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#### Democracy is a form of bourgeois politics designed to suppress the proletariat – it upholds the illusion that the exploited have a say in how they are ruled

ICC 15 [(The ICC was founded in January 1975 by different political groups which had arisen in the wake of the historic revival of the working class at the end of the 1960s that uses Marxism as effective weapon of the proletarian struggle for emancipation while at the same time reaffirming the communist political positions which have been settled once and for all by the experience of the workers' movement.) “Proletarian politics against bourgeois electoralism” International Communist Current, 3/15] BC

The workers’ movement and bourgeois democracy

Electoralism, the parliamentary system, is a central plank of bourgeois politics. We know of course that the capitalist class has frequently dispensed with it in times of crisis - fascism being an obvious example - or where it is congenitally weak, as in the stalinist regimes or various military dictatorships in the peripheral countries. But brute repression is not the most effective form of class rule, and in the most developed countries democracy is favoured because it upholds the illusion among the exploited that they really do have a say in how they are ruled. The democratic state is the more subtle mask of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, the best framework for preventing class conflict from getting out of control.

But didn’t the working class fight for the vote in the nineteenth century, and didn’t support for this struggle distinguish the marxists from the anarchists in the workers’ movement? And what about the heroic struggle of the suffragettes? Surely we should honour their struggle by exercising the right they secured for us?

It’s true that Marx, Engels, Rosa Luxemburg and others argued that the working class, as well as forming trade unions to defend its interests at the economic level, should organise political parties whose programme would include the right to vote and the fight, inside bourgeois parliaments, for laws that would back up the improvements won through the economic struggle. And when the anarchists attacked them for being reformists and demanded an all-out and immediate fight for revolution, they replied by arguing that capitalist society was still in the ascendant and that the working class was therefore faced with the necessity to develop its class identity and its historical programme inside the confines of bourgeois society.

It’s also true that this perspective contained serious pitfalls. If the workers’ movement got too attached to the struggle for immediate gains, it would lose sight of the long-term goals of revolution and communism, and thus ran the risk that its painfully created organisations would become a functioning part of bourgeois society. And this indeed is what happened – the trade unions and the mass social democratic parties were gradually integrated into capitalism, and a whole new current of thought emerged from within them, justifying this process by revising the fundamentals of marxism, which had always been based on the prediction that capitalism would sooner or later enter into a historical crisis which would make revolution a necessity.

The culminating point of this revisionist or opportunist trend was reached in 1914, when the epoch of crisis dawned and the workers’ organisations were faced with the choice: hold onto to what you have achieved inside capitalism by selling yourself to the bourgeoisie and supporting the war, or hold onto your principles by defending the international interests of the working class and opposing the war. In 1917-21, the choice was posed just as starkly: support the ruling class against the threat of revolution, or join the revolutionary struggle.

Revolution, by definition, demands a radical break with the past, and in the first great wave of revolutions provoked by the imperialist war of 1914-18, those who remained loyal to the working class were faced with the necessity to break with the old organisations – trade unions and political parties – that had become part of the capitalist war effort. They were obliged to reject the tactics of the previous period, focused on the fight for reforms, and to participate in the new forms of organisation created by the need for revolution.

Soviets versus parliament

The question of the vote and of parliament was a key element in this debate about the tactics appropriate to the epoch of revolution. After three years of futile slaughter, the working class had responded with truly revolutionary methods: mutinies and mass strikes. These movements gave rise to forms of organisation that would allow the working class to unite its forces and pose the question of political power: the soviets or workers’ councils, based on elected and revocable delegates from general assemblies of workers or soldiers. These organs were directly opposed to bourgeois parliaments, founded on the atomised citizen who votes for a party that can now assume the reins of state and oppress and defraud the population for the next four or five years. And everywhere the councils emerged – especially in Germany – the ruling class did everything it could to get them to hand over power to parliament, above all via the influence of the social democratic parties which still had the majority in the councils.

It was no accident that the right to vote was granted to the majority of the working class precisely when it had gone beyond the parliamentary form and affirmed in practice the possibility of a new form of political power, directly controlled from below and aimed at the complete transformation of society. In Britain, it was also symbolic that the vote was given to women (though still not all of them) in 1918, after the majority of the suffragette movement had pledged its loyalty to capitalism by supporting the war. Having initially opposed granting the vote to the exploited and the oppressed majority for fear that it would result in the overthrow of class rule, the bourgeoisie now rushed to grant universal suffrage as the best way of preserving its threatened system. This deception was denounced at the time by Sylvia Pankhurst, still often presented to us as a famous suffragette, but who in fact broke politically with the suffragette movement, including her mother Emmeline, for supporting the war; identifying herself with the workers’ revolution, Sylvia and her paper The Workers’ Dreadnought entered the battle for soviets against parliament and bourgeois elections.

Need for a proletarian perspective

Of course, this all happened a long time ago. The working class may have come close to revolution then, but today the working class hardly recognises itself as a class at all. For decades now it has been told that the attempt to build ‘communism’ in the USSR and the eastern countries was a total failure, that marxism has been refuted, that the working class doesn’t really exist anymore. Certainly the main parties contesting the next election no longer refer to class – including the ‘Labour’ party; and the ones that pretend to be a radical alternative to the established parties, such as UKIP on the right and the Greens on the left, call on us to vote on the basis of Britishness or as concerned citizens.

But capitalism is even more decrepit than in was in 1914 and the longer it continues, the more it threatens the very survival of humanity. In a world facing economic crisis, war and barbarism from all sides, the national solutions and reforms promised in bourgeois elections are more fraudulent than ever. And despite all the changes in its structure on a global scale since the first revolutionary wave, the working class is still the class that creates the wealth in this system, still the exploited class, and still the only force that can change society from top to bottom. What the working class lacks, above all, is a perspective, a sense not only of what it is today but of what it can become. And this perspective can only be a political one, because it is centred round the question of who will hold power - a minority of exploiters, or the majority made up of the exploited and the oppressed – and what they will do with power – defend their privileges even at the expense of the destruction of society and the natural environment, or create a new society based on solidarity and the satisfaction of human need.

All forms of bourgeois politics are a barrier to the self-organised, self-conscious movement we need if we are to challenge this social order. We are against participating in capitalist elections not because we favour apathy and withdrawal from political engagement, but because we are for proletarian politics and the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeois state. Amos 5/3/15

#### The aff’s rhetoric of unions and strikes as a solutions to labor disputes reinstates forces of capitalism

Eidlin 20 [(Barry Eidlin, assistant professor of sociology at McGill University and a former head steward for UAW Local 2865.), “Why Unions Are Good — But Not Good Enough”, JACOBIN, <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2020/01/marxism-trade-unions-socialism-revolutionary-organizing>, 01.06.2020] SS

Unions After Marx and Engels: Aristocracy or Revolutionary Agent?

The problems Marx and Engels identified in their later writings on trade unions intensified after their deaths. Formations they found promising, like the US Knights of Labor, and the “new unions” in Britain, either foundered or soon resembled the conservative “old unions” they challenged. The International Workingmen’s Association, or First International, to which Marx and Engels devoted much time and energy, dissolved by 1876.

On the European continent, Bismarck’s Anti-Socialist Law, in effect from 1878 to 1890, drove most German unions underground save for an elite layer of skilled workers, leaving the bulk of the industrial working class unorganized. In France, unions were more politically radical than in England or Germany, but numerically smaller and weaker. Meanwhile, Europe and North America’s capitalist class, far from entering into crisis, proved resilient, growing and consolidating its power.

For Marxists, questions of explaining capitalism’s durability and working-class weakness and conservatism loomed large, sparking debate on why these problems existed and how to solve them. Some like Eduard Bernstein proposed revising Marx’s idea of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie. In his vision of “evolutionary socialism,” unions combined with parliamentary parties and cooperative associations would gradually expand democratic control over the economy, displacing capitalists.

Karl Kautsky disagreed, warning that “the more capitalism passes over from free competition to monopoly . . . the more indispensable it will be that the trades unionists are inspired with socialist discernment and socialist enthusiasm.” While he was optimistic that unions would “constitute the most energetic factors in surmounting” capitalism, the reality of the workers’ organizations of his time suggested otherwise.

To explain working-class conservatism, some drew on observations from Marx and Engels themselves to argue that employers in core industries had managed to “bribe” a stratum of skilled workers with super-profits. This resulted in a conservative “labor aristocracy” that aligned with its industry to protect its privileges rather than building a broad working-class movement of skilled and unskilled workers.

Lenin expanded the idea to the global stage, arguing that imperialists’ colonial possessions generated the super-profits with which to bribe their respective labor aristocracies. For Lenin, this helped explain not only working-class conservatism in general, but European workers’ movements’ rejection of international solidarity in favor of alliances with their national bourgeoisies in the run-up to World War I.

While it is true that some skilled workers did form conservative organizations to protect their privileges, the idea that this resulted from these layers being “bribed” by their national bourgeoisies does not withstand scrutiny. Most difficult for the labor aristocracy theory to explain is the fact that, in many cases, the most skilled workers formed the core of broader left movements, organizing for class-wide demands. Critics argue that how workers were organized to struggle against their national bourgeoisies, not the mere fact of skill-based wage differentials, better explains why unions took radical or conservative turns.

Other theorists blamed working-class conservatism on workers’ organization itself. For syndicalists like Georges Sorel, formal organization was an obstacle to workers’ ability to realize their revolutionary potential. Likewise, based on his experience operating in and observing the German SPD, Robert Michels reached the conclusion that “who says organization, says oligarchy.”

Both argued that over time, workers’ organizations, whether parties or unions, shied away from activities that might advance workers’ interests, but at the expense of jeopardizing the organization’s existence. Sorel saw salvation in the mythical vision of the general strike, while Michels remained pessimistic about escaping the “iron law of oligarchy.”

Based on her experience with the German SPD, Rosa Luxemburg was also wary of organization’s conservatizing effects. She emphasized the need for workers’ self-activity, particularly through mass strikes. But unlike Sorel, she understood that the success of seemingly “spontaneous” mass action depended on the prior organization of leadership layers.

In this, her theory of how to build organizations to unite workers against capital resembled Lenin’s, even though her “spontaneist” position is often counterposed to his “elitism.” Many emphasize Lenin’s argument that unions were insufficient vehicles for forging the revolutionary agent capable of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, which required unions to ally with political parties of intellectuals, often from outside the working class.

But this focus on Lenin’s “centralism” ignores the extent to which Lenin appreciated the fundamental importance of mass action by workers in creating revolutionary consciousness and organization.

Both Lenin and Luxemburg saw workers’ core problem as overcoming “economism.” This meant separating the struggle against capital into distinct economic and political components, with unions bargaining over economic questions and parliamentary parties handling political questions. This undermined labor by taking as given the laws governing the economy, obscuring the fact that these laws were part of a political system that facilitated capital’s rule.

#### The “right to strike” is a tactic of neoliberal legalism and gets circumvented. The state is thus able to decide legitimate parameters for violence and insulate itself from anticapitalist action.

Crépon 19 – Marc Crépon is a professor of philosophy at the École Normale Supérieure, Paris. (“The Right to Strike and Legal War in Walter Benjamin’s “Toward the Critique of Violence”,” August 2019, pg. 252-253)

If we wish to understand how the question of the right to strike arises for Walter Benjamin in the seventh paragraph of his essay “Zur Kritik der Gewalt,” it is important to first analyze the previous paragraph, which concerns the state’s monopoly on violence. It is here that Benjamin questions the argument that such a monopoly derives from the impossibility of a system of legal ends to preserve itself as long as the pursuit of natural ends through violent means remains. Benjamin responds to this dogmatic thesis with the following hypothesis, arguably one of his most important reflections: “To counter it, one would perhaps have to consider the surprising possibility that law’s interest in monopolizing violence vis-à-vis the individual is explained by the intention not of preserving legal ends, but rather of preserving law itself. [This is the possibility] that violence, when it does not lie in the hands of law, poses a danger to law, not by virtue of the ends that it may pursue but by virtue of its mere existence outside of law.”1

In other words, nothing would endanger the law more than the possibility of its authority being contested by a violence over which it has no control. The function of the law would therefore be, first and foremost, to contain violence within its own boundaries. It is in this context that, to demonstrate this surprising hypothesis, Benjamin invokes two examples: the right to strike guaranteed by the state and the law of war.

Let us return to the place that the right to strike occupies within class struggle. To begin with, the very idea of such a struggle implies certain forms of violence. The strike could then be understood as one of the recognizable forms that this violence can take. However, this analytical framework is undermined as soon as this form of violence becomes regulated by a “right to strike,” such as the one recognized by law in France in 1864. What this recognition engages is, in fact, the will of the state to control the possible “violence” of the strike. Thus, the “right” of the right to strike appears as the best, if not the only, way for the state to circumscribe within (and via) the law the relative violence of class struggles. We might consider this to be the perfect illustration of the aforementioned hypothesis. Yet, there are two lines of questioning that destabilize this hypothesis that we would do well to consider.

First, is it legitimate to present the strike as a form of violence? Who has a vested interest in such a representation? In other words, how can we trace a clear and unequivocal demarcation between violence and nonviolence? Are we not always bound to find residues of violence, even in those actions that we would be tempted to consider nonviolent? The second line of questioning is just as important and is rooted in the distinction established by Georges Sorel, in his Reflections on Violence, between the “political strike” and the “proletarian general strike,” to which Benjamin dedicates a set of complementary analyses in §13 of his essay. Here, again, we are faced with a question of limits. What is at stake is the possibility for a certain type of strike (the proletarian general strike) to exceed the limits of the right to strike— turning, in other words, the right to strike against the law itself. The phenomenon is that of an autoimmune process, in which the right to strike that is meant to protect the law against the possible violence of class struggles is transformed into a means for the destruction of the law. The difference between the two types of strikes is nevertheless introduced with a condition: “The validity of this statement, however, is not unrestricted because it is not unconditional,” notes Benjamin in §7. We would be mistaken in believing that the right to strike is granted and guaranteed unconditionally. Rather, it is structurally subjected to a conflict of interpretations, those of the workers, on the one hand, and of the state on the other. From the point of view of the state, the partial strike cannot under any circumstance be understood as a right to exercise violence, but rather as the right to extract oneself from a preexisting (and verifiable) violence: that of the employer. In this sense, the partial strike should be considered a nonviolent action, what Benjamin named a “pure means.”

#### Capitalism is unsustainable and causes extinction – resource scarcity, environmental degradation, war

Trainer ’16 (Ted; 5/10/16; Conjoint Lecturer in the School of Social Sciences, University of New South Wales, leading proponent of de-growth and sustainability issues; Resilience; “Sustainability – The Simpler Way perspective”; <http://www.resilience.org/articles/General/2016/07_July/Sustainability%20The%20Simpler%20Way%20Perspective.pdf>; DOA: 7/15/17)

Firstly let’s set the scene; The deteriorating state of the planet. The resource base and environmental conditions on which the present levels of global production and consumption are built are obviously deteriorating at an alarming rate. Few if any would not be aware of this but it is important to briefly remind ourselves before focusing on how impossible it would be for this base to sustain affluence and growth for all. A glance at the situation reveals that resources are becoming more scarce and costly, including energy, productive land, minerals, food, fish, wood and water, and ecosystems are being severely damaged. We are losing species, forests, land, coral reefs, grasslands and fisheries at accelerating rates. A sixth era of massive biodiversity loss appears to have begun. We are polluting the planet with excess carbon dioxide, nitrogen and many toxic chemicals. The mass of big animals on the planet has declined sharply in recent decades, probably down by 90% in the sea. The World Wildlife Fund says that in general the quality of global ecosystems has deteriorated 30% since about 1970, and its “Footprint” measure indicates that we are now taking biological resources at a rate that would take 1.5 planets to provide in a sustainable way. (2014.) The reason for all this massive resource depletion and damage to the environment is simply that there is far too much producing and consuming going on. This is causing too many resources to be taken from nature and too many wastes to be dumped back into nature. Now consider the limits case: Could everyone live as we do? The 10-15% of the world’s people living in regions such as North America, Australia and Europe have per capita levels of resource use that are around 20 times the average for the poorest half of people. How likely is it that all the 9.7 billion people expected by 2050 could rise to the present rich world level of resource use? If they did live as we do then world annual resource production and consumption, and ecological damage, would be approaching 6 times as great as at present. Yet present levels of resource use and environmental impact are far from sustainable. The World Wildlife Fund’s ”Footprint” analysis yields an even higher multiple. They estimate that it takes about 8 ha of productive land to provide water, energy settlement area and food for one person living in Australia. So if 9 billion people were to live as we do we would need about 72 billion ha of productive land. But that is about 9 times all the available productive land on the planet. Now add the absurdly impossible implications of economic growth. But the foregoing argument has only been that the present levels of production and consumption are quite unsustainable. **Yet** we are determined to increase present living standards and levels of output and consumption, as much as possible and **without any end** in sight. In other words, our supreme national goal is economic growth. Few people seem to recognise the absurdly impossible consequences of pursing economic growth. If we rich countries have a 3% p.a. increase in economic activity until 2050 then our output, **resource use and environmental impact will be** around **4 times as great** as it is now, **and doubling every 23 years** thereafter. Now what if by 2050 all the expected 9.7 billion people expected to be living on earth had risen to the “living standards” we in rich countries would then have given 3% economic growth. Total world output, resource, use and environmental impact would be approaching 15 times as great as they are now … unless technical advance and efficiency gains could greatly reduce them. (See below.) These multiplies must be the focal point in discussions of sustainability. **Grasping the magnitude of** the **overshoot and** of the **unsustainability is crucial** here. The numbers show that present, let alone probable **2050** rich world **levels of consumption, are grossly unsustainable** and could never be extended to all people. But can’t technical advance solve the problems? Most people hold the "technical fix faith", believing that technical advance will solve the resource and environmental problems and thereby make it unnecessary for us to question the commitment to affluence and growth. When considering the following evidence keep in mind that what we need is not just to stop increases in impacts as growth goes on -- we need to reduce impacts dramatically before sustainable levels are reached. There is a very strong case that technical advance is nowhere near capable of solving the sustainability problems facing us. Note that many miraculous technical developments, e.g., in physics, astronomy, genetics, and medicine, are not so relevant here where the focus is on the possibility of making big improvements in the efficiency and energy costs of producing energy and materials, and of cutting ecological impacts. Following are some of the main elements in the case. 1. Efficiency gains to date. It is not the case that technical achievements in the relevant areas have been very encouraging. Ayres and Vouroudis (2009) note that for many decades the efficiency of production of electricity and fuels, electric motors, ammonia and iron and steel has more or less plateaued. In many crucial areas such as producing energy and minerals (below) the trend is towards worse efficiency, i.e., the need is for increasing inputs per unit of output. 2. The deteriorating productivity growth rate. **Technical advance** is regarded as a major determinant of productivity growth and that **has been in long term decline since the 1970s**. Even the advent of computerisation has had a surprisingly small effect, a phenomenon now labelled the “Productivity Paradox.” In fact the UK productivity growth rate has recently has gone below zero; i.e., productivity has actually deteriorated. (Weldon, 2016.) 3. Little or no “decoupling” is occurring for materials or energy use. This is the most important issue; does recent history indicate that economic output has been or can be separated from materials and energy use, so that growth can continue while resource demand falls? The “Tech-Fix faith” is fundamentally dependent on the assumption that massive decoupling is possible. But all the evidence seems to say that the amount of materials or energy needed to produce a unit of GDP in rich countries has not improved much if at all in recent years. The box below refers to some of the evidence. Weidmann et al. (2014) say “…for the past two decades global amounts of iron ore and bauxite extractions have risen faster than global GDP.” “… resource productivity…has fallen in developed nations.” “There has been no improvement whatsoever with respect to improving the economic efficiency of metal ore use.” Giljum et al. (2014, p. 324) report in the world as a whole only a 0.9% p.a. improvement in the dollar value extracted from the use of each unit of minerals between 1980 and 2009, and that over the 10 years before the GFC there was no improvement. “…not even a relative decoupling was achieved on the global level.” They point out that the picture would have been worse had they included the many materials in rich world imports. **Diederan’s account** (2009) **of** the **productivity** of minerals discovery effort **is even more pessimistic**. **Between 1980 and 2008 the** annual major **deposit discovery rate fell from 13 to less than 1, while discovery expenditure went from** about **$1.5 billion** p.a. **to $7 billion** p.a., **meaning** the **productivity** of expenditure **fell by a factor** in the vicinity **of** around **100, which is an annual decline of** around **40%** p.a. Recent **petroleum figures are similar**; in the last decade or so **the discovery rate has not increased but discovery expenditure** more or less **trebled**. (Johnson, 2010.) **Schandl** et al. (2015) **say “ …** there is a very high coupling of energy use to economic growth, meaning that an increase in GDP drives a proportional increase in energy use.” “Our results show that while relative **decoupling can** be achieved in some scenarios, **no**ne would **lead to an absolute reduction in energy or materials footprint**.” **In all three** of their **scenarios** “… **energy use continues to be strongly coupled with economic activity**...” **Alvarez found that for Europe, Spain and the US, GDP increased 74% in 20 years, but materials use actually increased 85%**. (Latouche, 2014.) **Similar conclusions** re stagnant or declining materials use productivity etc. **are arrived** at **by Aadrianse**, 1997, **Dittrich** et al., (2014), **Schutz**, **Bringezu and Moll**, (2004), **Warr**, (2004), **Berndt**, (1990), **Smil**, (2014) **and Victor** (2008, pp. 55-56). (Note that economists often claim that the “energy intensity” of rich world economies is improving, but this is only because they fail to take into account the huge amounts of energy used overseas to produce imports, and “fuel switching”; see Kaufman, 2004.) 4. There is ecological deterioration in almost all domains. Technical advance has obviously not slowed, halted or reversed overall damage to the planet’s ecosystems. The “Environmental Kuznets Curve” thesis is an application of the decoupling claim to environmental impacts, asserting that as countries become richer impacts increase for a time but then plateau and fall. There is little doubt now that the thesis is not valid. Rich countries are in general not solving their most serious environmental problems. Alexander’s review (2014) concludes that for the world as a whole, ”… decades of extraordinary technological development have resulted in increased, not reduced, environmental impacts.” These many sources and figures show the extreme implausibility of the tech-fix faith that in future technical advances will enable us to stop worrying about limits and any need to dramatically reduce consumption or the obsession with economic growth. Conclusions on the limits to growth case. In view of these lines of argument it is difficult to see how anyone could disagree with the basic limits to growth case. Present ways are so grossly unsustainable there is no possibility of all people rising to the living standards we take for granted today in rich countries, let alone those we are seeking. Again the most important point is the magnitude of the overshoot. Most people have no idea of how far beyond sustainable levels of consumption we are or how big the reductions should be. For decades many scientists and agencies are have been emphasizing the validity and importance of the basic limits case. Sustainable ways that all could share appear to require us to go down to per capita rates of resource consumption around 10% of those we have now. It follows from the above discussion that the only solution is to shift to some kind of Simpler Way, i.e., to lifestyles, settlements and systems that make it possible for us to live well on a small fraction of our present rich world levels, with no economic growth.

#### The alternative is to reorient political organizing away from the electoral system – only the alt provides the invisibility needed to construct alternative imaginaries

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In a world seemingly intent on supporting fascism, racism, misogyny, patriarchy, neoliberalism, environmental destruction and growing inequality it can be tempting to retreat from public political battles. We can use this urge to think carefully about the power of being invisible, of using ‘unseen’ spaces to build alternative imaginaries and practice prefigurative acts. We need to use invisibility strategically and with purpose as a way to rebuild while we live in an era of fear, anger and unpredictability.

Now is not the time to rely on the electoral system to counter such politics. White Americans and Europeans are being encouraged to articulate themselves as victims, as being treated unfairly, a move that eradicates any sense of history or complicity in structural inequalities (Bump, 2017). Such victimhood erases responsibility, solidarity and mutual obligation to tackle any structural inequalities. It decouples any links with others, with place, and with history. The system has already failed many in society and the history of representative democracies illustrates the tendency to repeatedly fail the marginalised, the environment, and the non-elite (Bartels, 2016; Purcell, 2013). While the state has had moments of protecting workers, responding to ecological crises, and providing welfare, it has only done so under pressure from social movements and even then, it has often been too slow and weak in taking any actions that might curtail the destructive effects of capitalism. For example, while labour movements such as trade unions have fought for employment rights and in countries like the UK there is now a broad range of legislation that protects workers from unfair dismissal, leave entitlement and maternity and paternity leave, there has at the same time been an exponential growth in the use of zero-hour employment contracts (Frege and Kelly, 2003). These contracts are legal and carefully sidestep employment legislation by enabling employers to avoid providing a stable living wage, holiday or sick pay (Burgess, 2013). Even when state legislation has been able to change or modify capitalist practices for the benefit of workers or the environment, the British vote for Brexit and the US support for Trump now illustrate how unstable, temporary and fragile such protective acts are.

If we reject relying on electoral politics it becomes more obvious that we, as individuals, are the ones who need to, and can, act to build a different type of politics (Wall, 1999; Purcell, 2013). Anarchism has always understood the value of people-power. Although it has been accused of failing to adequately confront power (Mueller, 2003) – by seeking to bypass the state and perhaps not always articulating how it would deal with the powerful or the oligarchical elite – anarchism has repeatedly illustrated that that grassroots, autonomous, solidaristic and collective activism can generate internationally progressive transformative politics (Scarce, 2016; Springer, 2016; Pickerill and Chatterton, 2006). This rests on a belief that right-wing populism can be effectively challenged by a left politics of justice, equality and inclusivity (Purcell, 2014).

This people-power can be mobilised visibly and invisibly. While confrontation and public resistance is necessary and timely, it is also vital that we attend to the less visible forms of activism that can be crucial to a successful transformative politics. In social movement studies these periods have been theorised as latent or organisational moments where activists regroup and reorganise ready for new visible mobilisations at a later date (Tarrow, 2011). But employing less visible forms of prefigurative politics is subtly different. Anarchist prefigurative politics are in themselves a powerful form of change that are not waiting for a future moment of mobilisation but require living now as if we already inhabit the world we want (Chatterton and Pickerill, 2010). It is a way to embody political values and reflect these in daily practices and acts, leading to new social relations (Ince, 2012). Prefiguration is a process of creation, of optimism; of action in the now that is flexible, local and diverse. On a micro-scale, for example, it is ensuring that our everyday practices do not contradict our politics (‘walking our talk’). Prefigurative acts build an alternative future.

Sometimes being invisible is incredibly powerful and silences useful (Gatwiri and Karanja, 2016). This invisibility creates space and time to remake ideas, resource flows and infrastructures but also to put into practice these ways of being. As Tsing (2015) explores in her examination of invisible networks of trade of matsutake mushrooms, there is much in the world that exists and flourishes on the edges of capitalist encroachment. It is in these ‘unseen’ spaces that alternative imaginaries are built and experimental ideas tested, not just as radical spatial interventions but also in our everyday lives in our homes and workplaces. Creative new ways of being and acting are practiced. There are also, of course, many forms of direct action that seem to appear (and need to be seen to appear) from invisible sources, such as hacking by Anonymous.

There is a huge range of post/non/alter-capitalist spaces to be employed here, including eco-communities, squats, online spaces, pop-up shops, secular halls and social centres, but informal spaces can also be used, such as people’s homes, or local community spaces such as village halls, allotments and meeting spaces above shops or in charity offices (Chatterton, 2016; Pickerill, 2016). Crucially, many of these spaces are hidden from public view - the squats only known by its residents, the eco-communities constructed without planning permission on rural fields and the meeting spaces squirrelled away in the back of charity offices all offer space to live and organise differently (Pickerill, 2012).

It is about seeing what might not at first sight be immediately visible and finding the cracks in places to be occupied or the moments to be ruptured (Purcell, 2013). Prefiguration enables the struggle to be grounded in place, for acts to be local, relevant and culturally appropriate. It is about developing responses to local events regardless of the unpredictability and the fear, of using what space we must

try out new ways of being (Mason, 2014; Maeckelbergh, 2016). Small daily acts, be that calling out racism, making ethical consumption choices (like where you purchase food and what you eat), or countering gender stereotypes, can appear nonconfrontational, almost invisible and yet open up space for dialogue with differentiated others. These small acts can seep out into the public space and gradually connect those willing to be attentive to, or moved towards, more participatory radical politics. These seemingly small daily acts open up a space of dialogue where difficult conversations about how privilege and oppression are structural and replicated can happen. These discussions can be the beginnings of creating the commons. Invisibility helps new necessary alliances (especially with the white working classes) be built. These less visible daily practices are just as important as filling the streets for a protest. This is about using invisibility to intensify our existing practices, to put into practice our creations and ideas, to remake the world without drawing unwanted attention to this creativity and therefore without making visible these spaces of production that are at risk of surveillance and repression. While it is necessary that we signal our withdrawal of consent to state power (especially to Trump) and resist coercion, the state response is predictable – it will be swift, violent, and merciless.

As we enter a new political era it is tempting to retreat from overt public political battles, but if we do it should be to put into practice our alternatives, continue to literally build alternative ways of being and ready ourselves for future public political encounters. It is strategic to be as invisible as we are visible, but only if we are practicing anarchist prefigurative politics, if we are experimenting in ‘unseen’ spaces, and if we are slowly but surely building new alliances of solidarity.

## 1NC- Off

#### CP: The United States should recognize an unconditional right to strike for worker with the exception of law enforcement

#### Police are losing grip of power

Willis 20 [(Jay Willis, senior contributor at The Appeal.) ,” POLICE UNIONS ARE LOSING THE WAR ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM” ,The Appeal , <https://theappeal.org/police-unions-are-losing-the-war-on-criminal-justice-reform/>, Nov 10, 2020] SS

Law enforcement organizations have long treated mass incarceration as a job creation program. In 2020, the tide began turning against them.

This commentary is part of The Appeal’s collection of opinion and analysis.

Law enforcement unions are maybe the most powerful force in politics that most voters never think twice about. By quietly dumping millions of dollars in key prosecutor elections and ballot initiative fights, these organizations manage to affect everything in the criminal legal system’s orbit, usually while flying well beneath the political radar. Police unions are sort of like gravity, if gravity played a significant role in enabling agents of the state to systematically terrorize communities of color without facing meaningful consequences.

In races that take place outside the quadrennial spending bonanzas for control of the White House, these strategic allocations of time and outlays of resources can be decisive in elections, especially since no cohesive pro-reform interest group exists to counteract their influence. (Tight-knit, well-organized police unions can coordinate in ways that the larger but more heterogenous and dispersed coalition of people who favor criminal justice reform cannot.) One recent study found that law enforcement groups have spent about $87 million in local and state elections over the past 20 years, including almost $65 million in Los Angeles alone. At the federal level, their recent campaign contributions and lobbying expenditures approach $50 million, according to The Guardian.

Such expenditures are savvy investments for police unions, who keenly understand the value of having sympathetic friends in high places. Because prosecutors work so closely with police, they have a strong incentive to develop a friendly relationship with rank-and-file officers, even if earning that trust comes at the price of turning a blind eye to abuse: It is not a coincidence that researchers have tracked the rise of police unions to an increase in on-the-job police killings. In a country where law-and-order rhetoric is deeply embedded in the cultural zeitgeist, if you’re a prosecutor intent on keeping your job, filing charges against the badge-wearing hand that feeds might not feel worth the retaliatory smear campaign that will inevitably follow.

In recent years, however—and especially as a result of the sustained protests of police violence in the aftermath of George Floyd’s killing in Minneapolis—people have grown more attuned to how these organizations bend the criminal legal system to their will and stymie efforts to reform it. A growing number of elected officials have pledged to refuse the support of law enforcement organizations; in California, a coalition of reform-minded prosecutors has been lobbying for a state bar ethics rule that would prohibit DAs from accepting donations from these sources altogether, arguing that prosecutors cannot ethically prosecute police officers if they are receiving the support of their unions.

“The ties that bind elected officials to police unions must be broken,” the Los Angeles Times editorial board wrote in June. “An elected official considering whether to prosecute officers should not be, in essence, on the political payroll of the agency defending the very same people.”

On Election Day 2020 in California, voters delivered police unions a series of resounding defeats that threaten to flip this time-honored paradigm on its head.

In the race for Los Angeles County District Attorney, reform-oriented challenger George Gascón ousted incumbent Jackie Lacey, earning control of a sprawling office that employs nearly 1,000 line prosecutors and retains jurisdiction over more than 10 million people. Lacey was the clear favorite of law enforcement organizations, who spent some $5 million boosting her candidacy and attacking her opponent’s. And for good reason: During Lacey’s eight years on the job, she reviewed more than 250 fatal shootings by on-duty law enforcement officers. She filed charges in one of them.

Occasionally, Lacey’s penchant for lenience extended beyond even that of high-profile police officials. None other than then-LAPD chief Charlie Beck called on Lacey to charge one of his officers, Clifford Proctor, in the 2015 killing of Brendon Glenn, an unarmed, homeless Black man. Lacey declined. “As independent prosecutors, we’re supposed to look at the evidence and the law,” she said. “And that’s what we did.” When the time came for Lacey to seek re-election, it seems that grateful police unions did not forget her choice.

Gascón’s résumé is one that might seem as if it would appeal to law enforcement types: A former LAPD patrol officer who rose to the rank of assistant chief, he also served as police chief in San Francisco and Mesa, Arizona, and as district attorney in San Francisco, before returning to run for DA in the city where he grew up. But Gascón is among the group of prosecutors who have disclaimed the support of police unions, and his campaign pledges include reducing the population of the county’s chronically overcrowded jail system, reopening investigations of high-profile police shootings that Lacey had closed, and declining to seek the death penalty altogether. For the unions, loyalty apparently extends only so far as it will allow their members to evade accountability.

Their efforts echoed those of the San Francisco Police Officers Association during last year’s DA election, when it spent some $650,000 on, among other things, mailers that declared progressive DA candidate Chesa Boudin to be “the #1 choice of criminals and gang members.” These scaremongering predictions were insufficient to prevent the city’s voters from electing Boudin—also a member of the no-money-from-cop-unions coalition—as Gascón’s successor.

Further down the ballot in 2020, California voters rejected Proposition 20, which would have reclassified certain misdemeanor theft offenses as felonies and reduced the availability of parole. (Incidentally, this would have rolled back the reforms of Proposition 47, a successful 2014 referendum co-authored by Gascón.) In other words, Proposition 20 would have resulted in more incarceration for more people for longer periods of time, which is why law enforcement organizations contributed roughly $2 million to the campaign to pass it.

Police unions also opposed San Francisco’s Proposition E, which eliminated the city’s minimum police staffing requirement, and Los Angeles’s Measure J, which earmarked hundreds of millions of dollars in public resources for non-police community investment. The Los Angeles County Professional Peace Officers Association, which represents sheriff’s deputies, claimed that Measure J would “cripple public safety,” and local law enforcement organizations combined to spend more than $3.5 million fighting it. Both measures nonetheless passed with overwhelming support.

Law enforcement unions reliably oppose criminal justice reform for the simple reason that any attempts to reduce the criminal justice system’s footprint will make police less relevant. (Over the years, they have opposed everything from body camera mandates to the simple requirement that officers wear nametags.) For them, mass incarceration is the world’s most lucrative job creation machine. To justify their lavish spending habits and the generous rules that apply to their conduct, police always frame themselves as a mere half-step ahead of staving off mass chaos, warning that any abrogation of their authority by naive do-gooders will put everyone in danger.

What this year’s election results demonstrate is that people understand the lies that infuse this narrative, which conspicuously omits from the ledger the staggering human costs that policing imposes on the communities it purports to keep safe. These losses won’t put an end to incidents of police brutality, or any other strain of rot that pervades the American criminal justice system. But they do signal that police unions are likelier to have to answer for their myriad failures, instead of relying on beneficiaries of their largesse to pretend that these failures do not exist.

#### The plan reverses that

Lopez 20 [(Laura Barrón-López, is a White House Correspondent for POLITICO.), “Democrats’ Coming Civil War Over Police Unions” , POLITICO , <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/10/14/police-reform-police-unions-qualified-immunity-democratic-party-420122>, 10/14/2020] SS

Earlier this year, House Democrats were close to pushing through a bill that would have cemented the power of police unions across the country. For a pro-labor party, the bill, which gave police officers the federal right to collectively bargain on working conditions, appeared to be a no-brainer. Nearly every Democrat in the House co-signed the legislation, including members of the Squad, a group of progressive superstars that includes Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Rashida Tlaib.

The Democrats have supported public-sector unions for generations — often fighting with Republican state officials who’ve worked to gut the memberships of public employee unions and limit bargaining abilities. The bill would have granted the right to form a union and bargain contracts to firefighters, emergency medical personnel and police, including in states that currently prohibit some in public safety from negotiating collectively for wages and working conditions.

As talk of moving the bill increased in March, Rep. Joaquin Castro of Texas was a rare voice raising alarms. He warned his colleagues on the Education and Labor Committee that the bill would formalize the authority of police unions to determine misconduct standards in their contracts, which are increasingly viewed as a barrier to holding police accountable for wrongdoing. Castro, a Democrat, fought it, asking racial justice groups like Campaign Zero and Color of Change to talk to his Democratic colleagues. He suggested new language limiting how much police could negotiate over accountability provisions with cities.

But labor organizations weren’t pleased with the idea of singling out police affiliates by restricting their ability to bargain over disciplinary standards in the bill. Then the coronavirus pandemic exploded, and negotiations stalled.

Two months later, a video of a white police officer using his knee to pin George Floyd’s neck to the pavement for nine minutes rocketed around the country. Hundreds of thousands took to the streets across the nation in response to Floyd’s killing, calling for a full re-imagining of policing and thrusting police unions into the center of the national argument. Activists, multiple legal experts and even some conservative think tanks, say police unions are one of the biggest impediments to reform, pushing hard to weaken accountability rules, and preventing new ones from being passed.

In the wake of Floyd’s killing, the bill expanding bargaining rights for police unions is all but dead as currently written, and not because of the pandemic. House Democrats rushed to pass a first of its kind police reform bill that would, among other measures, ban choke holds, establish a national database tracking misconduct and end the doctrine of qualified immunity, which shields police officers from civil lawsuits. More quietly, they quickly backed away from the collective-bargaining bill. In the span of three months, the party had changed its calculus, now viewing a labor bill that was endorsed by nearly every House Democrat as recently as March as untouchable in its current form.

Rep. Dan Kildee (D-Mich.), co-author of the measure, said in a statement that he asked House leadership to not move the bill unless the right for police to negotiate on accountability standards is addressed. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, who also signed on to the bill, is “withdrawing her support” from it “as long as it remains in its current form,” said Lauren Hitt, a spokesperson for the New York Democrat. Rep. Matt Cartwright of Pennsylvania, author of a separate broader bill to expand collective bargaining rights of public-sector workers, is also deciding “whether any changes need to be made to [his] bill to hold officers with problematic records accountable” and will consider changes Kildee makes to his legislation, said Cartwright spokesman Matt Slavoski.

All Democrats POLITICO spoke to said they support police’s right to unionize and bargain over wages and working conditions; it’s police’s ability to negotiate misconduct standards through union contracts that some are now questioning or flat out opposing.

#### Police strikes allow police to gain overwhelming amount of power

Wish 20 [(Brian E. Wish, PhD), “What If The Police Revolt?” , Medium, https://medium.com/illumination/what-if-the-police-revolt-ca5a44ba4790, Jun 16, 2020] SS

Police labor actions are successful

When police go on strike, they usually win. The most likely outcome of police labor unrest is quick resolution in favor of the police officers. The consequences can hurt individual officers but police forces as a whole tend to win concessions and solve their problems. Politicians realize that if things are bad enough for the police to strike, then the problems won’t go away even if all the strikers are fired.

The September 1919 Boston Police Strike is the most famous police labor action. Striking for higher pay, seventy percent of the police department walked out. Vandalism and looting ensued across the city. Calvin Coolidge sent in the state militia, which shot at least eight people over the next few days. The strike was unpopular, coming towards the end of the Red Summer of white rioting and at the beginning of the Red Scare. All striking officers were fired and replaced, with the State Guard staying on until December. Despite the firings, wages and benefits were raised substantially and a pension was instituted.

In the modern era, when finally roused to fight, police labor activity proves successful without mass firings.

In New York City, in 1971, virtually the entire police department stopped patrolling, responding only to major crimes. Strikers were eventually fined but won pay concessions and back pay to a disputed contract.

In Baltimore, Maryland, in 1974, hundreds of police officers went on strike. The city ultimately gave in to pay concessions, though the union was disbanded and participating probationary officers were fired

In Boston, Massachusetts, in 1975, hundreds of police officers called in sick or skipped work to avoid enforcing bussing or suppressing protests; national guard troops deployed to keep the peace

In Milwaukee, Wisconson, just before Christmas in 1981, police went on strike after an alderman made statements in support of a suspect accused of killing two officers; after sixteen hours the city council repudiated the statement and increased police funding.

In Columbus, Ohio, in 1993, hundreds of police and firefighter called in sick, quickly winning contract concessions and a 5% raise.

#### Enables police unions to conceal abuses of power

Greenhouse 20 [(Steven Greenhouse, reporter at the New York Times for thirty-one years; he covered labor and workplace matters there for nineteen. He is the author of “Beaten Down, Worked Up: The Past, Present, and Future of American Labor”), “How Police Unions Enable and Conceal Abuses of Power”, The New Yorker , <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/how-police-union-power-helped-increase-abuses>, June 18, 2020 ] SS

Police unions have long had a singular—and divisive—place in American labor. What is different at this fraught moment, however, is that these unions, long considered untouchable, due to their extraordinary power on the streets and among politicians, face a potential reckoning, as their conduct roils not just one city but the entire nation. Since the nineteen-sixties, when police unions first became like traditional unions and won the right to bargain collectively, they have had a controversial history. And recent studies suggest that their political and bargaining power has enabled them to win disciplinary systems so lax that they have helped increase police abuses in the United States.

A 2018 University of Oxford study of the hundred largest American cities found that the extent of protections in police contracts was directly and positively correlated with police violence and other abuses against citizens. A 2019 University of Chicago study found that extending collective-bargaining rights to Florida sheriffs’ deputies led to a forty per cent statewide increase in cases of violent misconduct—translating to nearly twelve additional such incidents annually.

In a forthcoming study, Rob Gillezeau, a professor and researcher, concluded that, from the nineteen-fifties to the nineteen-eighties, the ability of police to collectively bargain led to a substantial rise in police killings of civilians, with a greater impact on people of color. “With the caveat that this is very early work,” Gillezeau wrote on Twitter, on May 30th, “it looks like collective bargaining rights are being used to protect the ability of officers to discriminate in the disproportionate use of force against the non-white population.”

Other studies revealed that many existing mechanisms for disciplining police are toothless. WBEZ, a Chicago radio station, found that, between 2007 and 2015, Chicago’s Independent Police Review Authority investigated four hundred shootings by police and deemed the officers justified in all but two incidents. Since 2012, when Minneapolis replaced its civilian review board with an Office of Police Conduct Review, the public has filed more than twenty-six hundred misconduct complaints, yet only twelve resulted in a police officer being punished. The most severe penalty: a forty-hour suspension. When the St. Paul Pioneer Press reviewed appeals involving terminations from 2014 to 2019, it discovered that arbitrators ruled in favor of the discharged police and corrections officers and ordered them reinstated forty-six per cent of the time. (Non-law-enforcement workers were reinstated at a similar rate.) For those demanding more accountability, a large obstacle is that disciplinary actions are often overturned if an arbitrator finds that the penalty the department meted out is tougher than it was in a similar, previous case—no matter if the penalty in the previous case seemed far too lenient.

To critics, all of this highlights that the disciplinary process for law enforcement is woefully broken, and that police unions have far too much power. They contend that robust protections, including qualified immunity, give many police officers a sense of impunity—an attitude exemplified by Derek Chauvin keeping his knee on George Floyd’s neck for nearly nine minutes, even as onlookers pleaded with him to stop. “We’re at a place where something has to change, so that police collective bargaining no longer contributes to police violence,” Benjamin Sachs, a labor-law professor at Harvard, told me. Sachs said that bargaining on “matters of discipline, especially related to the use of force, has insulated police officers from accountability, and that predictably can increase the problem.”

For decades, members of the public have complained about police violence and police unions, and a relatively recent development—mobile-phone videos—has sparked even more public anger. These complaints grew with the killings of Eric Garner, Laquan McDonald, Walter Scott, Tamir Rice, Philando Castile, and many others. Each time, there were protests and urgent calls for police reform, but the matter blew over. Until the horrific killing of George Floyd.

Historians often talk of two distinct genealogies for policing in the North and in the South, and both help to explain the crisis that the police and its unions find themselves in today. Northern cities began to establish police departments in the eighteen-thirties; by the end of the century, many had become best known for using ruthless force to crush labor agitation and strikes, an aim to which they were pushed by the industrial and financial élite. In 1886, the Chicago police killed four strikers and injured dozens more at the McCormick Reaper Works. In the South, policing has very different roots: slave patrols, in which white men brutally enforced slave codes, checking to see whether black people had proper passes whenever they were off their masters’ estates and often beating them if they did something the patrols didn’t like. Khalil Gibran Muhammad, a historian at Harvard, said that the patrols “were explicit in their design to empower the entire white population” to control “the movements of black people.”

At the turn of the twentieth century, many police officers—frustrated, like other workers, with low pay and long hours—formed fraternal associations, rather than unions, to seek better conditions—mayors and police commissioners insisted that the police had no more right to join a union than did soldiers and sailors. In 1897, a group of Cleveland police officers sought to form a union and petitioned the American Federation of Labor—founded in 1886, with Samuel Gompers as its first president—to grant them a union charter. The A.F.L. rejected them, saying, “It is not within the province of the trade union movement to especially organize policemen, no more than to organize militiamen, as both policemen and militiamen are often controlled by forces inimical to the labor movement.”

#### Police brutality re-enforces racial stereotypes, creates a public mental and physical health crisis and creates an endless cycle of injustice and hostility

SNMA 2019 [(Mavis Britwum, Region IX Political Advocacy Liaison), ( Eloho E. Akpovi, HPLA Policy Statements Subcommittee Chairperson), (Jeniffer Okungbowa-Ikponmwosa, HPLA Committee Chairperson), (Veronica Wright, HPLA Committee Chairperson), “Statement on Police Brutality” , Health Policy and Legislative Affairs Committee, Third Review, <https://cdn.ymaws.com/snma.org/resource/resmgr/hlpa/policy_statements/police_brutality.pdf>, ] SS

INTRODUCTION

Established in 1964 by students of Meharry Medical College, the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) is the nation's oldest and largest organization focused on the needs and concerns of medical students of color. In addition, the SNMA is dedicated to practices leading to better health care for minority and underrepresented communities. As these communities are disproportionately subject to the practice and consequences of police brutality, defined as any act of unmerited excessive and aggressive physical, mental, and/or emotional abuse, above and beyond the law, enacted upon by an individual or groups of individuals in law enforcement, 1 the SNMA strongly opposes the medical, social, and political infractions incurred via these acts of excessive force.

BACKGROUND

Epidemic levels of racial minorities are being unjustly scrutinized, brutalized, and even killed at the hands of law enforcement in the United States. According to limited research that exists, more than two thousand individuals have been killed by police officers since 1990 – 75% of whom were people of color.1 Due to underreporting, some incidences of police brutality that result in nonfatal civilian injury are unaccounted for, resulting in a staggering underestimation well below the actual number.

Police departments are established for the protection of the community they serve, and as such, should be responsible for treating their assigned communities with respect and fairness. Unfortunately, in reality, that is not the case. Historically, society has internalized the idea that Blackness is inherently associated with criminality in order to justify unreasonably use of deadly force on Black/African American men and women who are considered to be “suspects” or “persons of interest” in acts of wrongdoing.2 This includes the US law enforcement community, members of which have been influenced by socially ingrained stereotyping and demonstrated unjust scrutiny against Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx members of society.

In 2015, 19% of Black/African American and 17% of Hispanics/Latinxs admitted to being mistreated unfairly by police officers in the past 30 days, in comparison to 3% of White responders.3 This scrutiny has, in turn, led to numerous unmerited physical and psychological attacks on individuals of color, resulting not only in permanent disability, but also death of innocent law abiding Americans. A few prominent national cases include Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Michael Brown, Sandra Bland, and Jordan Edwards. Such unwarranted incidents resulting in injury and murder constitute direct attacks upon the civil rights of many ethnic minorities in the United States. Police brutality, and the use of unwarranted physical and emotional force, ultimately compromise the physical and mental health of victims and their families while ignoring the need for psychological and social intervention and support of law enforcement officers.

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

Police brutality results in potentially severe mental and physical injury. The types of physical injuries sustained are similar to those experienced by victims of violent crime such as assault and homicide. These injuries commonly result from night-stick or baton beatings, pistol whippings, beatings by fist or boot, restraint holds, and shootings. Examples of physical injuries include, but are not limited to, skin abrasion/laceration, bone fracture, asphyxiation, parenchymal nerve injury, contusion, concussion, skull fracture, epidural and subdural hematomas, pneumothorax, and hemothorax. Complications of such injuries include post-traumatic cerebral edema, infections, hydrocephalus (secondary to blood or infection in the subarachnoid space), post-traumatic epilepsy (secondary to sustained contusions and lacerations), paralysis, permanent disability and death.2

Damage caused by police brutality goes beyond the physical manifestations. Psychological trauma faced by victims manifests itself in many ways, such as stress, anxiety, fear, paranoia, distrust, insomnia, anorexia, and depression.

Such psychological symptoms can further be manifested as Acute Stress Disorder (ASD) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Psychological stress often consumes many facets of victims’ lives, adversely affecting job performance, ability to sustain employment, and everyday interactions with family and associates. 2 Moreover, the families of fatally injured victims often suffer many of the same psychological tolls. Police brutality must be recognized, investigated, and acted upon as a serious health concern because of its obvious deleterious effects on individuals, their families and communities.

A Public Health Issue

Police brutality, which was once thought of as isolated incidences, has grown into a public health issue.4 Police violence not only negatively affects those individuals directly involved but also creates a tidal wave of chaos that spans across state and regions lines. Police brutality directly increases the divide between communities of color and police officials, which present in multiple way. It has resulted in an increasing number of individuals and communities that feel distrust toward police officials.4 They are, therefore, reluctant to report instances to police and bypass the unjust judicial systems by taking matters into their own hands.

The media’s coverage of incidences of police brutality is often presented in a manner that skews the lines of victim and perpetrator. One of the most common examples of subliminal biases can be seen in the choice of photographs selected to accompany police violence coverage. This is often achieved by presenting a picture of the officer cloaked in his uniform and heavily decorated in awards while the civilian, often a Black/African American male, is pictured in “street clothes” and often in surroundings as to perpetuate stereotypes such as thug, uneducated or violent. This type of bias representation further increases racial divides, creating a barrier among civilians and law enforcement.5 To look one step further, the failure to prosecute police officers in cases where “excessive force” was documented, further alienates minorities and perpetuates social injustices and oppression. While there are some national statutes in place, the United States Department of Justice has been unable to eliminate this growing issue. Any hopes of eradicating this public health issue will come with collaboration of federal and local reform.5

Furthermore, increases in police sensitivity training, higher educational requirements for officer recruits, community policing, and other progressive approaches have not produced a measurable decrease in police brutality against Black/African American males because none of these initiatives specifically address the larger societal issues of police brutality (case study).2

Psychological Impact on Members of the Target Population

Police violence has been linked to negative impacts on the mental health of victims, specifically leading to the development of anxiety and depressive symptoms. As the number of incidents and level of police violence used increases, the likelihood of the victim developing PTSD also increases.6 PTSD is associated with an increased risk for maladaptive behaviors such as alcohol and drug dependence most notably in Black/African Americans.7 This risk is further compounded by the negative impacts of PTSD on one’s perception of self. Traumatic experiences such as police violence cannot only cause an individual to develop an altered sense of self, but they can also alter a victim’s perceptions of those around them leading to an almost global sense of mistrust; with victims reporting increased skepticism of the world and a decreased feeling of safety in society.7 At the most extreme, victims have described their experience following an incidence of police violence as one of agoraphobia; they are afraid to leave their homes, afraid to interact with large groups of people.

While treatment strategies for individuals with PTSD following acts of violence are improving, barriers to treatment still exist specifically in the Black/African American community.2 Some barriers are financial. These include decreased access to mental health services due to lower health insurance rates and incomprehensive policies. Other barriers are related to cultural stigma associated with seeking mental health treatment. These include but are not limited to negative perceptions of mental health treatment and question of its utility.

Many patients have a preference for a mental health practitioner of the same race. However, the healthcare system harbors an underrepresentation of Black/African American mental health workers,7 as almost 90% of mental/behavioral health workers identify as non-Hispanic White and the other 10% is comprised of those that identify as “racial and ethnic minorities.”8 Though true, the effects of police brutality reach beyond victim and the resources available to them. Broadly it touches families, friends and loved ones in many ways. The growing issue of police brutality shows that American societies have not socially developed very far from the days of oppressive and violent tactics that were prevalent during previous times of intense social climates such as those seen during desegregation and the civil rights movements. A generation that marched on the front line for social justice decades ago so that their children and grandchildren could grow up in a more accepting society must still endure the tragedies of systemic racism and oppression.

A parent’s first instinct is to protect and nurture their offspring to the best of their ability. However, in the face of police brutality, parents are left feeling betrayed and helpless at the hands of the very individuals who are embarked with the responsibility to protect and serve. These feelings of grief and bereavement for their lost loved ones is compounded by mental anguish, frustrations, and anger when families learn that no one will be prosecuted for these crimes, often times in the presence of substantial evidence.8

Members of the community who do not have a loved one directly affected by police brutality and violence are still mentally affected in ways that often change their outlook on the world and consequently how they carry themselves in society. Witnessing police brutality instills distrust in the younger generation which undoubtedly grows the separation between minorities and police officers. Many younger individuals will take on a sense of hopelessness and believe that their societies do not value individuals of color. Because the parents in these situations are undergoing their own grieving process, the mental effects of police brutality on young children are often undertreated.5

## Case

### 1NC – Democracy

#### **Democracy doesn’t deliver instead causes lack of accountability that destroys infrastructure**

Moyo 18 [(Dambisa Moyo, international economist and the author, most recently, of Edge of Chaos: Why Democracy Is Failing to Deliver Economic Growth—and How to Fix It. She serves on the boards of 3M and Chevron), “Why Democracy Doesn’t Deliver”, Foreign Policy, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/04/26/why-democracy-doesnt-deliver/>, April 26, 2018] SS

Only 19 percent of Americans today say they can trust their government to do what is right. Meanwhile, citizens in developing countries see authoritarian leaders as more trustworthy than democratic politicians. Increasingly, it seems that people across the globe are skeptical of the ability of democratic governments to act effectively — including as good custodians of the economy. Indeed, the liberal democratic system is unwittingly undermining the economic growth that is necessary for its continued survival.

At the root of the problem is a predilection for short-​termism that has become embedded in the political and business culture of modern democracies. By design, Western politicians have relatively short political horizons; they are often in office for terms of less than five years. So they find their duties regularly interrupted by elections that distract from the job of addressing long-​term policy challenges. As a result, politicians are naturally and rationally drawn to focus their efforts on seducing their electorates with short-​term sweeteners — including economic policies designed to quickly produce favorable monthly inflation, unemployment, and GDP numbers.

Voters generally favor policies that enhance their own well-​being with little consideration for that of future generations or for long-​term outcomes. Politicians are rewarded for pandering to voters’ immediate demands and desires, to the detriment of growth over the long term. Because democratic systems encourage such short-​termism, it will be difficult to solve many of the seemingly intractable structural problems slowing global growth without an overhaul of democracy.

One of the most fundamental obstacles to effective governance is the short electoral cycle embedded in many democratic systems. Frequent elections taint policymaking, as politicians, driven by the rational desire to win elections, opt for quick fixes that have a tendency to undermine long-term growth. Meanwhile, they neglect to address more entrenched, longer-​term economic challenges, such as worsening education standards, the imminent pension crisis, and deteriorating physical infrastructure, that don’t promise immediate political rewards.

America’s failing infrastructure encapsulates the problem of both public and private myopia. A 2017 report by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) gave the country a grade of D+ for overall infrastructure, citing 2,170 high-​hazard dams, 56,007 structurally deficient bridges (9.1 percent of the nation’s total), and $1 trillion in needed upgrades to drinking water systems

over the next 25 years.

At a minimum, the ASCE suggests that a $2 trillion investment is needed by 2020 to address the significant backlog of overdue maintenance and the pressing need for modernization. The effects of increased infrastructure investment on the prospects of low-​skilled labor could be substantial. Investing in infrastructure would have all sorts of other benefits, but the prevailing democratic political system discourages the sort of long-​term thinking necessary to do so.

Clearly there have been periods in the past when governments have chosen to undertake large infrastructure projects without succumbing to political myopia. In the United States, for example, the federal government drove the rollout of the Work Projects Administration (WPA) in the 1930s. Launched under President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal to help address America’s chronic unemployment, the WPA was America’s largest and most ambitious project dedicated to constructing public buildings, roads, bridges, schools, and courthouses. It was possible because the short-​term political incentive of reducing mass unemployment through the rapid creation of jobs aligned with a long-​term agenda.

Today, when it comes to infrastructure, China and India present a useful study in contrasts. Both countries needed roads to increase productivity. China built them, but India’s infrastructure programs got bogged down in red tape and political wrangling born of political fissures in its democratic system. Because vested interests in India have a stranglehold on policymaking and implementation, India’s democratic processes stifled decisions that could have helped drive economic growth. In the 2016-2017 World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report, India was ranked 68th of 138 countries for overall infrastructure, well behind China, which was ranked 42nd. The effects of underinvestment in infrastructure on the economy are real: For India, spending 1 percent of GDP on infrastructure is likely to boost the country’s GDP by 2 percent and create as many as 1.4 million jobs.

#### Infrastructure reform needed to solve Climate Change

USA Today 7/20 [(The Editorial Board, USA TODAY), "Climate change is at 'code red' status for the planet, and inaction is no longer an option” USA Today” , <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/todaysdebate/2021/07/20/climate-change-biden-infrastructure-bill-good-start/7877118002/>, Published July 2021 Updated Aug. 9, 2021] SS

Not long ago, climate change for many Americans was like a distant bell. News of starving polar bears or melting glaciers was tragic and disturbing, but other worldly.

Not any more.

Top climate scientists from around the world warned of a "code red for humanity" in a report issued Monday that says severe, human-caused global warming is become unassailable. Proof of the findings by the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a now a factor of daily life.

Due to intense heat waves and drought, 107 wildfires – including the largest ever in California – are now raging across the West, consuming 2.3 million acres.

Earlier this summer, hundreds of people died in unprecedented triple-digit heat in Oregon, Washington and western Canada, when a "heat dome" of enormous proportions settled over the region for days. Some victims brought by stretcher into crowded hospital wards had body temperatures so high, their nervous systems had shut down. People collapsed trying to make their way to cooling shelters.

Heat-trapping greenhouse gases

Scientists say the event was almost certainly made worse and more intransigent by human-caused climate change. They attribute it to a combination of warming Arctic temperatures and a growing accumulation of heat-trapping greenhouse gases caused by the burning of fossil fuels.

The consequences of what mankind has done to the atmosphere are now inescapable. Periods of extreme heat are projected to double in the lower 48 states by 2100. Heat deaths are far outpacing every other form of weather killer in a 30-year average. A persistent megadrought in America's West continues to create tinder-dry conditions that augur another devastating wildfire season. And scientists say warming oceans are fueling ever more powerful storms, evidenced by Elsa and the early arrival of hurricane season this year.

Increasingly severe weather is causing an estimated $100 billion in damage to the United States every year.

"It is honestly surreal to see your projections manifesting themselves in real time, with all the suffering that accompanies them. It is heartbreaking," said climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe.

Rising seas from global warming

Investigators are still trying to determine what led to the collapse of a Miami-area condominium that left more than 100 dead or missing. But one concerning factor is the corrosive effect on reinforced steel structures of encroaching saltwater, made worse in Florida by a foot of rising seas from global warming since the 1900s.

The clock is ticking for planet Earth. While the U.N. report concludes some level of severe climate change is now unavoidable, there is still a window of time when far more catastrophic events can be mitigated. But mankind must act soon to curb the release of heat-trapping gases.

Global temperature has risen nearly 2 degrees Fahrenheit since the pre-industrial era of the late 19th century. Scientists warn that in a decade, it could surpass a 2.7-degree increase. That's enough warming to cause catastrophic climate changes.

After a brief decline in global greenhouse gas emissions during the pandemic, pollution is on the rise. Years that could have been devoted to addressing the crisis were wasted during a feckless period of inaction by the Trump administration.

Congress must act

Joe Biden won the presidency promising broad new policies to cut America's greenhouse gas emissions. But Congress needs to act on those ideas this year. Democrats cannot risk losing narrow control of one or both chambers of Congress in the 2022 elections to a Republican Party too long resistant to meaningful action on the climate.

So what's at issue?

A trillion dollar infrastructure bill negotiated between Biden and a group of centrist senators (including 10 Republicans) is a start. In addition to repairing bridges, roads and rails, it would improve access by the nation's power infrastructure to renewable energy sources, cap millions of abandoned oil and gas

wells spewing greenhouse gases, and harden structures against climate change.

It also offers tax credits for the purchase of electric vehicles and funds the construction of charging stations. (The nation's largest source of climate pollution are gas-powered vehicles.)

**Warming causes extinction – any reduction should be prioritized above every other impact**

**Ramanathan et al. 17** [Veerabhadran Ramanathan is Victor Alderson Professor of Applied Ocean Sciences and director of the Center for Atmospheric Sciences at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, Dr. William Collins is an internationally recognized expert in climate modeling and climate change science. He is the Director of the Climate and Ecosystem Sciences Division (CESD) for the Earth and Environmental Sciences Area (EESA) at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL), Prof. Dr Mark Lawrence, Ph.D. is scientific director at the Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) in Potsdam, Örjan Gustafsson is a Professor in the Department of Environmental Science and Analytic Chemistry at Stockholm University, Shichang Kang is Professor, Cold and Arid Regions Environmental and Engineering Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS); CAS Center for Excellence in Tibetan Plateau Earth Sciences, and Molina, M.J., Zaelke, D., Borgford-Parnell, N., Xu, Y., Alex, K., Auffhammer, M., Bledsoe, P., Croes, B., Forman, F., Haines, A., Harnish, R., Jacobson, M.Z., Lawrence, M., Leloup, D., Lenton, T., Morehouse, T., Munk, W., Picolotti, R., Prather, K., Raga, G., Rignot, E., Shindell, D., Singh, A.K., Steiner, A., Thiemens, M., Titley, D.W., Tucker, M.E., Tripathi, S., & Victor, D., authors come from the following 9 countries - US, Switzerland, Sweden, UK, China, Germany, Australia, Mexico, India, “Well Under 2 Degrees Celsius: Fast Action Policies to Protect People and the Planet from Extreme Climate Change,” Report of the Committee to Prevent Extreme Climate Change, September 2017, http://www.igsd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Well-Under-2-Degrees-Celsius-Report-2017.pdf] TDI

**Climate change is becoming an existential threat with warming in excess of 2°C within the next three decades and 4°C to 6°C within the next several decades. Warming of such magnitudes will expose as many as 75% of the world’s population to deadly heat stress in addition to disrupting the climate and weather worldwide. Climate change is an urgent problem requiring urgent solutions**. This paper lays out urgent and **practical solutions that are ready for implementation now, will deliver benefits in the next few critical decades**, and places the world on a path to achieving the longterm targets of the Paris Agreement and near-term sustainable development goals. The approach consists of four building blocks and 3 levers to implement ten scalable solutions described in this report by a team of climate scientists, policy makers, social and behavioral scientists, political scientists, legal experts, diplomats, and military experts from around the world. These solutions will enable society to decarbonize the global energy system by 2050 through efficiency and renewables, drastically reduce short-lived climate pollutants, and stabilize the climate well below 2°C both in the near term (before 2050) and in the long term (post 2050). It will also reduce premature mortalities by tens of millions by 2050. As an insurance against policy lapses, mitigation delays and faster than projected climate changes, the solutions include an Atmospheric Carbon Extraction lever to remove CO2 from the air. The amount of CO2 that must be removed ranges from negligible, if the emissions of CO2 from the energy system and SLCPs start to decrease by 2020 and carbon neutrality is achieved by 2050, to a staggering one trillion tons if the carbon lever is not pulled and emissions of climate pollutants continue to increase until 2030.

There are numerous living laboratories including 53 cities, many universities around the world, the state of California, and the nation of Sweden, who have embarked on a carbon neutral pathway. These laboratories have already created 8 million jobs in the clean energy industry; they have also shown that **emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollutants can be decoupled from economic growth**. Another favorable sign is that **growth rates of worldwide carbon emissions have reduced from 2.9% per year during the first decade of this century to 1.3% from 2011 to 2014 and near zero growth rates during the last few years. The carbon emission curve is bending, but we have a long way to go and very little time for achieving carbon neutrality**. We need institutions and enterprises that can accelerate this bending by scaling-up the solutions that are being proven in the living laboratories. We have less than a decade to put these solutions in place around the world to preserve nature and our quality of life for generations to come. The time is now.

The Paris Agreement is an historic achievement. For the first time, effectively all nations have committed to limiting their greenhouse gas emissions and taking other actions to limit global temperature change. Specifically, 197 nations agreed to hold “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels,” and achieve carbon neutrality in the second half of this century.

**The climate has already warmed by 1°C. The problem is running ahead of us, and under current trends we will likely reach 1.5°C in the next fifteen years and surpass the 2°C guardrail by mid-century with a 50% probability of reaching 4°C by end of century**. Warming in excess of 3°C is likely to be a global catastrophe for three major reasons:

• **Warming in the range of 3°C to 5°C is suggested as the threshold for several tipping points in the physical and geochemical systems; a warming of about 3°C has a probability of over 40% to cross over multiple tipping points, while a warming close to 5°C increases it to nearly 90%, compared with a baseline warming of less than 1.5°C, which has only just over a 10% probability of exceeding any tipping point.**

**• Health effects of such warming are emerging as a major if not dominant source of concern. Warming of 4°C or more will expose more than 70% of the population, i.e. about 7 billion by the end of the century, to deadly heat stress and expose about 2.4 billion to vector borne diseases such as Dengue, Chikengunya, and Zika virus among others**. Ecologists and paleontologists have proposed that warming in excess of 3°C, accompanied by increased acidity of the oceans by the buildup of CO2 , can become a major causal factor for exposing more than 50% of all species to extinction. 20% of species are in danger of extinction now due to population, habitat destruction, and climate change.

The good news is that **there may still be time to avert such catastrophic changes**. The Paris Agreement and **supporting climate policies must be strengthened substantially within the next five years to bend the emissions curve down faster, stabilize climate, and prevent catastrophic warming**. To the extent those efforts fall short, societies and **ecosystems will be forced to contend with substantial needs for adaptation—a burden that will fall disproportionately on the poorest three billion who are least responsible for causing the climate change problem.**

Here we propose a policy roadmap with a realistic and reasonable chance of limiting global temperature to safe levels and preventing unmanageable climate change—an outline of specific science-based policy pathways that serve as the building blocks for a three-lever strategy that could limit warming to well under 2°C. The projections and the emission pathways proposed in this summary are based on a combination of published recommendations and new model simulations conducted by the authors of this study (see Figure 2). We have framed the plan in terms of four building blocks and three levers, which are implemented through 10 solutions. The first building block would be fully implementing the nationally determined mitigation pledges under the Paris Agreement of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In addition, several sister agreements that provide targeted and efficient mitigation must be strengthened. Sister agreements include the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol to phase down HFCs, efforts to address aviation emissions through the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), maritime black carbon emissions through the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and the commitment by the eight countries of the Arctic Council to reduce black carbon emissions by up to 33%. There are many other complementary processes that have drawn attention to specific actions on climate change, such as the Group of 20 (G20), which has emphasized reform of fossil fuel subsidies, and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC). HFC measures, for example, can avoid as much as 0.5°C of warming by 2100 through the mandatory global phasedown of HFC refrigerants within the next few decades, and substantially more through parallel efforts to improve energy efficiency of air conditioners and other cooling equipment potentially doubling this climate benefit.

For the second building block, numerous subnational and city scale climate action plans have to be scaled up. One prominent example is California’s Under 2 Coalition signed by over 177 jurisdictions from 37 countries in six continents covering a third of world economy. The goal of this Memorandum of Understanding is to catalyze efforts in many jurisdictions that are comparable with California’s target of 40% reductions in CO2 emissions by 2030 and 80% reductions by 2050—emission cuts that, if achieved globally, would be consistent with stopping warming at about 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Another prominent example is the climate action plans by over 52 cities and 65 businesses around the world aiming to cut emissions by 30% by 2030 and 80% to 100% by 2050. There are concerns that the carbon neutral goal will hinder economic progress; however, real world examples from California and Sweden since 2005 offer evidence that economic growth can be decoupled from carbon emissions and the data for CO2 emissions and GDP reveal that growth in fact prospers with a green economy.

The third building block consists of two levers that we need to pull as hard as we can: one for drastically reducing emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) beginning now and completing by 2030, and the other for decarbonizing the global energy system by 2050 through efficiency and renewables. Pulling both levers simultaneously can keep global temperature rise below 2°C through the end of the century. If we bend the CO2 emissions curve through decarbonization of the energy system such that global emissions peak in 2020 and decrease steadily thereafter until reaching zero in 2050, there is less than a 20% probability of exceeding 2°C. This call for bending the CO2 curve by 2020 is one key way in which this report’s proposal differs from the Paris Agreement and it is perhaps the most difficult task of all those envisioned here. Many cities and jurisdictions are already on this pathway, thus demonstrating its scalability. Achieving carbon neutrality and reducing emissions of SLCPs would also drastically reduce air pollution globally, including all major cities, thus saving millions of lives and over 100 million tons of crops lost to air pollution each year. In addition, these steps would provide clean energy access to the world’s poorest three billion who are still forced to resort to 18th century technologies to meet basic needs such as cooking. For the fourth and the final building block, we are adding a third lever, ACE (Atmospheric Carbon Extraction, also known as Carbon Dioxide Removal, or “CDR”). This lever is added as an insurance against surprises (due to policy lapses, mitigation delays, or non-linear climate changes) and would require development of scalable measures for removing the CO2 already in the atmosphere. The amount of CO2 that must be removed will range from negligible, if the emissions of CO2 from the energy system and SLCPs start to decrease by 2020 and carbon neutrality is achieved by 2050, to a staggering one trillion tons, if CO2 emissions continue to increase until 2030, and the carbon lever is not pulled until after 2030. This issue is raised because the NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions) accompanying the Paris Agreement would allow CO2 emissions to increase until 2030. We call on economists and experts in political and administrative systems to assess the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of reducing carbon and SLCPs emissions beginning in 2020 compared with delaying it by ten years and then being forced to pull the third lever to extract one trillion tons of CO2

The fast mitigation plan of requiring emissions reductions to begin by 2020, which means that many countries need to cut now, is urgently needed to limit the warming to well under 2°C. Climate change is not a linear problem. Instead, we are facing non-linear climate tipping points that can lead to self-reinforcing and cascading climate change impacts. Tipping points and selfreinforcing feedbacks are wild cards that are more likely with increased temperatures, and many of the potential abrupt climate shifts could happen as warming goes from 1.5°C in 15 years to 2°C by 2050, with the potential to push us well beyond the Paris Agreement goals.

Where Do We Go from Here?

**A massive effort will be needed to stop warming at 2°C, and time is of the essence. With unchecked business-as-usual emissions, global warming has a 50% likelihood of exceeding 4ºC and a 5% probability of exceeding 6ºC in this century, raising existential questions for most, but especially the poorest three billion people. A 4ºC warming is likely to expose as many as 75% of the global population to deadly heat.** Dangerous to catastrophic impacts on the health of people including generations yet to be born, on the health of ecosystems, and on species extinction have emerged as major justifications for mitigating climate change well below 2ºC, although we must recognize that the uncertainties intrinsic in climate and social systems make it hard to pin down exactly the level of warming that will trigger possibly catastrophic impacts. To avoid these consequences, we must act now, and we must act fast and effectively. This report sets out a specific plan for reducing climate change in both the near- and long-term. With aggressive urgent actions, we can protect ourselves. Acting quickly to prevent catastrophic climate change by decarbonization will save millions of lives, trillions of dollars in economic costs, and massive suffering and dislocation to people around the world. This is a global security imperative, as it can avoid the migration and destabilization of entire societies and countries and reduce the likelihood of environmentally driven civil wars and other conflicts.

#### **Turn: Democracy breeds social inequality – any other conclusion is based on false longitudinal comparison**

Treanor 6 [(Paul, Political Scientist) “Why Democracy is Wrong” http://web.inter.nl.net/users/Paul.Treanor/democracy.html, 13 May 2006] MCM

Democracy has failed to eliminate social inequality, and this seems a permanent and structural failure. It is undeniable that all democratic societies have social inequalities - substantial differences in income, in wealth, and in social status. These differences have persisted: there is no indication that inequality will ever disappear in democracies. In the stable western democracies, inequality is apparently increasing. The pattern established in the United States is, that the lowest incomes do not grow: all the benefits of economic growth go to the higher-income groups.

Average household income before taxes grew in real terms by nearly one-third between 1979 and 1997, but that growth was shared unevenly across the income distribution. The average income for households in the top fifth of the distribution rose by more than half. In contrast, average income for the middle quintile climbed 10 percent and that for the lowest fifth dropped slightly. Furthermore, income growth at the very top of the distribution was greater yet: average income in 1997 dollars for the top 1 percent of households more than doubled, rising from $420,000 in 1979 to more than $1 million in 1997.  
Historical Effective Tax Rates, 1979-1997., Congressional Budget Office, 2001, p. 5

Some form of social inequality is inherent in democracy - a fact neglected by most democratic theory. In a theoretical democracy of 100 voters, a party of 51 voters can confiscate the property of the other 49. They can divide it among themselves. However, if one voter is sick on election day, they lose their majority. A party of 52 has more chance to divide the property of the minority, but now the minority is 48 and there is slightly less to divide. A party of 99 will have guaranteed success against a minority of one, but the shares after division will be small.

In practice, a coalition of two-thirds, or three-quarters, can successfully disadvantage a minority (one third, one quarter). For instance, the majority might exclude the minority from the main labour market, and then force this excluded underclass into workfare. The emergence of an underclass is usually seen as a structural change within a society, but it might be simply a side-effect of democracy. Every democracy is a temptation (to the majority) to disadvantage minorities. In practice, every existing liberal democracy is a dual society, with some politically marginalised minority

(typically the urban underclass).

In the past, aristocratic conservatives feared that democracy would allow the poor to confiscate the wealth of the rich. In reality, the historical trend seems exactly the opposite. Increasingly, western democracy is not about 'ordinary people' against the elite: it is about ordinary people joining with social elites to 'bash the underclass'. Guarantees of fundamental rights do not prevent a low-status minority being targeted, politically and socially. In several European countries political parties compete against each other, to show how tough they are against an unpopular minority - for instance asylum seekers. There is nothing the minority can do, so long the political parties do not infringe their rights. Unfortunately this development is probably still in the early stages: the worst is yet to come. In a democracy, those at the bottom of the social scale can expect steadily worsening conditions of life.

a fatal transition to democracy

The post-1989 transition in central and eastern Europe provided the first comprehensive indication of the negative effects of democracy. (Liberal democracy in combination with the free market, which is what western media and governments mean, when they talk of democracy in eastern Europe). In the older democratic states, the present model of democracy was formed over 100 or 200 years. Britain in 1800 can not be compared with Britain two centuries later: the huge differences are not simply 'the result of democracy'. However, in eastern Europe modern states acquired a new political and economic system within a few years - with a complete statistical record. Russia in 1985 can be compared with Russia in 1995: the difference is largely due to the economic and political transition. The UN Development Program listed 7 social-economic costs of the process (the reference to "life expectancy levels achieved in the 1990s" should apparently read "1980's"):

The process of transition in the region has had huge human development costs, many of which still continue unabated....

The biggest single 'cost of transition' has undoubtedly been the loss of lives represented by the decline in life expectancy in several major countries of the region, most notably in the Russian Federation, and most strikingly among young and middle-aged men....Most regrettably, the trends in life expectancy have meant that several million people have not survived the 1990s who would have done so if the life expectancy levels achieved in the 1990s had been maintained....

The second cost of transition has been the rise and persistently high level of morbidity, characterized by higher incidence of common illnesses and by the spread of such diseases as tuberculosis that had been reduced to marginal health threats in the past....

A third cost of transition has been the extraordinary rise in poverty - both income and human poverty....

A major contributor to the increase in poverty - along with falling incomes and rising inflation - has been the rise in income and wealth inequality, and this has been a fourth cost of transition....

A fifth cost of transition has been rising gender inequalities. During the Soviet era, quotas for women helped to incorporate them into positions of economic and political decision-making and authority, but the advent of more democratic regimes has led paradoxically to lower percentages of women in such positions. Women have found themselves progressively pushed out of public life. Simultaneously, their access to paid employment has declined and their total work burden both within the household and outside it has increased....

A sixth cost of transition has been the considerable deterioration of education....

A seventh cost of transition has been the rise in unemployment, underemployment and informalization of employment....

Summing up the seven costs of transition across the whole region underscores the dramatic and widespread deterioration of human security....  
TRANSITION 1999: Human Development Report for Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS, UNDP (Chapter 1).

The report itself has more detail on all of these aspects, and especially on poverty. In historical perspective, this is clearly not indicative of a voluntary choice for emancipation and progress. Instead these characteristics are consistent with the traditional historical pattern of expansion by conquest: more on this 'democratic conquest' below.

So what would happen if the existing market democracy was abolished, in an older liberal-democracy such as Britain or the Netherlands? It is not possible to recreate 1980's 'Soviet-bloc' societies in these countries, but experience in eastern Europe indicates the possible benefits of a reverse transition...

life expectancy would rise

public health would improve: the incidence of infectious diseases would fall

poverty would decline sharply, although the mean income would probably also fall

income inequalities would fall

women would have higher social status, more access to political-administrative structures, and more access to employment

there would be more resources for education, and access to education would improve

unemployment would fall: there would be fewer people in insecure jobs, and possibly also fewer in low-productivity 'junk jobs' (also a form of underemployment)

Supporters of democracy themselves use social and political comparisons between very different societies - for instance between Stalin's Russia (or Hitler's Germany) and the present USA. The western lobby in favour of the transition process in eastern Europe also quote its successes - again using longitudinal comparisons of non-comparable societies. If cross-generational, cross-cultural, cross-societal comparisons are acceptable in justification of democracy, then why not in criticism of it?

death in democracy

Income inequality is probably not the best indicator of structural inequalities in democracies. The statistics on health give a more comprehensive picture of a fundamental, long-term, inequality - apparently resistant to all declared government policy. The evidence for a worsening gap is also clearer in the health statistics.

Above all, inequalities in mortality are a moral defect of democracies. This comment is on western European countries: all of them are democracies:

The differences in mortality and morbidity are quite shocking. Economically inactive men have three times the risk of premature death observed for employed men. While strong health selection increases the risk of exclusion from the labour market, it seems likely that there is also reverse causation due to social isolation and stress. Finland and Norway were used to illustrate the concept of healthy life-expectancies. Norwegian and Finnish men with post secondary education live 3-4 years longer than men with basic education, and 10-12 years more of healthy life, that is, without chronic debilitating illness. One important change between the 1970s and the 1980s is that Sweden, Norway and Denmark have lost their relatively favourable international position in terms of the size of mortality differences between classes. There are some other striking findings; French men in lower socio economic groups had much greater excess mortality than the European average, which Kunst et al suggest may be due to the level of alcohol consumption; and while Nordic countries show large morbidity differences by education level, Great Britain shows large mortality differences by income.  
Health and health care policy : inequality and the risks of exclusion, Council of Europe Human Dignity and Social Exclusion Project. See the CoE site for footnotes and references, deleted here.

Public health and epidemiology journals are full of such examples of health inequalities. In several countries there have also been major national studies, which confirm that health and mortality inequalities are a general pattern. In Britain, the 1998 Acheson Report on health inequalities showed that they had worsened since the last major study, the Black Report in 1980. Those were the years of the Conservative governments in Britain, so perhaps the Conservative policies are responsible. But that is the point: those Conservative governments were democratically elected. If democracy was a system which prevented inequalities in death rates, then democracy would prevent a government which worsened those inequalities. If democracy was a system which prevented inequalities in death rates, then there would be no inequalities anyway. But there are, and democracy is apparently making them worse....

Over the last twenty years, death rates have fallen among both men and women and across all social groups. However, the difference in rates between those at the top and bottom of the social scale has widened.  
For example, in the early 1970s, the mortality rate among men of working age was almost twice as high for those in class V (unskilled) as for those in class I (professional). By the early 1990s, it was almost three times higher. This increasing differential is because, although rates fell overall, they fell more among the high social classes than the low social classes....not only did the differential between the top and the bottom increase, the increase happened across the whole spectrum of social classes....  
Death rates can be summarised into average life expectancy at birth. For men in classes I and II combined, life expectancy increased by 2 years between the late 1970s and the late 1980s. For those in classes IV and V combined, the increase was smaller, 1.4 years. The difference between those at the top and bottom of the social class scale in the late 1980s was 5 years, 75 years compared with 70 years. For women, the differential was smaller, 80 years compared with 77 years....  
Premature mortality, that is death before age 65, is higher among people who are unskilled. Table 4 illustrates this with an analysis of deaths in men aged 20 to 64 years. If all men in this age group had the same death rates as those in classes I and II, it is estimated that there would have been over 17,000 fewer deaths each year from 1991 to 1993....  
Inequalities in Health: The Current Position, Independent Inquiry into Inequalities in Health Report (Acheson Report). Footnotes and references deleted.

The estimate of excess deaths - excess in comparison with equal death rates - gives an idea of the scale of suffering involved. Research in Spain estimated a national 10% excess mortality by geographical areas:

Excess number of deaths in the most deprived geographical areas account for 10% of total number of deaths annually....Total annual excess of deaths was estimated to be about 35 000 people in Spain.  
Juan Benach and Yutaka Yasui. Geographical patterns of excess mortality in Spain explained by two indices of deprivation, Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health 53 (1999): 423-431.

It is hard to show that democracy causes these deaths, but it certainly does not prevent them. That is, in itself, reason to question its moral legitimacy. In eastern Europe, the scale of deaths associated with the transition to market democracy was far greater. Roland Scharff estimated the total excess deaths in the reform years (1992-1996) at 3,5 million.

### 1NC – Inequality

#### There are many alt causes to inequality, none of which have quick fixes

Bhala 15 – Kara Tan Bhala, President and Founder, Seven Pillars Institute for Global Finance and Ethics - ‎Seven Pillars Institute for Global Finance and Ethics (“The Causes of Economic Inequality” January 21st, 2015, <http://sevenpillarsinstitute.org/case-studies/causes-economic-inequality>) LADI

(ii) Education affects wages

Individuals with different levels of education often earn different wages [2]. This is probably related to reason one: the level of education is often proportional to the level of skill. With a higher level of education, a person often has more advanced skills that few workers are able to offer, justifying a higher wage.

The impact of education on economic inequality is still profound in developed countries and cities [3]. Although there are usually policies of free education in developed nations, levels of education received by each individual still differ, not because of financial ability but innate qualities like intelligence, drive and personal ability. For example, in Hong Kong, 12 years of free education are provided for each citizen, not covering tertiary education, offered only when students receive certain results on public exams.

Moreover, receiving the same level of education does not mean receiving education of the same quality. This accounts for the difference in abilities and hence wages for individuals all receiving, for example, 12 years of education. Therefore, it seems no matter how good the social welfare policy of a country is at preventing denial of education due to financial difficulties, differences in education, in terms of levels and quality, still play a prominent role in economic inequality.

(iii) Growth in technology widens income gap

Growth in technology arguably renders joblessness at all skill levels [3]. For unskilled workers,

computers and machinery perform a lot of tasks these workers used to be do. In many jobs, such as packaging and manufacturing, machinery works even more effectively and efficiently. Hence, jobs involving repetitive tasks have largely been eliminated. Skilled workers are not immune to the nightmare of losing jobs. The rapid development in artificial intelligence may ultimately allow computers and robots to perform knowledge-based jobs [3].

The impact of increasing unemployment is stagnant or decreasing wages for most workers, as there is a low demand for but high supply of labor. A small portion of society, usually the owners of capital, controls an ever-increasing fraction of the economy [3]. The income gap between workers who earn by their skills and owners who earn by investing in capital has widened.

Although both skilled and unskilled workers are adversely affected by the technological advance, it seems unskilled workers are subject to worse outcomes [3]. This is because the labor market may still need skilled workers to use computers and operate the advanced machines. The rightward shift in the demand for skilled labor creates an increase in the relative wages of the skilled compared to the unskilled workers. Hence, the income gap among workers also has widened.

(iv) Gender does matter

In many countries, there is a gender income gap in the labor market [3]. For example, in America, the median full-time salary for women is 77 percent of that of men [4]. However, women who work part time make more on average than men who work part-time [4]. Additionally, among people who never marry or have children, women make more than men [4].

It may be difficult to justify such differences. According to a U.S. Census report [4], the wage gap is not fully explained even after accounting for key factors that affect earnings, such as discrimination and the tendency of women to consider factors other than pay when looking for work. The only thing we know for sure is that gender does contribute to a difference in wages in society and hence economic inequality.

(v) Personal factors

It is generally believed that innate abilities play a part in determining the wealth of an individual. Hence, individuals possessing different sets of abilities may have different levels of wealth, leading to economic inequality [3]. For example, more determined individuals may keep improving themselves and striving for better achievements, which justifies a higher wage.

Another example is intelligence [3]. A lot of people believe that smarter people tend to have higher income and hence more wealth. This is debatable. In the book IQ and the Wealth of Nations, Dr. Richard Lynn opined that there is a correlation of 0.82 between average IQ and GDP. However, Stephen Jay Gould, in the book The Mismeasure of Man, criticized it for employing the wrong methods of evaluation.

In addition to innate abilities, diversity of preferences, within a society or among different societies, contributes to the difference in wealth [3]. When it comes to working harder or having fun, equally capable individuals may have totally different priorities, resulting in a difference in their incomes. Their saving patterns may also differ, leading to different levels of accumulated wealth.

Inequality is a vicious cycle

“The rich get richer, the poor get poorer” is not just a cliche. The concept behind it is a theoretical process called “wealth concentration.” Under certain conditions, newly created wealth is concentrated in the possession of already-wealthy individuals [5]. The reason is simple: People who already hold wealth have the resources to invest or to leverage the accumulation of wealth, which creates new wealth. The process of wealth concentration arguably makes economic inequality a vicious cycle.

The effects of wealth concentration may extend to future generations [3]. Children born in a rich family have an economic advantage, because of wealth inherited and possibly education, which may increase their chances of earning a higher income than their peers. These advantages create another round of the vicious cycle.

#### COVID-19 makes econ collapse inevitable – capitalism cannot function in an 18-month shutdown

Roos 4/5 [(Jerome, a fellow in international political economy at the London School of Economics) “Capitalism Causes Disasters, Socialism Can Solve Them” Jacobin, 4/5/2020] BC

The coronavirus pandemic is rapidly threatening to escalate into a global crisis of epochal proportions. As the virulent disease holds the world in its grip, the disastrous handling of the outbreak in the United States and Europe also highlights a number of structural weaknesses in the political-economic configurations of the Western world. This is demonstrating in the most unambiguous terms just how ill-equipped market-oriented capitalist societies are to deal with an emergency of this scope and intensity.

There are at least three interrelated aspects to the current crisis, all of which expose fundamental flaws at the heart of the established order. The first and most important of these is, of course, the medical dimension: a public health emergency that takes the form of a relentless exponential increase in the number of detected cases, in the number of hospitalized patients, and in the number of fatalities. In the United States and many European countries, a repeat of the Italian scenario is now imminent, as the sudden influx of critically ill intensive-care patients threatens to overwhelm structurally underfunded or outright unaffordable public health care systems.

In the short term, the immediate priority of governments should therefore be to stave off the coming humanitarian catastrophe and save as many lives as possible. Yet it has rapidly become clear that bringing this raging pandemic under control will require much more than government officials “nudging” citizens toward behavioral changes. This strategy, which effectively seeks to privatize the costs of the crisis by placing the full burden of adjustment on individuals, is the ultimate market-conforming approach. As the dithering of several Western governments over the past weeks has amply demonstrated, a public campaign for handwashing, elbow-sneezing, and voluntary social distancing simply will not be enough to stem the rising rate of infections.

According to the World Health Organization, suppressing the pandemic will require radical state action, from enforced lockdowns and quarantines to far-reaching public health interventions. The latter will need to include not only a rapid upscaling of hospital capacity and a herculean effort to produce ventilators, protective gear, and other medical supplies, but also an immediate and widespread government-led rollout of testing capacity, contact tracing, and supervised isolation of those who have been infected — not to mention the fast-tracked development of an effective vaccine. Such a state-led emergency response is clearly necessary, but it will force most Western governments to go far beyond the neoliberal remit they have long since established for themselves as the guarantors of “free enterprise.”

It is also clear that some of these public health interventions will come at an immense cost. This in turn highlights the second dimension of the current crisis: the economic one. As the virus continues its rapid spread, advanced capitalist democracies suddenly find themselves in the extraordinary position of having to defy business interests and effectively shut down all nonessential workplaces to enable their working populations to stay at home. Of course, employers are actively challenging the “necessity” of such radical measures — yet public health experts are adamant that a failure to institute them would rapidly overwhelm hospital capacity.

Economic Collapse

At present, we are yet to apprehend what the consequences of such a sudden stop in productive and commercial activity will be. All we know is that the economic fallout will be immense — far worse than anything we have ever seen outside of a major war — and that it could potentially pose an existential threat to the heavily indebted world economy and the global financial system as we know it. As the billionaire hedge fund manager Bill Ackman recently put it to CNBC, “capitalism does not work in an 18-month shutdown.”

Ever keen to prop up the established order, Western governments and central banks have therefore moved aggressively to respond to this second aspect of the crisis. Even as they hesitated to safeguard the health of the general public, they moved swiftly to preserve the health of the markets. In the space of just weeks, officials have already pledged a number of record-shattering rescue packages to prevent a system-wide meltdown, including a raft of groundbreaking new monetary interventions by the Federal Reserve and the $2tn fiscal stimulus program recently passed by the Senate.

#### Capitalism is the root cause of disease – it encourages industrial ag, loss of ecological diversity, and increased interaction with pathogens

Duzgun 4/5 [(Eren, teaches Historical Sociology and International Relations at Leiden University, Netherlands.) “Capitalism, Coronavirus and the Road to Extinction” The Bullet, 4/5/2020] BC

Contradictions on a Global Scale

Critical biologists and epidemiologists have put the blame on industrial agriculture as the root cause of the emergence of new pathogens since the 1990s. According to Rob Wallace, giant agribusiness and resource extraction firms have now reached the last virgin forests and smallholder-held farmlands in the world, subordinating them to the logic of capitalist markets.

The loss of the ecological diversity and complexity of these huge tracts of land has increasingly forced wild food operators to hunt in previously untouched parts of the jungle, which, in turn, has increased “the interaction with, and spillover of, previously boxed-in pathogens, including Covid-19.” Likewise, global warming has forced or allowed pathogens to escape their natural habitat. As a result, new viruses against which we have no immunity “are being sprung free, threatening the whole world.” In short, as John Vidal writes, “we disrupt ecosystems, and we shake viruses loose from their natural hosts. When that happens, they need a new host. Often, we are it.”

That some agribusiness firms have been blatantly risking lives for profit would not come as a surprise to the critical reader. Even Bill Gates has been sounding the alarm about the potentially deadly consequences of irresponsible business practices and new viruses. Yet, what tends to remain underemphasized in these debates is that the blame belongs neither solely to ‘greedy’ firms that have driven viruses out of their natural habitat, nor to ‘short-sighted’ politicians who have not invested enough in vaccine technology or national health systems. Instead, the problem is rooted in the very structure and rationality of the system as a whole. That is, we may go extinct as a result of the ‘successes’ of the very system ‘we’ created in the first place, i.e., capitalism.

How did we end up losing control of an ‘economic’ system of our own making? This is indeed an anomaly in human history. The conception of the ‘economy’ as an autonomous sphere dictating its own rules over society did not exist in non-capitalist societies. As the economic anthropologist Karl Polanyi put it, “neither under tribal, nor feudal, nor mercantile conditions was there… a separate economic system in society.” The economy either “remained nameless” or had “no obvious meaning,” for the economic process and prices were instituted through non-market means, such as kinship, marriage, age-groups, status, political patronage, etc. Even “where markets were most highly developed, as under the mercantile system,” the economic system, as a rule, “was absorbed in the social system” and showed “no tendency to expand at the expense of the rest.”

In this sense, the market with a distinctive logic, autonomy, and dynamic of its own was completely unknown to our ancestors, and indeed, the emergence of the idea of ‘self-regulating’ markets represented a complete reversal of the way in which past economies functioned.

In order for ‘self-regulating’ markets to ‘self-regulate’, a variety of political and institutional arrangements had to be initiated to progressively eliminate the non-market survival strategies that humans previously relied upon. Most notably, the age-old communal systems of social and moral regulation needed to be eradicated, a process that systematically subordinated the ‘natural and human substance of society’, i.e., land and labour, to market relations for the first time in history.

Rise of Capitalism

At the heart of the rise of capitalism, therefore, rested a ‘political’, legal, and violent process that led to the historically unprecedented characterization of land and labour as commodities. Without commodifying land and labour, i.e., without treating the planet’s living substance as commodities, it would have been impossible to view the ‘economy’ as an institutionally and motivationally self-regulating sphere of life, an almost robotic creature functioning at the expense of human lives and livelihoods.

Capitalism presupposed from the very beginning a radical transformation in the human use of nature as well as in the provision of life’s essential requirements. In this sense, the danger of global extinction which we have been going through is not a temporary hiccup in an otherwise smoothly operating capitalist ecosystem but has always been a possibility built into the very structure of market society.

On the one hand, by treating land and labour as commodities, by subjecting people’s utilization of land and enjoyment of life to their ability to continuously increase market competitiveness and productivity, capitalism has enabled massive technological advancements in all spheres of life. This, in turn, has generated, above all, an unprecedented potential to feed, clothe, and accommodate an ever-increasing world population.

On the other hand, however, as Ellen Wood argues, by subordinating all other considerations to the imperatives of market competition, capitalism has also created poverty, homelessness, environmental destruction and pandemics. Billions of people who could be fed and housed are subjected to immense doses of insecurity, living their lives under the constant threat of joblessness, homelessness, loss of status and starvation. In a similar fashion, the environment that could be protected is systematically destroyed for profit, and killer viruses that could be contained are unleashed.

Undoubtedly, Covid-19 has become the archetypal example that lays bare “the destructive impulses of a system in which the very fundamentals of existence are subjected to the requirements of profit.”

Can the ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ outcomes of capitalism be somewhat reconciled? Indeed, for a brief period in the Global North, it seemed they could be. During the so-called Golden Age of Capitalism (1945-70), massive productivity increases (alongside working-class struggles) allowed for steady increases in wages, job security, expansion of welfare state, improvements in the living conditions of the majority of the labouring masses as well as the expansion of civil and political liberties.

Yet, this brief period of generalized prosperity and stability also facilitated the incorporation of the western working classes into the dominant capitalist ideology, causing them to turn a blind eye to the economically destabilizing, environmentally destructive, and socially degrading impact of global capitalism in the Global South.

The main ‘problem’ with the Global South has been, by and large, a question of ‘timing’. Once capitalism was established and consolidated in the Global North, it has not only led to the birth of new and more effective forms of imperialist control and neocolonial expansion but has also irrevocably undermined the potentially positive outcomes of capitalist development elsewhere.

For example, the MIT political economist Alice Amsden, a large chunk of whose work in the 1970s and 1980s sought to explain the success of the ‘Asian Tigers’, more recently concluded that the massive technological and infrastructural gap between the North and the South has literally made impossible capitalist ‘development’ of any sort in the vast majority of southern economies since the 1990s. The economic situation in the Global North has gotten progressively worse too. Under the conditions of increased global economic competition wages have been stagnating or declining since the 1970s, while decades of fiscal austerity wiping out most of the economic and social gains of the earlier period. The new reality of high unemployment, stagnant wages, long work hours and precarious jobs has been masked for a while by a debt-driven growth, the unsustainability of which has been bitterly testified by millions of people since the 2008 financial crisis.

All in all, market imperatives have been regulating social reproduction almost worldwide for a long time but with no prospect of capitalist ‘development’ for an overwhelming majority of the world’s population in the South and the North alike. Furthermore, the ecologically disastrous and socially inhumane consequences of capitalism have long outweighed the prospects of material gain in the Global South. In this respect, what is being painfully realized in the current conjuncture is that the North is no longer able to externalize the worst consequences of such an unsustainable mode of life. The North isn’t and won’t be spared the existential threats posed by global capitalism.

The implication is that any meaningful attempt at solving the present, and future crises needs to take the bull by the horn. There is literally no choice to be made between ‘capitalism’ and ‘capitalism with a human face’. As long as the underlying dynamics of our lives remain the same, as long as we keep treating nature and human beings as commodities, no cosmetic surgery will do.

To the contrary, historical experience suggests that such minimal interventions will sooner or later backfire, re-legitimizing capitalism pure and simple. The only way to ‘re-embed’ our economies and save our lives from ecological collapse is by intervening in the very heart of the beast: land and human beings need to be taken out of the market. The beast is not tameable; it needs to be killed. •

#### Diseases cause extinction – they’ll start in the U.S., which avoids burnout

Bar-Yam, 16 - SB and PhD in physics from MIT, president of the New England Complex Systems Institute (Yaneer Bar-Yam, "Transition to extinction: Pandemics in a connected world," *Medium*, 7-3-2016, https://medium.com/complex-systems-channel/transition-to-extinction-pandemics-in-a-connected-world-153867fe98f4#.2bxv2alfc)

When we introduce long range transportation into the model, the success of more aggressive strains changes. They can use the long range transportation to find new hosts and escape local extinction. Figure 3 shows that the more transportation routes introduced into the model, the more higher aggressive pathogens are able to survive and spread.

As we add more long range transportation, there is a critical point at which pathogens become so aggressive that the entire host population dies. The pathogens die at the same time, but that is not exactly a consolation to the hosts. We call this the phase transition to extinction (Figure 4). With increasing levels of global transportation, human civilization may be approaching such a critical threshold.

In the paper we wrote in 2006 about the dangers of global transportation for pathogen evolution and pandemics [8], we mentioned the risk from Ebola. Ebola is a horrendous disease that was present only in isolated villages in Africa. It was far away from the rest of the world only because of that isolation. Since Africa was developing, it was only a matter of time before it reached population centers and airports. While the model is about evolution, it is really about which pathogens will be found in a system that is highly connected, and Ebola can spread in a highly connected world.

The traditional approach to public health uses historical evidence analyzed statistically to assess the potential impacts of a disease. As a result, many were surprised by the spread of Ebola through West Africa in 2014. As the connectivity of the world increases, past experience is not a good guide to future events.

A key point about the phase transition to extinction is its suddenness. Even a system that seems stable, can be destabilized by a few more long-range connections, and connectivity is continuing to increase.

So how close are we to the tipping point? We don’t know but it would be good to find out before it happens.

While Ebola ravaged three countries in West Africa, it only resulted in a handful of cases outside that region. One possible reason is that many of the airlines that fly to west Africa stopped or reduced flights during the epidemic [9]. In the absence of a clear connection, public health authorities who downplayed the dangers of the epidemic spreading to the West might seem to be vindicated.

As with the choice of airlines to stop flying to west Africa, our analysis didn’t take into consideration how people respond to epidemics. It does tell us what the outcome will be unless we respond fast enough and well enough to stop the spread of future diseases, which may not be the same as the ones we saw in the past. As the world becomes more connected, the dangers increase.

Are people in western countries safe because of higher quality health systems? Countries like the U.S. have highly skewed networks of social interactions with some very highly connected individuals that can be “superspreaders.” The chances of such an individual becoming infected may be low but events like a mass outbreak pose a much greater risk if they do happen. If a sick food service worker in an airport infects 100 passengers, or a contagion event happens in mass transportation, an outbreak could very well prove unstoppable.

Watch this mock video of a pathogen spreading globally through land and air transportation. Long range transportation will continue to pose a threat of pandemic if its impacts cannot be contained.