessinsider.com/amazon-warehouse-workers-have-to-pee-into-bottles-2018-4) for fear of punishment, respond when millions are in need and they hold all the cards? Will they — these multinational entities without constitutions or public accountability, who control sprawling information and surveillance networks, logistics infrastructure and even [our food supply](https://medium.com/@justindanneman/amazon-on-track-to-control-the-worlds-food-supply-f0effb343aff) — use their resources for the collective good? Or will they bite down, make us fight their [wars](https://earther.gizmodo.com/here-s-where-the-post-apocalyptic-water-wars-will-be-fo-1829793126) for them, and then [flee](https://www.space.com/40112-elon-musk-mars-colony-world-war-3.html) when they’ve had enough? Our situation is dire, but only because we allow it to be. Jeff Bezos doesn’t have superpowers; he and his ilk hold the reins because we all give tacit consent to the economic order that permits them to. W**e could collectively decide to change that by demanding communism. And we desperately need to, soon. And by soon, I mean now. And by now, I mean yesterday. Because the water is getting higher today.**

### 2 - plan

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

#### [7] Recognition of a right means the US protects it when infringed

Macleod PhD 13

Macleod, A. M.(Professor Emeritus Philosophy Arts and Science, Ph.D., Queen’s ) (2013). Rights and Recognition: The Case of Human Rights. Journal of Social Philosophy, 44(1), 51–73. doi:10.1111/josp.12009 // Comrade AW

To recognize the existence of human rights—whatever the normative rationale for their content and scope is taken to be—is to be committed to an account of the duties that would have to be discharged for the rights to be respected or protected. The familiar philosophical doctrine of the correlativity of rights and duties has an application to human rights no less than to rights of other kinds. In its application to human rights, however, care must be taken to interpret it properly: it should not be assumed too readily that one and the same version of the doctrine applies to all rights no matter what sorts of rights they happen to be. For example, when A promises B to perform a particular action X, the right to promise generates for B—to the performance of X by A—can be correlated straightforwardly, and neatly, with the duty A incurs to do X. B’s right can be said to be a right against A, and A’s duty is one owed by A to B. The promise doesn’t generate any rights for third parties (C, D, etc.), and A incurs no duty to any of these third parties. Moreover, the content of the right A’s promise generates for B is fixed by the content of the promise: B’s right is to the performance of X by A. And the content of the duty A incurs is also fixed by the content of the promise: it is a duty to B to do X. To say that in such contexts, rights and duties are “correlative” is to say that B’s right to the performance of X by A is correlative to A’s duty to B to do X. There is no uncertainty about the identity either of the right.

#### [8] Specifically means right to strike will be defended in court

Legal Dictionary no date

TheFreeDictionary, xx-xx-xxxx, "Right," [https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/right //](https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/right%20//) Comrade AW

[CivilRights](https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Civil+Rights) are those that belong to every citizen of the state, and are not connected with the organization or administration of government. They include the rights of property, marriage, protection by law, freedom to contract, trial by jury, and the like. These rights are capable of being enforced or redressed in a civil action in a court.

#### [9] normal means through the NLRA doesn’t include public workers

Fernández 19

Alexia Fernández, 9-20-2019, "5 questions about labor strikes that you were too embarrassed to ask," Vox, [https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/9/20/20873867/worker-strike-walkout-stoppage-firing-job //](https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/9/20/20873867/worker-strike-walkout-stoppage-firing-job%20//) Comrade AW

But this doesn’t apply to all workers. The NLRA doesn’t cover certain transportation workers, agricultural laborers, or public employees. Government employees — state, local, and federal — do not have a right to strike under the federal law. That said, [eight states](https://www.vox.com/2019/8/30/20838389/best-and-worst-states-to-work) allow most government employees to strike. Illinois and California, for example, allow teachers to strike. Yet it’s illegal for police and firefighters to walk off the job in any state.

### 3 - solvency

#### [10] The right to strike embraces a politics of *antisubordination* that explicitly puts confronting power relations at the forefront of policy as opposed to economics

Gourevitch, PhD, 16

(Alex, PoliSci@Brown, Gourevitch, A. (2016). Quitting Work but Not the Job: Liberty and the Right to Strike. Perspectives on Politics, 14(02), 307–323. doi:10.1017/s1537592716000049 )

For these reasons, it is time to think anew about the strike as a distinct form of collective action. The reissue of old classics, like Jeremy Brecher’s labor history Strike!, and the appearance of new reflections, like labor lawyer Joe Burns’ Reviving the Strike or journalist Micah Uetricht’s Strike for America, are signs of renewed interest. But a small group of disparate examples is not a concentrated mass, and none of these pieces are part of political science. It is a strange fact about the right to strike that over the past fifty years English-speaking political philosophers have published only one book-length study and a handful of articles on this subject,12 while neighboring political phenomena—civil disobedience, right of revolution, secession, civil war, social movements—attract vastly more attention. Further, despite ample discussion of the problem of inequality across all fields and subfields, there is relatively little discussion of labor rights. This is especially true among political philosophers, who, with those few aforementioned exceptions, have had much more to say about welfare rights and ideal distributions than about labor rights, especially the right to strike. Though the history of political thought offers many figures who thought about the strike either in systematic or piecemeal ways, the ideas of John Stuart Mill and Karl Marx, L.T. Hobhouse and Rosa Luxemburg, Georges Sorel and Big Bill Haywood seem to have had more influence on union organizers and social theorists, labor lawyers and intellectual historians, than current political philosophers.13 My basic thought is that the right to strike is a right of human freedom claimed against the social domination that the typical modern worker experiences. Ordinarily, the right to strike is thought to be an economic right whose purpose is to maintain a certain kind of bargaining relationship among self-interested economic actors. However, it is better understood as a political right that individuals claim against an unjust system of law and property in the name of justice and emancipation. It is a political right even when most strikes do not have explicitly political ends. Put another way, one reason strikes are political is the way they threaten the normal distinction between politics and economics itself. They do so by challenging the idea that the logic of commodity exchange and private contracts should govern labor relations. The best justification of the right to strike lies in the way strikers claim their liberty not just as abstract persons but as socially-situated agents, who find themselves in the historically specific relationships of domination associated with the labor market. It is this connection to resisting domination that makes the right to strike political. My central purpose is to develop an argument for the right to strike and in so doing to show how recent developments in political philosophy around concepts like domination and freedom can enrich our thinking about labor rights.14 While basically a normative argument, this is not an argument from what is sometimes called ideal theory. The procedure here is not to imagine the best regime and derive the right to strike from features of that regime—quite the opposite. It would, in fact, be hard to understand just why the strike protects a fundamental interest in non-domination if we began from perfectly just conditions. As we shall see, we can only make sense of the right to strike—of the interests it protects, of its scope, of the role it plays in our moral reasoning—against the background of injustice. Those unjust conditions of domination explain the right to strike. I make no general claims about the superiority of non-ideal versus ideal theory. Rather, my argument here is narrower: to explain and justify the right to strike, we must begin with the significantly unjust conditions of the typical labor market. The normative argument here connects to wider research programs on the politics of inequality and, in particular, to how we think about collective responses to economic injustice. While this article does not engage in the comparison, it certainly invites research into comparative labor regimes, especially comparisons among regimes where there is more robust strike activity compared with regimes that incorporate labor demands in other ways. More broadly, I introduce a distinctive kind of question we might ask when comparing political economies. The most familiar comparative questions ask who gets what and why or how do these institutions work compared to those. Since the right to strike is a right of actors who suffer injustice to attempt to remediate that injustice, sometimes by infringing the rights of others, it is one of those rights that touches on that other classic political question: ‘Who can do what to whom? Although I answer that question in a more analytic and normative vein, it is also an urgent empirical concern. My argument proceeds in five parts. I start by trying to answer a deceptively simple question—what is a right to strike?—and show that any answer raises some significant moral and conceptual puzzles. In the second section, I use current American labor law to show that these puzzles are not abstract questions but reach deep into law and policy. In the third, fourth, and fifth sections, I show how the right to strike can be understood as a way of resisting the forms of structural and personal domination that are associated with the modern labor markets

#### [11] Workers are exploited because of *forcing*- with no alternatives they have to sell their labor to employers. An unconditional right to strike *flips the script* and allows workers to *refuse to work* while maintaining the *right to work*

Gourevitch, PhD, 16

(Alex, PoliSci@Brown, Gourevitch, A. (2016). Quitting Work but Not the Job: Liberty and the Right to Strike. Perspectives on Politics, 14(02), 307–323. doi:10.1017/s1537592716000049 )

So long as we view the labor market as a series of voluntary agreements to which workers and employers freely consent, we cannot make adequate sense of the right to strike. There are two interconnected forms of compulsion to which workers are subject that undermine any such view. Drawing on what has become known as the republican theory of freedom, I propose that we see these interconnected compulsions as forms of “domination” where domination means being subject to the uncontrolled or arbitrary power of another.44 On this view, I am subject to another person’s will if that person has the capacity to interfere with me, even if he does not actually interfere. The dominator might be benevolent or malicious, but in either case, he dominates because he can interfere in an uncontrolled way. That is what distinguishes the republican position from the more common, liberal view of freedom as non-interference, where I am unfree only if someone actually interferes with my choices. Philip Pettit, who has done more than anyone to promote and develops this neo-republican theory, tends to take the view that structural domination does not exist because to be dominated means that one person is directly subject to another person’s will.45 One employer might dominate an employee, simply by having the power to harass or interfere with her, but a group of individuals cannot, in themselves, be dominated nor can a background distribution of property be dominating. As Pettit puts it, “the property system ... will not be a source of domination so far as it is the cumulative, unintended effect of people’s mutual adjustments.” 46 However, as I and others have argued elsewhere, given both the history of republican thinking and the inner logic of the theory of freedom, there is no special reason to restrict the concept of domination to only interpersonal relations. Individuals can be dominated in a more structural way, by the distribution of property or by general features of a labor market that involve submission in a more anonymous or impersonal way. There are various kinds of economic dependence that subject some individuals to the uncontrolled power of others.47 Here we shall encounter just this kind of structural domination. The concept of domination is useful for my argument because it illuminates certain relations of power and helps explain the sense in which the right to strike emerges out of a demand for freedom, not just for higher wages or safer conditions, though those substantive concerns are always also in play.48 However, while I believe the republican theory is particularly useful, even those who doubt its value as a concept still ought to be persuaded by my argument for the right to strike. Although I cannot get into all the reasons why, the principle reason is the following. The background argument for the right to strike is that it is a remedial response to the substantial economic injustice that these compulsions entail. While I make sense of that injustice in terms of the nature and distribution of domination, a fellow-traveling reader could make sense of this injustice by using other conceptions of injustice and unfreedom. In that case, the right to strike would be adequately justified to them as a demand for freedom against unjustifiable denials of that freedom. That is all I can say about that issue here. Let us proceed, then, to the social analysis. The two relevant kinds of domination are structural domination, which renders workers vulnerable to exploitation, and personal domination, which is the array of legal authority and social power that gives employers arbitrary control over workers in a particular workplace. If we recognize these as ineliminable features of the capitalist market for labor, then the right to strike makes sense not as a relic of feudal guild privileges nor just as an economically rational effort by some to maximize wages, but as a form of resistance to the modern labor market itself. Let us begin with structural domination and the problem of exploitation. Though most closely associated with the Marxian tradition, the thought that desperate workers are exploited is a familiar one. Even those not so sympathetic to the complaints of modern wage-laborers can be found saying, as David Hume famously did, that “the fear of punishment will never draw so much labour from a slave, as the dread of being turned off and not getting another service, will from a freeman.” 49 Adam Smith gave this fact a turn in favor of workers: It is not, however, difficult to foresee which of the two parties must, upon all ordinary occasions, have the advantage in the dispute, and force the other into a compliance with their terms.... In all such disputes the masters can hold out much longer.... Many workmen could not subsist a week, few could subsist a month, and scarce any a year without employment. In the longrun the workman may be as necessary to his master as his master is to him, but the necessity is not so immediate.50 On top of which, as Smith noted, “masters are always and every where in a sort of tacit, but constant and uniform combination.” In a world in which economic necessity couples with employer collusion, workers have little choice: “Such combinations [by employers], however, are frequently resisted by a contrary defensive combination of the workmen; who sometimes too, without any provocation of this kind, combine of their own accord to raise the price of their labour.” 51 For this reason Smith thought it was wrong to treat trade unions as criminal conspiracies.52 The view of unions and strikes as defensive, aimed at lessening employers’ ability to take advantage of workers’ need, persisted throughout the industrial age. By the time L.T. Hobhouse wrote Liberalism, it was possible for a liberal to argue that strikes might even be connected to human freedom: The emancipation of trade unions, however, extending over the period from 1824 to 1906, and perhaps not yet complete, was in the main a liberating movement, because combination was necessary to place the workman on something approaching terms of equality with the employer, and because tacit combinations of employers could never, in fact, be prevented by law.53 We must note, however, that nearly all of these arguments remain within a form of social theory that attempts to make capitalist practice more like its theoretical self-image. These thinkers tended to defend unions and their right to strike as a way of achieving “real freedom of contract” in the face of economic necessity. Hobhouse was updating Smith and Mill when arguing that “in the matter of contract true freedom postulates substantial equality between the parties. In proportion as one party is in a position of vantage, he is able to dictate his terms. In proportion as the other party is in a weak position, he must accept unfavourable terms.” 54 On this account, the right to strike is defensible only insofar as it helps maintain a position of relative equality among independent bargaining parties. It thereby secures contracts that are not just voluntary but truly free—Mill’s “necessary instrumentality of that free market.” This basic idea reappears in any number of twentieth-century acts of labor legislation and jurisprudence, perhaps most notably in the 1935 law granting American workers the right to strike.55 The problem with the real freedom of contract view is that it is based on faulty social analysis. The labor market is not just another commodity market in which propertyowners are, or can be made, free to participate or not participate. Here some social theory is inescapable. Workers who have no other consistent source of income than a wage have no reasonable alternative to selling their labor-power. That is because in capitalist societies most goods are only legally accessible if you can buy them. There is no other way of reliably acquiring necessary goods. The only way for most workers to get enough money to buy what they need is by selling their laborpower. Their only alternatives are to steal, hope for charity, or rely on inadequate welfare provision. These are, generally speaking, unreasonable alternatives to seeking income through wages. If workers have no reasonable alternative to selling their labor-power they are therefore forced to sell that labor-power to some employer or another.56 This forcing exists even when workers earn relatively high wages, since they still lack reasonable alternatives, though the forcing is more immediate the closer one gets to poverty wages. The key feature of this forcing is that it is consistent with voluntary exchange but it is not some occasional or accidental feature of this or that worker’s circumstances. It is a product of the distribution of property in society. People are forced to sell their capacity to labor when, on the one hand, everyone has property rights in their own capacity to labor and, on the other hand, some group of individuals monopolize all or nearly all of the productive assets in that society. These are the necessary conditions to create a labor market sufficiently robust to organize production. That is to say, a society in which the primary way of organizing production is through a labor market is one in which most people are forced into that labor market. Or, put another way, a society in which most people were truly free to enter or not enter the labor market would be one in which labor is so radically decommodified that the mere formal possibility of a labor market could not serve, on its own, to guarantee social reproduction. Relations among workers and employers would be truly free and thus truly contingent. It is only when there is a sufficiently large population of individuals who have nothing but their labor-power to sell that the mechanism of social forcing guarantees a constant supply of labor through the labor market itself. But this means that, in a society based on the commodification of labor, the conditions that would make the buying and selling of labor-power a truly free set of exchanges would require utterly transforming that market-based production relationship itself. It would require giving workers a reasonable alternative to selling their labor—say through a sizable, unconditional basic income and universal public goods, or through giving all workers the possibility of owning or cooperatively owning their own enterprise. Such measures would amount to a radical de-commodification of labor-power, an overcoming of the very social conditions that give rise to the labor market’s self-image as a site of free exchange. As Ira Steward, a nineteenth-century American labor reformer, once said, “if laborers were sufficiently free to make contracts ... they would be too free to need contracts.” 57 The foregoing social analysis is familiar enough, but its implications for the right to strike are rarely considered. The right to strike begins to make more sense if we reflect upon the fact that workers who are forced to sell their labor power are vulnerable to exploitation. Exploitation just is the word for structural domination in the domain of economic production.58 Some workers will accept jobs at going wage rates and hours, others will be unable to bargain for what they need, and most can be made to work longer hours, at lower pay, under worse conditions than they would otherwise accept. Many employers know this and will take advantage of it.59 Even if employers do not intentionally take advantage of it, they do so tacitly by making numerous economic decisions about hiring, firing, wages, and hours that assume this steady supply of economically-dependent labor. So it is not just the force of necessity, but the fact that this forcing leaves workers vulnerable to exploitation and the further fact that this is a class condition that is relevant to our thinking. It explains why workers might seek collective solutions to their structural domination and why they might refuse to believe that they can overcome their exploitation through purely individual efforts. The further point is that, short of quasi-socialist redistribution or of giving everyone universal rights to ownership of capital, workers are justified in turning to some other way of resisting their structural domination. The legal fact of being able to quit a job is cold comfort because it allows workers to leave a specific boss, but not the labor market itself. Insofar as workers are forced into contracts with employers, and into work associations with other workers, they can only resist their structural domination from within. Here we have an insight into why the right to strike includes the perplexing claim that workers refuse to work yet maintain a right to the job. The typical worker can quit the job, but she cannot quit the work. To avoid being exploited she turns the table: she quits working without quitting the job.

#### [12] star this on the flow - A radical right to strike snowballs n sympathy strikes become general strikes which challenges the very edifice of capitalism and commodified labor- the plan is not a “reform”

Gourevitch, PhD, 16

(Alex, PoliSci@Brown, Gourevitch, A. (2016). Quitting Work but Not the Job: Liberty and the Right to Strike. Perspectives on Politics, 14(02), 307–323. doi:10.1017/s1537592716000049 )

We now have a way of explaining the right to strike as something decidedly more modern than just residual protection of some feudal guild privilege. The right to strike springs organically from the fact of structural domination. Striking is a way of resisting that domination at the point in that structure at which workers find themselves—the particular job they are bargaining over. It is not that workers believe they have some special privilege but quite the opposite. It is their lack of privilege, their vulnerability, that generates the claim. Structural domination makes its most immediate appearance in the threat of being exploited by a particular employer, even though the point of structural domination is that workers can be exploited by any potential employer. The sharpest form that the structural domination takes is through the threat of being fired, or of never being hired in the first place. The claim that strikers make to their job is therefore, in the first instance, a dramatization of the fact that their relationship is not voluntary, it is not accidental and contingent. They are always already forced to be in a contractual relationship with some employer or another. The refusal to perform work while retaining the right to the job is a way of bringing to the fore this social and structural element in their condition. It vivifies the real nature of the production relationship that workers find themselves in. Quitting the work but not the job is a way of saying that this society is not and cannot be just a system of voluntary exchanges among independent producers. There is an underlying structure of unequal dependence, maintained through the system of contracts, that even the “most voluntary” arrangements conceal. This is not just a dramaturgical fact about strikes, though the drama has, in many cases, been nearly Greek in its intensity and tragedy. It is a point about power. It would not have the drama if it were not a power play. By demanding the job as a matter of right workers do not just publicize their domination, they attempt to challenge the forcing to which they are subject. Limiting the employer’s ability to make contracts with others, and preventing other workers from taking those jobs, is a way of reversing the power relationship. It is a way of neutralizing the threat of losing the job, which is the most concrete, immediate point of contact with that background structure of domination. If you cannot lose your job, you are less vulnerable, less immediately economically dependent. Of course, this does not do away with the background structure itself, but a particular strike can never do that. Though even here, there are times when a strike, as it becomes a more generalized rejection of structural domination—say in large-scale sympathy strikes or general strikes—can begin to challenge the broad structure of economic control itself.60 This is a challenge to the logic of the capitalist labor market that begins from within, at the location of the strike itself. At that point in the system, strikers temporarily reverse the relationships of power by eliminating that employers’ ability to use the threat of jobloss against them. They do that not just by claiming the job but by claiming it as a matter of right. The thought is that the exploitation of workers is unjustifiable, an unjustifiability that appears in the terms of the employment itself. Workers have the right to the job, and therefore to interfere with the employer’s property rights and other workers’ contract rights, because it is unjustifiable to subject workers to exploitative conditions. To be sure, many strikes and many strikers never articulate the argument in this language. But the point is not what workers always explicitly say, but rather what they do and what that doing presupposes. I am reconstructing the ideal presuppositions of a strike, and in particular, how to think about the peculiar set of assumptions about the right to a job. We have seen that it is no atavistic recovery of traditional rights and guild privileges but is a way of resisting a thoroughly modern form of social domination from a point within that structure of domination. Again, facing a freedom to quit the job but not the work, workers assert a right to quit working but keep the job. To put this all another way, though strikes are still about bargaining, and in that sense like market exchanges, they are simultaneously a challenge to the market as the appropriate standard by which to judge the fairness of workers’ compensation. The market is unfair because of workers’ structural disadvantage. Over and against the market value, strikers can argue that there are shared, or at least shareable, standards of fair compensation that employers should adhere to. While here again we see the echoes of feudal theories of “just price” and equity jurisprudence,61 we must note that in principle the claim is not, or does not have to be, based on special privilege. Rather, it begins by challenging the view that labor“freely” finds its value on the market. Workers are always already in relationships with employers and they cannot leave the basic relationship of earning money only by selling laborpower, no matter how many jobs they might quit. The standards we use for evaluating those kinds of forced relationships, like the state, are different, based on shared conceptions of justice and human need, not private agreement.

#### [13] Labor is the best starting point for radical politics- workplace exploitation makes every other form of resistance harder

White, PhD, 19

(Damian, Prof@RhodeIslandSchoolofDesign, in *Rethinking the Environment for the Anthropocene* eds. Manuel Arias-Maldonado & Zev Trachtenberg p.198-199)

More generally, agencies are everywhere in critical design but the potential creativity of labor is almost completely missing from a great deal of the discussion (see Wark 2015; Goldstein 2018). By referencing labor, of course, I take it as given that we cannot understand this in the traditional singular and masculine fashion that would take us back behind the gains and insights of feminist, queer, post-colonial political economy or political ecology. Our labor is always hybrid (enrolling humans and non-humans) and queer in being simultaneously classed, gendered, racialized, bound up in the dichotomies of first/third world, able/disabled and other modes of social domination and subordination (Moore 2015; Battistoni 2016). A coherent accounting of labor in worlds torn between industrial and post industrial economies must acknowledge how it is material and immaterial, direct and affective, physical, cognitive and emotional. Our socio-natural reality is a product of constant hybrid organism-environment-interactions where all organ- isms, including humans are in a process of actively making their worlds (Harvey 1996; Arias-Maldonado 2015; Wark 2016; White, Rudy and Gareau 2016). But nevertheless, the relations between critical design and labor need to be carefully explored for an Anthropocene politics that is committed to the just transition. Much critical design futuring to date has placed a great deal of attention on everyday life as the site for transition experimentation (see Fry, 2009; Manzini 2014; Irwin, Kossoff and Tonkinwise 2015). This has value, but a credible vision of the just transition has to acknowledge the extent to which many of our fellow working men and women across the planet find themselves in conditions of servitude at work. There are debts to be paid, childcare to be done, eldercare to engage with, bosses to please and all manner of other modes of subordination to carefully negotiate as we make our way through everyday life. Unless we grapple with the way so many of our fellow citizens are effectively still feudal subjects “in the family, the factory and the field” (Robin 2011:15), we will not only delimit the audience for transition futuring but underestimate the forces that press against the possibility of having the time or energy to be involved in civic experiments to enable just and democratic transition futures. Critical forms of design futuring must address the question of work simply because the workplace and control over terms and conditions in the workplace will continue to be a critical site for political struggle for the foreseeable future as will the demand for more leisure (see White 2015b).