# 1NC

## 1

### OFF

#### Interpretation: Just governments must be a full or flawed democracy as pertained by the 2020 democracy index. China doesn’t qualify, ss and link below.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy\_Index

#### Just gov is a democracy – prefer because its from a legal dictionary

**The Free Dictionary**, "Declaration of Independence," TheFreeDictionary, <https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Declaration+of+Independence> //SR

Scholars have long debated the relative importance of the different sources Jefferson used for his ideas in the Declaration. Most agree that the natural rights philosophy of English philosopher John Locke greatly influenced Jefferson's composition of the Declaration. In particular, Locke advanced the ideas that a just government derives its legitimacy and power from the consent of the governed, that people possess inalienable rights that no legitimate government may take away, and that the people have the right and duty to overthrow a government that violates their rights. Jefferson also paralleled Locke in his identification of three major rights—the rights to "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness"—though the last of his three is a change from Locke's right to "property."

#### China violates - check screenshots its an authoritarian regime

**Table

Description automatically generated**

#### Vote neg for limits and ground - they can literally pick any government not grounded in the resolution making it impossible for us to predict and arbitrarily prepare specific political scenarios that we can never possibly expect. Especially true for authoritarian governments who have a lot worse conditions than democracies which means uniqueness will ALWAYS flip aff and their affs are objectively more likely to be true and unturnable. Our interp solves - just pick a full or flawed democracy which is still 75 different affs. C/a the ! to limits and precision

#### Fairness is a voter because all arguments concede the validity of evaluation and you can’t tell who won if it’s unfairly evaluated

#### Education is a voter because it’s the only reason schools fund debate and it’s the most portable

#### Reject the team – (1) No argument to drop and (2) strongest internal link to better norms through deterrence

#### No RVI – (1) it’s illogical you don’t win for answering arguments (2) RVI don’t deter frivolous theory – there’s a reason people preempt RVI justifications which decks time anyways – frivolous theory is good because it establishes more critical thinking and we find better norms which impact turns substance education (3) People will bait out theory and be infinitely abusive just to win off of a prepped out counteirnterp

#### Competing interpretations – (1) Reasonability is arbitrary – impossible to know what is reasonable until you establish a brightline (2) Bites judge intervention – they have to gut check what they think is good (3) Collapses – you use offense/defense to evaluate offense under the brightline (4) Norms – you can sidestep norms by selectively choosing a different brightline you meet every round.

## 2

### OFF

#### Interpretation – topical affirmatives defend the resolution as a general principle. To clarify, a general principle necessitates that you defend that the plan is a good idea in the abstract and don’t defend implementation and PICs don’t negate.

#### Violation – they read enforcement

#### Negate –

#### (1) Jurisdiction – it’s NSDA rules

**NSDA 21** [2021-22 Lincoln-Douglas Ballot, https://www.speechanddebate.org/wp-content/uploads/Sample-Lincoln-Douglas-Debate-Ballot-Blank.pdf // JB]

Each **debater** has the burden to **prove** their **side** of the resolution **more valid** as a **general principle**. It is **unrealistic** to expect a debater to prove **complete validity or invalidity** of the resolution. The **better debater** is the one who, on the whole, proves their side of the resolution **more valid** as a general principle.

#### Outweighs – It’s literally on the LD ballot which means whenever a judge submits the ballot it’s what they contractually abide by – operating outside of the rules would forfeit the judge’s ability to submit a decision – that flips reasonability because rules are most predictable because they’re procedures to debating.

#### (2) Fairness – it prevents abusive PICs out of certain parts of the plan that are abusive because it steals aff ground by isolating a hyperspecific DA to the plan – solves topic education to read it as a DA and has the net benefit of critical thinking because you need to win the DA actually outweighs the plan

#### (3) Phil education – it encourages philosophical analysis and prevents messy enforcement and process debates where you just focus on the post-fiat implications – we’ll impact turn policy debate a) it’s nonunique through forums of CX and PF b) philosophical policy is better because you can find the best possible idea, not the most common c) phil education outweighs because it’s unique to LD and controls the internal link to other education through philosophical justification

## 3

### Framework

#### The meta ethic is practical reason-

#### [1] Ethics must be derived a priori – moral truths exist independently of the empirical world. Prefer –

#### A] Uncertainty – our experiences are inaccessible to others which allows people to say they don’t experience the same, however a priori principles are universally applied to all agents which makes it action guiding

#### B] Naturalistic fallacy – experience only tells us what is since we can only perceive what is, not what ought to be, this means experience may be generally useful but should not be the basis for ethical action.

C] Induction – it’s own method

#### [2] Practical Reason is that procedure. To ask for why we should be reasoners concedes its authority since it uses reason – anything else is escapable and non-actionguiding which is the problem of regress. Aggregation is nonsensical since a] it impedes on one persons ends for another and b] assumes everyone values the same thing.

#### [3] Moral law must be universal—our judgements can’t only apply to ourselves any more than 2+2=4 can be true only for me – any non-universalizable norm justifies someone’s ability to impede on your ends.

Korsgaard ’83 (Christine M., “Two Distinctions in Goodness,” The Philosophical Review Vol. 92, No. 2 (Apr., 1983), pp. 169-195, JSTOR) // LEX JB [brackets for gendered language]

The argument shows how Kant's idea of justification works. It can be read as a kind of regress upon the conditions, starting from an important assumption. The assumption is that **when a rational being makes a choice or undertakes an action, [they] supposes the object to be good, and its pursuit to be justified**. At least, if there is a categorical imperative there must be objectively good ends, for then there are necessary actions and so necessary ends (G 45-46/427-428 and Doctrine of Virtue 43-44/384-385). **In order for there to be any objectively good ends, however, there must be something that is unconditionally good and so can serve as a sufficient condition of their goodness**. Kant considers what this might be**: it cannot be an object of inclination**, for those have only a conditional worth, "**for if the inclinations and the needs founded on them did not exist, their object would be without worth**" (G 46/428). It cannot be the inclinations themselves because a rational being would rather be free from them. Nor can it be external things, which serve only as means. So, Kant asserts, **the unconditionally valuable thing must be "humanity"** or "rational nature," which he defines as "the power set to an end" (G 56/437 and DV 51/392). Kant explains that **regarding your existence as a rational being as an end in itself is a "subjective principle of human action."** By this I understand him to mean that **we must regard ourselves as capable of** conferring **value upon the objects of our choice, the ends that we set, because we must regard our ends as good**. But since "every other rational being thinks of his existence by the same rational ground which holds also for myself' (G 47/429), **we must regard others as capable of conferring value by reason of their rational choices and so also as ends in themselves**. Treating another as an end in itself thus involves making that person's ends as far as possible your own (G 49/430). The ends that are chosen by any rational being, possessed of the humanity or rational nature that is fully realized in a good will, take on the status of objective goods. They are not intrinsically valuable, but they are objectively valuable in the sense that every rational being has a reason to promote or realize t hem. For this reason it is our duty to promote the happiness of others-the ends that they choose-and, in general, to make the highest good our end.

#### Thus the standard is consistency with the categorical imperative. To clarify, consequences don’t link to the framework.

#### Prefer additionally –

#### [1] Kantian theory has the best tools for fighting oppression through combatting ethical egoism and abstraction

Farr 02 [Arnold (prof of phil @ UKentucky, focusing on German idealism, philosophy of race, postmodernism, psychoanalysis, and liberation philosophy). “Can a Philosophy of Race Afford to Abandon the Kantian Categorical Imperative?” JOURNAL of SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY, Vol. 33 No. 1, Spring 2002, 17–32 // LEX JB]

**One of the most popular criticisms of Kant’s** moral philosophy is that it is too formalistic.13 That is, the universal nature of the categorical imperative leaves it devoid of content. Such a principle is useless since moral decisions are made by concrete individuals in a concrete, historical, and social situation. This type of criticism lies behind Lewis Gordon’s rejection of any attempt to ground an antiracist position on Kantian principles. The rejection of universal principles for the sake of emphasizing the historical embeddedness of the human agent is widespread in recent philosophy and social theory. I will argue here on Kantian grounds that although a distinction between the **universal and the concrete is a valid distinction, the unity of the two is required** for an understanding of human agency. The attack on Kantian formalism began with Hegel’s criticism of the Kantian philosophy.14 The list of contemporary theorists who follow Hegel’s line of criticism is far too long to deal with in the scope of this paper. Although these theorists may approach the problem of Kantian formalism from a variety of angles, the spirit of their criticism is basically the same: The universality of the categorical imperative is an abstraction from one’s empirical conditions. Kant is often accused of making the moral agent an abstract, empty, noumenal subject. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Kantian subject is an embodied, empirical, concrete subject. However, this concrete subject has a dual nature. Kant claims in the Critique of Pure Reason as well as in the Grounding that human beings have an intelligible and empirical character.15 It is impossible to understand and do justice to Kant’s moral theory without taking seriously the relation between these two characters. The very concept of morality is impossible without the tension between the two. By “empirical character” Kant simply means that we have a sensual nature. We are physical creatures with physical drives or desires. The very fact that **I cannot simply satisfy my desires without considering the rightness or wrongness of my actions suggests that my empirical character must be held in check** by something, or else I behave like a Freudian id. My empiri- cal character must be held in check by my intelligible character, which is the legislative activity of practical reason. **It is through our intelligible character that we formulate principles that keep our empirical impulses in check. The categorical imperative is the supreme principle of morality that is constructed by the moral agent in his/her moment of self-transcendence.** What I have called self-transcendence may be best explained in the following passage by Onora O’Neill: In restricting our maxims to those that meet the test of the categorical imperative we refuse to base our lives on maxims that necessarily make our own case an exception. The reason why a universilizability criterion is morally signiﬁcant is that it makes our own case no special exception (G, IV, 404). In accepting the Categorical Imperative we accept the moral reality of other selves, and hence the possibility (not, note, the reality) of a moral community. **The Formula of Universal Law enjoins no more than that we act only on maxims that are open to others also**.16 O’Neill’s description of the universalizability criterion includes the notion of self-transcendence that I am working to explicate here to the extent that like self-transcendence, universalizable moral principles require that the individ- ual think beyond his or her own particular desires. **The individual is not allowed to exclude others as rational moral agents who have the right to act as he acts in a given situation.** For example, if I decide to use another person merely as a means for my own end I must recognize the other person’s right to do the same to me. I cannot consistently will that I use another as a means only and will that I not be used in the same manner by another. Hence, the universalizability criterion is a principle of consistency and a principle of inclusion. That is, in choosing my maxims I attempt to include the perspective of other moral agents. … Whereas most criticisms are aimed at the formulation of universal law and the formula of autonomy, our analysis here will focus on the formula of an end in itself and the formula of the kingdom of ends, since we have already addressed the problem of universality. The latter will be discussed ﬁrst. At issue here is what Kant means by “kingdom of ends.” Kant writes: “By ‘kingdom’ I understand a systematic union of different rational beings through common laws.”32 The above passage indicates that Kant recognizes different, perhaps different kinds, of rational beings; however, the problem for most critics of Kant lies in the assumption that Kant suggests that the “kingdom of ends” requires that we abstract from personal differences and content of private ends. The Kantian conception of rational beings requires such an abstraction. Some feminists and philosophers of race have found this abstract notion of rational beings problematic because they take it to mean that rationality is necessarily white, male, and European.33 Hence, the systematic union of rational beings can mean only the systematic union of white, European males. I ﬁnd this interpretation of Kant’s moral theory quite puzzling. Surely another interpretation is available. That is, the implication that in Kant’s philosophy, rationality can only apply to white, European males does not seem to be the only alternative. The problem seems to lie in the requirement of abstraction. There are two ways of looking at the abstraction requirement that I think are faithful to Kant’s text and that overcome the criticisms of this requirement. **First, the abstraction requirement may be best understood as a demand for intersubjectivity or recognition. Second, it may be understood as an attempt to avoid ethical egoism in determining maxims for our actions.** It is unfortunate that Kant never worked out a theory of intersubjectivity, as did his successors Fichte and Hegel. However, this is not to say that there is not in Kant’s philosophy a tacit theory of intersubjectivity or recognition. The abstraction requirement simply demands that in the midst of our concrete differences we recognize ourselves in the other and the other in ourselves. That is, we recognize in others the humanity that we have in common. Recognition of our common humanity is at the same time recognition of rationality in the other. We recognize in the other the capacity for selfdetermination and the capacity to legislate for a kingdom of ends. This brings us to the second interpretation of the abstraction requirement. **To avoid ethical egoism one must abstract from (think beyond) one’s own personal interest and subjective maxims. That is, the categorical imperative requires that I recognize that I am a member of the realm of rational beings.** Hence, I organize my maxims in consideration of other rational beings. Under such a principle other people cannot be treated merely as a means for my end but must be treated as ends in themselves. **The merit of the categorical imperative for a philosophy of race is that it contravenes racist ideology to the extent that racist ideology is based on the use of persons of a different race as a means to an end rather than as ends in themselves.** Embedded in the formulation of an end in itself and the formula of the kingdom of ends is the recognition of the common hope for humanity. That is, maxims ought to be chosen on the basis of an ideal, a hope for the amelioration of humanity. This ideal or ethical commonwealth (as Kant calls it in the Religion) is the kingdom of ends.34 Although the merits of Kant’s moral theory may be recognizable at this point, we are still in a bit of a bind. It still seems problematic that the moral theory of a racist is essentially an antiracist theory. Further, what shall we do with Henry Louis Gates’s suggestion that we use the Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime to deconstruct the Grounding? What I have tried to suggest is that instead of abandoning the categorical imperative we should attempt to deepen our understanding of it and its place in Kant’s critical philosophy. A deeper reading of the Grounding and Kant’s philosophy in general may produce the deconstruction35 suggested by Gates. However, a text is not necessarily deconstructed by reading it against another. Texts often deconstruct themselves if read properly. To be sure, the best way to understand a text is to read it in context. Hence, if the Grounding is read within the context of the critical philosophy, the tools for a deconstruction of the text are provided by its context and the tensions within the text. Gates is right to suggest that the Grounding must be deconstructed. However, this deconstruction requires much more than reading the Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime against the Grounding. It requires a complete engagement with the critical philosophy. Such an engagement discloses some of Kant’s very signiﬁcant claims about humanity and the practical role of reason. With this disclosure, deconstruction of the Grounding can begin. **What deconstruction will reveal is not necessarily the inconsistency of Kant’s moral philosophy or the racist or sexist nature of the categorical imperative, but rather, it will disclose the disunity between Kant’s theory and his own feelings about blacks and women. Although the theory is consistent and emancipatory and should apply to all persons, Kant the man has his own personal and moral problems. Although Kant’s attitude toward people of African descent was deplorable, it would be equally deplorable to reject the categorical imperative without ﬁrst exploring its emancipatory potential.**

#### [2] Analytical philosophy means anyone can generate offense under the framework with analytics without evidence – couple impacts

#### a) Accessibility – util disproportionately favors evidence-based debate which is what big schools with coaching staffs have which kills small school engagement

#### b) Ground – it ensures that there’s always offense on both sides whereas util might skew against an uninherent aff because of what countries do

#### c) Critical thinking – ensures that you engage and contest offense instead of running to cards for argumentation

### Offense

#### [1] The process of strike uses patients or beneficiaries of work as a means to an end

**Howard 20** [Danielle Howard,, Mar 2020, "What Should Physicians Consider Prior to Unionizing?," Journal of Ethics | American Medical Association, [https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/article/what-should-physicians-consider-prior-unionizing/2020-03 //](https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/article/what-should-physicians-consider-prior-unionizing/2020-03%20//) LEX JB]

* Written in the context of doctors, warrant can be used for all jobs

**The** possible **disadvantage to** patients highlights the crux **of** the moral issue of physician **strikes. In** Immanuel **Kant’s** *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, one formulation of **the categorical imperative is to “Act in such a way as to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of anyone else, always as an end and never merely as a means**.”24 **When patient care is leveraged** by physicians during strikes, **patients serve as a means to the union’s ends**. Unless physicians act to improve *everyone’s*care, union action—if **it jeopardizes** the **care of some hospitalized patients**, for example—cannot be ethical. It is for this reason that, in the case of **physicians looking to form a new union**, the argument can be made that unionization should be used only as a last resort. Physician union **members must be prepared to utilize collective action and accept its risks to patient care, but every effort should be made to avoid actions that risk harm to patients.**

#### [2] Going on strike isn’t universalizable – a) if everyone leaves work then there will be no concept of a job b) everyone means the employer even leaves which is a contradiction in contraception

#### [3] No aff offense – no unique obligation of the state to give ability to strike – if a workplace is coercive you can use legal means or just find another job – it’s also promise breaking because you signed up for the job

#### [4] Neg contention choice – otherwise they can concede all of our work on framework and just read 4 minutes of turns which moots the four minutes of framework debate that the 1NC did giving them a massive advantage. It also kills phil education since it allows them to escape the framework lbl which outweighs since phil ed is unique to LD.

## Case

### UV

#### 1NC theory first - 1] Abuse was self-inflicted- They started the chain of abuse and forced me down this strategy 2] Norming- We have more speeches to norm over whether it’s a good idea since the shell was read earlier. Norming outweighs A] Constutivism- It’s the constitutive purpose of theory debating B] Sequencing- it’s a pre-requisite to actualizing any other voter like fairness or education 3] It was introduced first so it comes lexically prior 4] All the reasons why 1AR theory is skewed towards the aff should be evaluated as a reason why 1NC theory comes first

#### Neg abuse outweighs Aff abuse – 1] Infinite prep time before round to frontline 2] 2AR judge psychology and 1st and last speech 3] Infinite perms and uplayering in the 1AR.

#### Reasonability on 1AR shells – 1AR theory is very aff-biased because the 2AR gets to line-by-line every 2NR standard with new answers that never get responded to– reasonability checks 2AR sandbagging by preventing really abusive 1NCs while still giving the 2N a chance.

#### DTA on 1AR shells - They can blow up a blippy 20 second shell to 3 min of the 2AR while I have to split my time and can’t preempt 2AR spin which necessitates judge intervention and means 1AR theory is irresolvable so you shouldn’t stake the round on it.

#### RVIs on 1AR theory – 1AR being able to spend 20 seconds on a shell and still win forces the 2N to allocate at least 2:30 on the shell which means RVIs check back time skew – ows on quantifiability

### FW

### Adv

#### Top-Level—tons of alt causes to Chinese econ which they haven’t established UQ for—at worst, all of the inherency evidence prove the plan is politically unpopular and gets easily circumvented.

#### Economic growth doesn’t translate to soft power—but independently, there’s no impact to it—China has zero international credibility .1AC Albert 18

Eleanor Albert 2-9-2018 "China’s Big Bet on Soft Power" <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/chinas-big-bet-soft-power> (a third-year PhD student concentrating in international relations and comparative politics)//Elmer Recut Aanya \* Note- graphs ommitted but raw data has been retained.

Is its soft power effective? Soft power by nature is difficult to measure. In the case of the ambitious BRI, China’s neighbors and partners have so far responded by taking a cautious approach [PDF]. Many business and government leaders view BRI as an economic opportunity to stimulate growth across Asia and beyond; the continent’s infrastructure needs are expected to exceed $1.5 trillion a year to sustain development through 2030, according to a 2017 Asian Development Bank report. Economic wellbeing is a powerful incentive for countries desperate for development, but Chinese financing and construction does not translate directly into Beijing’s ability to exert influence in recipient countries. For example, local communities in South and Southeast Asian countries like Myanmar and Sri Lanka have expressed resentment toward China’s growing presence; even in Pakistan where the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor has been broadly endorsed, some lawmakers fear that such projects may jeopardize national interests. In spite of the risks, regional actors are often induced by short-term economic benefits needed to fuel growth, though they remain guarded about bending to Beijing’s strategic preferences. While there are few quantifiable metrics to gauge influence, experts often refer to public opinion polls that assess global perceptions of China. By these benchmarks, China’s efforts seem to have had little effect in boosting its favorability. Percent favorable view China’s Favorability Argentina Egypt Germany Indonesia Japan Kenya Pakistan Russia United States 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 0 25 50 75 100 Respondents answered whether they held a favorable or unfavorable view of China. Pew Research Center Share In Africa, opinion poll respondents typically hold more favorable views of China than in other parts of the world, according to surveys conducted by Pew Research Center and Afrobarometer [PDF], a Pan-African research network. Countries like Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, and Niger have some of the highest views of China’s influence, often ranging above 75 percent. In Latin and South American nations, the majority of respondents often view China favorably, but the margins are less substantial. For example, Chile and Peru held positive views with 66 percent and 60 percent of respondents seeing China favorably in 2015, while Argentine and Mexican respondents stood at 53 percent and 47 percent, respectively. Countries that have held highly positive views of China over time include Pakistan and Russia. Other neighbors hold more varied perceptions. On average, 64 percent of Indonesian respondents viewed China favorably between 2005 and 2015. Over the same period, opinions of China in Japan dropped significantly. In western democratic countries like Germany and the United States, a clear trend has emerged: despite the government’s efforts, favorable opinions of China have declined since 2011. What are the limitations of China’s soft power? China’s soaring economy has elevated the country as a model to be emulated, but there are multiple strains that threaten to undermine its image. Environmental pollution and degradation, food safety issues, overcapacity of state-owned enterprises, and Xi’s exhaustive anticorruption campaign are likely to dissuade others from following China’s example. China will find it hard to win friends and influence nations so long as it muzzles its best advocates. The Economist China’s soft power campaign is limited by the dissonance between the image that China aspires to project and the country’s actions, experts say. Rising nationalism, assertiveness vis-à-vis territorial disputes, crackdowns on nongovernmental organizations, censorship of domestic and international media, limits to the entry of foreign ideals, and political repression constrain China’s soft power. “If China’s narratives don’t address the country’s shortcomings, it becomes very hard to sell the idea of China as a purveyor of attractive values,” says CFR Senior Fellow Elizabeth C. Economy. Chinese culture and ideas have the potential to appeal worldwide, but only when there is “honesty in the depiction,” Economy adds. Moreover, other experts have warned of the rise of authoritarian influence, dubbed “sharp power.” Authors of a 2017 report from the National Endowment for Democracy described the concept as “principally not about attraction or even persuasion; instead, it centers on distraction and manipulation.” Reports of entrenched Chinese influence in Australian and New Zealand politics, as well as attempts to pierce German business and political circles, triggered alarms across Western democracies in late 2017. Ultimately, China’s tightening authoritarian political system is the biggest obstacle to the positive image the country and government yearn for. “So long as [China’s] political system denies, rather than enables, free human development, its propaganda efforts will face an uphill battle,” wrote David Shambaugh in Foreign Affairs in 2015. Without the free exchange of ideas and the ability of Chinese citizens to engage in open debate, the gap between the government’s portrayal and China’s reality will likely grow. “China will find it hard to win friends and influence nations so long as it muzzles its best advocates,” writes the Economist.

#### No war from economic collapse – this card answers their internal warrants

**Walt 20** Stephen M. Walt,MAY 13, 2020, "Will a Global Depression Trigger Another World War?," Foreign Policy, [https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/13/coronavirus-pandemic-depression-economy-world-war //](https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/13/coronavirus-pandemic-depression-economy-world-war%20//) LEX JB

But war could still be much less likely. The **Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Barry Posen** has [already considered](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2020-04-23/do-pandemics-promote-peace) the likely impact of the current pandemic on the probability of war, and he believes **COVID-19 is more likely to promote peace instead**. He argues that **the** current **pandemic is affecting** all the **major powers adversely**, which means it isn’t creating tempting windows of opportunity for unaffected states while leaving others weaker and therefore vulnerable. Instead, it is making all governments more pessimistic about their short- to medium-term prospects. Because **states** often **go to war out of** sense of **overconfidence** (however misplaced it sometimes turns out to be), pandemic-induced pessimism should be conducive to peace. Moreover, by its very nature **war requires** states to **assemble lots of people in close proximity—at training camps, military bases, mobilization areas, ships at sea, etc.—and that’s not something you want to do in the middle of a pandemic**. For the moment at least, beleaguered **governments** of all types **are focusing on** convincing their citizens they are doing everything in their **power to protect the public from the disease**. Taken together, **these** considerations might **explain why** even an impulsive and headstrong warmaker like **Saudi Arabia’s Mohammed bin Salman has gotten more interested in**[**winding down his brutal and unsuccessful military campaign in Yemen**](https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/04/09/coronavirus-pandemic-peace-talks-yemen-houthi-saudi-arabia/). **Now is hardly the time for** Russia to try to grab more of Ukraine—if it even wanted to—or for **China to make a play for Taiwan, because the costs** of doing so **would clearly outweigh the economic benefits**. Even conquering an oil-rich country—the sort of greedy acquisitiveness that [Trump occasionally hints at](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/11/05/trump-keeps-talking-about-keeping-middle-east-oil-that-would-be-illegal/)—doesn’t look attractive when there’s a vast glut on the market. I might be worried if some weak and defenseless country somehow came to possess the entire global stock of a successful coronavirus vaccine, but **that scenario is not even remotely possible.** The bottom line: **Economic conditions** (i.e., a depression) may affect the broader political environment in which decisions for war or peace are made, but they are only one factor among many and rarely the most significant. **Even if** the **COVID-19** pandemic **has** large, lasting, and **negative effects on the world economy**—as seems quite likely—**it is not likely to affect the probability of war very much**, especially in the short term.