## 1NC – Off

### 1NC – 1

#### Interpretation – “A” in the resolution indicates that you must defend that all just governments recognize an unconditional right to strike.

#### An indefinite article like the word “a” is a universal quantifier if the main verb applies directly to it

Michael Hess. 1985. (Michael Hess is professor of Computational Linguistics and head of the Institute of Computational Linguistics. PhD at University of Zurch). “How Does Natural Language Quantify?”. <https://www.aclweb.org/anthology/E85-1002.pdf>. Bergen AK

The indefinite article seems, on the surface, to cause much less trouble than the definite article. Its interpretation as an existential quantifier always looked quite straightforward. However, it was noticed (Kamp 1981) that indefinite articles sometimes must be represented as universal quantifiers. Prominent among these cases are the so- called donkey sentences, exemplified by sentences 7 and 8. 7) If Pedro owns a donkey he is rich. 8) If Pedro owns a donkey he beats it. The traditional, and most natural, representation of 7 is 7a 7a) EXISTS X: (donkey(X) AND owns(pedro,X)) IMPLIES rich(pedro). where the top-most syntactic connector of the English sentence, i.e. the conjunction "if", corresponds to the top-most connector of the logical form, i.e. the implication. However, if we apply the same schema mechanically to example 8 it will produce the non-sentence 8a: 8a) EXISTS X: (donkey(X) AND owns(pedro,X)) IMPLIES beats(pedro, X). This is not a logical sentence because the variable "X" in the consequent is outside the scope of the existential quantifier and remains unbound. 8 must therefore be represented as 8b 8b) ALL X: ((donkey(X) AND owns(pedro,X)) IMPLIES beats(pedro, X)) where the indefinite article is now represented as a universal quantifier. Now we are in the most unsatisfactory situation that we have to represent two syntactically very similar surface sentences by two radically different logical sentences, and that the same noun phrase has to be mapped into an existential quantifier one time, into a universal quantifier another time. If we try to consistently represent indefinite articles as universal quantfflers we get 7b as representation for 7 7b) ALL X: ((donkey(X) AND owns(pedro,X)) IMPLIES rich(pedro)). which is indeed logically equivalent to 7a, but on purely formal grounds. The scope has been artificially extended to span over terms without any variables, which certainly runs very much against our intuition about the meaning of the original sentence. The conclusion cannot be avoided that even the seemingly innocuous indefinite article cannot be represented as a straightforward existential quantifier.

#### That applies to the rez – the obligation in the resolution applies directly to the just government, which makes “A” a universal quantifier. They specify Brazil – Vote aff:

#### 1] Limits – there’s 195 different governments that you could potentially specify, which explodes the number of affs – there’s no universal disad to every government since each has different political scenarios so we lose core neg ground like the business confidence DA or the Grids/Police PIC. Limits outweighs – it controls the internal link to the possibility of engagement which turns education.

#### 2] Precision – semantics outweighs pragmatics:

#### A] Anything else allows the aff to jettison words from the resolution to moot neg ground since they’re not bound by the resolution – they’ll say they’re good enough but there’s no brightline for that which justifies straying from the rez always.

#### B] Resolvability—it’s more resolvable to compare semantics because you’re just comparing two definitions, but pragmatics involves weighing between different impacts and how well they connect to voters, which is less resolvable because pragmatics is way more subjective. Resolvability matters because otherwise the judge must intervene to determine a winner which is the worst form of abuse since the debaters can’t control it.

#### C] Jurisdiction – tournament rules mandate that we must defend the resolution, which means the judge doesn’t have the jurisdiction to vote on an advocacy that’s not topical. Fairness is a voter—the judge must vote for the better debater which is impossible if the round is skewed.

#### TVA solves – say that governments should have a RtS and that it would be good for Chinese collective bargaining.

#### Drop the debater since drop the arg is severance – restarts the debate so the aff gets 7-6 time skew and too late for new neg offense.

#### Use competing interps—[a] leads to a race to the top where we find the best norms [b] reasonability is arbitrary and invites judge intervention [c] reasonability collapses—you use offense/defense on the paradigm debate.

#### No RVIs—[a] logic – you don’t win for being fair, [b] means you bait theory and go for the RVI

### 1NC – 2

#### Capitalism is a system engendering massive violence and inevitable extinction – the foundational task is to find a way out – the Role of the Ballot is to endorse the best organizational tactics.

Badiou ‘18

[Alain, former chair of philosophy at the Ecole Normale Superiure, professor of philosophy at The European Graduate School. Translated by David Broder. 07/30/2018. “The Neolithic, Capitalism, and Communism,” <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3948-the-neolithic-capitalism-and-communism>] pat

Today, it has become commonplace to predict the end of the human race such as we know it. There are various reasons for such forecasts. According to a messianic kind of environmentalism, the excessive predations of a beastly humanity will soon bring about the end of life on Earth. Meanwhile, those who instead point to runaway technological advances prophesy, indiscriminately, the automation of all work by robots, grand developments in computing, automatically-generated art, plastic-coated killers, and the dangers of a super-human intelligence.

Suddenly, we see the emergence of threatening categories like transhumanism and the post-human — or, their mirror image, a return to our animal state — depending on whether one prophesies on the basis of technological innovation or laments all the attacks on Mother Nature.

For me, all such prophesies are just so much ideological noise, intended to obscure the real peril that humanity is today exposed to: that is to say, the impasse that globalised capitalism is leading us into. In fact, it is this form of society — and it alone — which permits the destructive exploitation of natural resources, precisely because it connects this exploitation to the boundless quest for private profit. The fact that so many species are endangered, that climate change cannot be controlled, that water is becoming like some rare treasure, is all a by-product of the merciless competition among billionaire predators. There is no other reason for the fact that scientific innovation is subject to the question of what technologies can sell, in an anarchic selection mechanism.

Environmentalist preaching does sometimes use persuasive descriptions of what is going on — despite the exaggerations typical of the prophet. But most of the time this becomes mere propaganda, useful for those states who want to show their friendly face. Just as it is for the multinationals who would have us believe — to the greater benefit of their balance sheets — in the noble, fraternal, natural purity of the commodities they are trafficking.

The fetishism of technology, and the unbroken series of "revolutions" in this domain — of which the "digital revolution" is the most in vogue — has constantly spread the beliefs both that this will take us to the paradise of a world without work — with robots to serve us, and us left to idle — and then, on the other hand, that digital "thought" will crush the human intellect. Today there is not one magazine that does not inform its astonished readers of the imminent "victory" of artificial over natural intelligence. But in most cases neither "nature" nor the "artificial" are properly or clearly defined.

Since the origins of philosophy, the question of the real scope of the word "nature" has been constantly posed. "Nature" could mean the romantic reverie of evening sunsets, the atomic materialism of Lucretius (De natura rerum), the inner being of things, Spinoza’s Totality (Deus sive Natura), the objective underside of all culture, rural and peasant surroundings as counterposed to the suspicious artificiality of the towns ("the earth does not lie," as Marshal Pétain put it), biology as distinct from physics, cosmology as compared to the tiny location that is our planet, the invariance of centuries as compared to the frenzy of innovation, natural sexuality as compared to perversion… I am afraid that today "nature" most of all refers to the calm of the villa and the garden, the charm wild animals have for tourists, and the beach or the mountains where we can spend a nice summer. Who, then, can imagine man responsible for nature, when thus far he has just been a thinking flea on a secondary planet in an average solar system at the edge of one banal galaxy?

Since its origins philosophy has also devoted a great deal of thought to Technology, or the Arts. The Greeks meditated on the dialectic of Techne and Physis — a dialectic within which they situated the human animal. They laid the ground for this animal to be seen as "a reed, the weakest of nature, but … a thinking reed." For Pascal, this meant that humanity was stronger than Nature and closer to God. A long time ago, they saw that the animal capable of mathematics would do great things to the order of materiality.

Are these "robots" which they keep banging on about anything more than calculation in the form of a machine? Digits in motion? We know that they can count quicker than us, but it was we who invented them, precisely in order to fulfil this task. It would be stupid to look at a crane raising a concrete pillar up to some great height, use this to argue that man is incapable of the same feat, and then conclude by saying that some muscular, superhuman giant has emerged… Lightning-quick counting is not the sign of an insuperable "intelligence" either. Technological transhumanism plays the same old tune — an inexhaustible theme of horror and sci-fi movies — of the creator overwhelmed by his own creation. It does so either thrilled about the advent of the superman — something we have been expecting ever since Nietzsche — or fearing him and taking refuge under the skirt of Gaia, Mother Nature.

Let’s put things in a bit more perspective.

For four or five millennia, humanity has been organised by the triad of private property — which concentrates enormous wealth in the hands of very narrow oligarchies; the family, in which fortunes are transmitted via inheritance; and the state, which protects both property and the family by armed force. This triad defined our species’ Neolithic age, and we are still at this point — we could even say, now more than ever. Capitalism is the contemporary form of the Neolithic. Its enslavement of technology in the interests of competition, profit and concentrating capital only raises to their fullest extension the monstrous inequalities, the social absurdities, the murderous wars, and the damaging ideologies that have always accompanied the deployment of new technology under the reign of class hierarchy throughout history.

We should be clear that technological inventions were the preliminary conditions of the arrival of the Neolithic age, and by no means its result. If we consider our species’ fate, we see that sedentary agriculture, the domestication of cattle and horses, pottery, bronze, metallic weapons, writing, nationalities, monumental architecture, and the monotheist religions are inventions at least as important as the airplane or the smartphone. Throughout history, whatever has been human has always, by definition, been artificial. If that had not existed, there would not have been Neolithic humanity — the humanity we know — but a permanent close proximity with animal life; something which did indeed exist, in the form of small nomadic groups, for around 200,000 years.

A fearful and obscurantist primitivism has its roots in the fallacious concept of "primitive communism." Today we can see this cult of the ancient societies in which babies, men, women and the elderly supposedly lived in fraternity, without anything artificial, and indeed lived in common with the mice, the frogs, and the bears. Ultimately, all this is nothing but ridiculous reactionary propaganda. For everything suggests that the societies in question were extremely violent. After all, even their most basic survival needs were constantly under threat.

To speak fearfully of the victory of the artificial over the nature, of robot over man, is today an untenable regression, something truly absurd. It is easy enough to answer such fears, such prophesies. For judged by this standard, even a simple axe, or a domesticated horse, not to mention a papyrus covered in symbols, is an exemplary case of the post- or trans-human. Even an abacus allows quicker calculation than the fingers of the human hand.

Today we need neither a return to primitivism, or fear of the "ravages" the advent of technology might bring. Nor is there any use in morbid fascination for the science-fiction of all-conquering robots. The urgent task we face is the methodical search for a way out of the Neolithic order. This latter has lasted for millennia, valuing only competition and hierarchy and tolerating the poverty of billions of human beings. It must be surpassed at all cost. Except, that is, the cost of the high-tech wars so well known to the Neolithic age, in the lineage of the wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945, with their tens of millions of dead. And this time it could be a lot more.

The problem is not technology, or nature. The problem is how to organise societies at a global scale. We need to posit that a non-Neolithic way of organising society is possible. This means no private ownership of that which ought to be held in common, namely the production of all the necessities of human life. It means no inherited power or concentration of wealth. No separate state to protect oligarchies. No hierarchical division of labour. No nations, and no closed and hostile identities. A collective organisation of everything that is in the collective interest.

All this has a name, indeed a fine one: communism. Capitalism is but the final phase of the restrictions that the Neolithic form of society has imposed on human life. It is the final stage of the Neolithic. Humanity, that fine animal, must make one last push to break out of a condition in which 5,000 years of inventions served a handful of people. For almost two centuries — since Marx, anyway — we have known that we have to begin the new age. An age of technologies incredible for all of us, of tasks distributed equally among all of us, of the sharing of everything, and education that affirms the genius of all. May this new communism everywhere and on every question stand up against the morbid survival of capitalism. This capitalism, this seeming "modernity," represents a Neolithic world that has in fact been going on for five millennia. And that means that it is old — far too old.

#### History proves an effective right to strike is impossible in liberal capitalist society – courts will water it down and workers will be replaced – but its justification relies on the same tropes of property protection that will be used to delegitimize worker militancy.

White ‘18

[Ahmed, University of Colorado Law School. 2018. “Its Own Dubious Battle: The Impossible Defense of an Effective Right to Strike,” <https://scholar.law.colorado.edu/articles/1261/>] pat

Like every other aspect of Taft-Hartley, the 1947 amendments to the Wagner Act that directly touched on mass picketing and other forms of strike militancy were strongly supported by the business community, including prominent employers and business associations like the National Association of Manufactures, the American Iron and Steel Institute, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Promoted by these groups, witness after witness regaled the Congress with stories of how mass picketing, along with secondary boycotts and other militant tactics, gave unions too much power, eroded the power of owners and their supervisors, and threatened the American way. Time and again, senators and representatives expressed their support for new restrictions on the right to strike as mandates of a common faith, a commitment of the nation itself, to the principles of property and order. “They are a veritable pronouncement of contempt of law and order, private capitalism, and ownership of property, competition, and everything that even smacks of liberty,” said Ohio Representative Frederick Smith, speaking of NLRB positions that seemed to continence an expansive view of the right to strike. “He has been required to employ or reinstate individuals who have assaulted him and his employees and want only to destroy his property,” said New York Representative Ralph Gwinn, in defense of employers supposedly ravaged by such strikes. Under prevailing law, such employers endured “respectable robbery without liability,” Gwinn said.

We in America prize human individual liberty even above the state. We believe that property rights are natural to man. The best protection of those property rights and of that liberty is in the balancing of the rights of our workers and the rights of our businessmen so that the great majority of our citizens will enjoy that private property and that human liberty,

said Representative Charles Kersten of Wisconsin, condemning mass picketing of the sort that had recently featured at the Allis-Chalmers plants in his state. Consider, too, the remarks of Representative John Robsion of Kentucky:

There have been cases in this country where literally thousands of persons have picketed a plant and engaged in violence. In my honest opinion, labor nor management never did help its cause by engaging in lawlessness, violence, and the destruction of the property of others, and under this bill and the law the company cannot mistreat, browbeat and engage in violence and lawlessness against the workers.

Nor was it only conservatives who joined in this, as evidenced by remarks of Utah Senator Elbert Thomas, who had supported the New Deal and the work of the La Follette Committee, on which he had served, and who had joined with Robert La Follette Jr. in 1939 in sponsoring a pro-labor amendment to the Wagner Act. For a worker, he said,

to interpret his right to strike as being an absolute right, entitling him to quit work while the water is turned on in the plant, for leaving in a mine certain equipment in such a way as to result in costly destruction, would obviously be most improper. No person has a right to do such things. No one has a right to act against society. No one has a right to destroy it.

And so it went, the references to the inviolate values of property and order in defense of the legislation much too numerous to exhaustively cite. It is easy to dismiss these contentions, even from moderates like Thomas, as the contrived utterances of people who were singularly committed to advancing their narrow class and political interests. To some extent, they surely were that. But these views were hardly outside the mainstream of American politics, particularly among elites, broad swathes of the middle class, and important elements of the working class. Indeed, they comported very conveniently with commonplace views about the virtues of property and order and resonated with what much of the public believed at the time—this is what made them so resonant. And whether contrived or not, they performed an important function. By invoking the virtues of property and order in this way, these Congressmen and the witnesses before them who favored restricting mass picketing and other forms of coercive protest were conspicuously able to couch this position as something other than a malicious attack on the “legitimate” rights of labor. Instead, theirs was a mission to realign the labor law with fundamental American values, to save it from those who had allowed labor policies and the habits of union to stray beyond this field. In this way they were able to deflect, if not disprove, the all-too-apt contention by the legislation’s opponents, repeated many times in the process, that what Taft-Hartley was really about was elevating property rights over human rights.

Added proof that strike militancy was actually indefensible can be found in the fact that no scholars would justify it, not even mass picketing—at least not beyond the point at which it became coercive, which was of course the very point at which it was employed in an effective way. In the wake of the Memorial Day Massacre, most all the major papers sided with the police, declaring the strikers enemies of public order who brought the violence upon themselves. Initially, this stance was premised on distorted readings of the events of that day that charged the strikers with various acts of provocation. But even when the La Follette Committee publicized a Paramount Pictures newsreel (which the company had suppressed) and unearthed other evidence that proved that most all of the blame for what happened that day rested on the police, most of the papers still adhered to this reading of the events.

This attitude toward mass picketing was a centerpiece of revived interest in the right to strike in the major papers, one that extended from the mid 1930s into the 1940s and exceeded the surge in interest of the late 1910s and early 1920s. In 1941, for instance, the New York Herald Tribune described pending legislative attempts to limit mass picketing as “too thoroughly justified to require argument.” In 1946 the New York Times summoned up the rhetoric used to condemn the sitdown trikes and declared mass picketing a “seizure” that was “by its very nature illegal because it infringes both individual and property rights.” Conservative though he was, newspaperman David Lawrence, founder of U.S. News and World Report, spoke for many when he declared mass picketing an act of “violence” by which unionists were seeking to take the law into their own hands. In fact, Lawrence’s judgement that mass picketing was an affront to civil liberties aligned with that of the American Civil Liberties Union, long a champion of labor rights, which, as the New York Times was keen to note, also condemned the tactic in these terms.

Such views fit with a broader tendency to criticize the right to strike as being too aggressively employed by unionists and too generously construed by the courts and the NLRB. In the decade between the validation of the Wagner and the passage of Taft-Hartley, newspapers gave voice to a criticism of mass picketing and other erstwhile excessive forms of strike behavior, one that typically described the Wagner Act as having gone too far in protecting workers’ prerogatives to protest. A typical example of the content and tenor of these pieces is a 1941 editorial in the Chicago Daily Tribune:

“The right to strike” is now used frequently to mean the right of union leaders to force men who don’t want to strike to do so. It is used to justify the seizure of industries and the blockading of factories by mass picketing to prevent the entrance of workers who are satisfied with their working conditions and the movement of goods in and out of the plants. “The right to strike” in this sense means not only that every strike is right but that every measure which may be adopted to win a strike is right.

In fact, at this crucial moment it was common for elites of all stripes to claim that they supported the right to strike and yet to assert that it was being abused by unionists who insisted on winning every labor dispute and using coercive and disorderly methods to do so. In 1946, Hebert Hoover, who might well have denied just such a thing fifteen years earlier, inveighed that “Nobody denies that there is a ‘right’ to strike”; but that right, he said, had been abused to the detriment of the public interest. Although considerably more liberal than Hoover, Walter Lippmann, the extremely popular political commentator, offered a similar judgement about a railroad strike that same year, concluding “we must henceforth refuse to regard the right to strike as universal and absolute, and as one of the inalienable rights of man.” Also writing in 1946, Henry Ford II, whose father had used a small army of thugs and toughs to enforce the open shop at his plants and bitterly fought unionization until 1941, now purported at once to support the right to strike—and to believe that it should be limited. “There is no longer any question of the right of organized workers to strike, but that right,” he said, “is being misused.”

Like Taft-Hartley’s supporters in Congress, figures like Hoover, Lippmann, and Ford did not trouble themselves to confess that such tactics as they so blithely condemned might actually be necessary to counterbalance the power of employers and give life and meaning to a statute that did not take adequate account of this basic reality, let alone that they were essential in establishing the idea that workers enjoyed any enforceable right to strike. But they did not have to, either; for they honestly did not believe that labor should generally prevail. Liberal or conservative, it did not matter; these were capitalists in a capitalist society, contented, consistent with their values, with a right to strike that went little further than a right to withhold one’s labor. To be sure, these were not the views of ordinary people. But the public’s perspective did not seem to vary all that much from those of elites. Although overall approval of union membership as measured in Gallup surveys slipped noticeably after 1937, it remained quite high—well above fifty percent right through the 1940s. Nevertheless, Gallup surveys taken in June 1937, after the big wave of sit-strikes had waned noticeably, but while mass picketing and overall levels of labor militancy remained high, revealed that fifty-seven percent supported the proposition that the militia should “be called out whenever strike trouble threatens.”

As with the sit-down strikes, too, the status of mass picketing and other forms of strike militancy can also be gauged by the way these tactics were defended. During the hearings on Taft-Hartley, only a few labor leaders stood against the torrent of criticism of these practices by businessmen, conservative unionists, and congressmen and senators, and tried to parry the move to prohibit the strikes. With only a couple of exceptions, most of them consistently qualified their defense of these tactics by downplaying their coercive qualities—again the very thing that made them so effective in the first place—while also describing them as expedients, presumably temporary, that were justified by the unreasonable stances of some employers.

While the political motivations and implications of this campaign against these forms of strike militancy might be as dubious as the attacks on the sit-down strikes, their value in expressing dominant political judgments concerning these tactics is not. Repeatedly, it was taken for granted that workers could not be allowed to excessively coerce their fellow workers, that they should be obliged to adhere to their contractual obligations, that they did not own the streets or the workplace, and that whatever the right to strike was, it was surely, as Brandeis had insisted, not an absolute right. Of course, all of this was controversial for many unionists. But unionists were almost the only ones to really push back against these measures. Even President Harry Truman’s dramatic veto of Taft-Hartley is widely regarded as a political move taken with the expectation that Congress would override the veto anyway. It is also notable that despite dedicating itself to this aim, the labor movement has never come close to repealing the Taft-Hartley Act, or even securing the enactment of favorable amendments to any of its provisions.

And then there is the replacement worker doctrine where, if anything, the change in the law even more clearly reflected the depth and power of liberal norms. For the rule established in Mackay Radio came out of the blue. It was set forth in a case which required no such question to be resolved, in a manner that drew no support from the text of the Wagner Act, and on the basis of legislative history that was ambiguous at best. Worse, as Getman points out, the rule is in direct conflict with the very statutory principle of barring discrimination on the basis of a worker’s assertion of the basic labor rights laid out in § 7 that it was, itself, supposedly derived from.

As an exercise in statutory construction and administration, Mackay Radio makes no sense; but as a defense of property rights it makes all the sense in the world. One way to see this is to consider what would have happened had the Court decided the matter in a fundamentally different way. If employers were barred from replacing economic strikers, it seems likely that strikes would have proliferated to an extraordinary extent, as workers could at least plausibly have expected to be able to strike under a broad array of circumstances and yet be restored to their jobs no matter the outcome. But precisely because such a doctrine would have given workers so much power, Congress would almost certainly have stepped in with its own rule, codifying employers’ right to permanently replace striking workers and bringing this to an end. Ultimately, it is difficult to imagine a much more liberal alternative to the Mackay Radio rule surviving for very long—a point that also draws support from labor’s failure to repeal the rule in Congress in the early 1990s.

A simple exercise in counterfactual speculation bears similar fruit in regard to other, more basic, limitations on the right to strike, including those imposed relative to sit-down strikes, mass picketing, and secondary boycotts. Shrill and self-interested though it was, all the testimony from employers and their allies during the hearings on Taft-Hartley or Landrum-Griffin about the perils posed by these tactics, was fundamentally correct. For were workers able to make unfettered use of sit-down strikes, mass picketing, and general strikes and sympathy walkouts, they could have very much challenged the sovereignty of capitalists in and about the workplace, and with this the bedrock institutions and norms of liberal society. As Jim Pope puts it, Charles Evans Hughes’ opinion in Fansteel established the maxim that “the employer could violate the workers’ statutory rights without sacrificing its property rights, while the workers could not violate the employer’s property rights without sacrificing their statutory rights.” This is unquestionably true. But equally unquestionable is that neither this court nor any other important arbiter of legal rights in this country was ever prepared to endorse the contrary view that property rights might be sufficiently subordinate to labor rights as to justify the kinds of tactics by which workers could routinely defeat powerful employers on the fields of industrial conflict.

Significantly, there is no reason to believe that any of this has changed or is poised to change today. Quite the contrary: In a culture and political system more immersed than ever in the veneration of order and control, mediated by criminal law and police work, by the celebration of property rights, and by a readiness to punish violence, it is all but unthinkable that the courts or the NLRB would deign to give legal sanction to workers to engage in any sustained way in the kinds of tactics that might make going on strike a worthwhile thing to do.

#### Capitalism is terminally unsustainable and at a turning point – reinforcing structures causes extinction and turns their impacts.

* TCC = Transnational Capitalist Class, TNS = Transnational State

Robinson 20 [William I. Robinson, American professor of sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, “The Global Police State,” 2020, Pluto Press, EA]

But the globalization boom of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries was short-lived. The global financial meltdown of 2008 marked the onset of a new structural crisis of global capitalism, one that opens the possibility for systemic change. Karl Marx was the first to identify crisis as immanent to capitalism and there is a vast literature on capitalist crisis.11 Here I identify three types of crisis. Cyclical crises, or recessions, occur about every ten years in the capitalist system and typically last some 18 months. These comprise the so-called “business cycle.” There were recessions in the early 1980s, the early 1990s, and the early 2000s. “Structural crises,” so called because the only way out of crisis is to restructure the system, occur approximately every 40–50 years. A new wave of colonialism and imperialism resolved (that is, displaced) the first recorded structural crisis of the 1870s and 1880s. The next structural crisis, the Great Depression of the 1930s, was resolved through a new type of redistributive capitalism, referred to as the “class compromise” of Fordism-Keynesianism, social democracy, New Deal capitalism, and so on (more on this below). As we have seen, capital responded to the next structural crisis, that of the 1970s, by going global. Each of these major episodes of structural crisis have presented this potential for systemic change. Historically, each has involved the breakdown of state legitimacy, escalating class and social struggles, and military conflicts. In the past, structural crises have led to a restructuring that includes new institutional arrangements, class relations, and accumulation activities that eventually resulted in a restabilization of the system and renewed capitalist expansion. Yet a new period of far-reaching restructuring through digitalization appears to be under way at this time. Before we return to this new wave of restructuring, let us focus on the nature of the current crisis, which shares aspects of earlier system-wide structural crises of the 1880s, the 1930s, and the 1970s. Yet there are several interrelated dimensions to the current crisis that I believe sets it apart from these earlier ones and suggest that a simple restructuring of the system will not lead to its restabilization—that is, our very survival requires now a revolution against global capitalism. Above all is the existential crisis posed by the ecological limits to the reproduction of the system. We have already passed tipping points in climate change, the nitrogen cycle, and diversity loss. For the first time ever, human conduct is intersecting with and fundamentally altering the earth system in such a way that threatens to bring about a sixth mass extinction.12 While capitalism cannot be held solely responsible for the ecological crisis, it is difficult to image that the environmental catastrophe can be resolved within the capitalist system given capital’s implacable impulse to accumulate and its accelerated commodification of nature. The ecological dimensions of global crisis have been brought to the forefront of the global agenda by the worldwide environmental justice movement. Communities around the world have come under the escalating repression of a global police state as they face off against transnational corporate plunder of their environment and demand environmental justice and action by governments to avert the climate catastrophe. And climate change refugees, who are likely to run into the hundreds of millions in the years ahead, are vilified by racist and neo-fascist forces and repressed by a global police state. This accelerated commodification of nature points to another underlying dimension of the current crisis. We are reaching limits to the extensive expansion of capitalism, in the sense that there are no longer any new territories of significance to integrate into world capitalism and new spaces to commodify are drying up. The capitalist system is by its nature expansionary. In each earlier structural crisis, the system went through a new round of extensive expansion—that is, incorporating new territories and populations into it—from waves of colonial conquest in earlier centuries, to the integration in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries of the former socialist bloc countries, China, India and other areas that had been marginally outside the system. There are no longer any new territories to integrate into world capitalism. At the same time, the privatization of education, health, utilities, basic services, and public lands are turning those spaces in global society that were outside of capital’s direct control into “spaces of capital,” so that intensive expansion—that is, the commodification of what were non-commodified resources and activities—is reaching depths never before seen. Commodification refers to the process of turning people, the things that people produce, and nature into things that are privately owned, have a monetary value, and that can be bought and sold. Capitalism by its nature must constantly expand intensively by commodifying more and more of the world. What is there left to commodify? Where can the system now expand? New spaces have to be violently cracked open and the peoples in these spaces must be repressed by a global police state. But what does exhaustion of spaces for extensive and intensive expansion imply for the reproduction of the system? The sheer magnitude of the means of violence and social control is unprecedented, as well as the magnitude and concentrated—and increasingly privatized—control over these means of violence along with the means of global communication and the production and circulation of symbols, images, and knowledge. As I will discuss in more detail in Chapters 2 and 3, computerized wars, drone warfare, robot soldiers, bunkerbuster bombs, satellite surveillance, cyberwar, spatial control technology, and so forth, have changed the face of warfare, and more generally, of systems of social control and repression. We have arrived at the panoptical surveillance society, a point brought home by revelations of the defector from the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA), Edward Snowden, that the NSA monitored virtually every communication on the planet. It is no exaggeration to say that we are now in the age of thought control by those who control global flows of communication, information, and symbolic production. But most frightening is the production and deployment of a new generation of nuclear weapons and the threat of “limited” nuclear war.13 If global crisis leads to a new world war, the destruction would simply be unprecedented. Combined with ecological meltdown, it is difficult to see how humanity could survive such a conflagration. Global capitalism lends itself to escalating inter-national tensions with the potential to spill over into major interstate conflict. But we should not explain these tensions through the outdated nation-state/interstate mode of analysis that attributes such tensions to national rivalry and competition among national capitalist classes for international economic control. Rather, these tensions derive, above all, from an acute political contradiction in global capitalism that I already alluded to above: economic globalization takes places within a nation-state-based system of political authority. Nation-states face a contradiction between the need to promote transnational capital accumulation in their territories and their need to achieve political legitimacy. In the age of capitalist globalization, governments must attract to the national territory transnational corporate and financial investment, which requires providing capital with all the incentives associated with neo-liberalism—downward pressure on wages, deregulation, low or no taxes, privatization, fiscal austerity, and on so— that aggravate inequality, impoverishment, and insecurity for working and popular classes. As a result, states around the world have been experiencing spiraling crises of legitimacy. To put it in more technical terms, there is a contradiction between the accumulation function and the legitimacy function of nation-states. This situation generates bewildering, unstable, and seemingly contradictory politics. It helps explain the rise of far-right and neo-fascist forces that espouse rhetoric of nationalism and protectionism even as they promote neo-liberalism, such as the Trump government in the United States, and has confused some into believing that “deglobalization” is under way as we move backward to an earlier era of national protectionism. In fact, the “old protectionism” of the twentieth century aimed to protect national products and the national capitalist groups that produced them with tariffs and subsidies. The new protectionism—if we could call it that, as the term is extremely misleading and leads to much confusion—aims to create the conditions to attract transnational capital to national territories. Despite its protectionist rhetoric, for instance, the Trump White House called not for locking out foreign investors but for transnational investors from around the world to invest in the United States, enticed by a regressive tax reform, unprecedented deregulation, and some limited tariff walls that would benefit groups from anywhere in the world that establish operations behind them. “America is open for business,” Trump declared at the 2018 meeting of the global elite gathered for the annual conclave of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland: “Now is the perfect time to bring your business, your jobs and your investments to the United States.”14 And the biggest single beneficiary of steel tariffs that Trump imposed in 2018 on imported steel was ArcelorMittal, the Indian-based company that owns majority shares in U.S. Steel.15 Moreover, as we will see later, TCC contingents from countries around the world that appear to be in geopolitical competition are not just heavily invested in global police state but they are cross- and mutually invested in it. More to the point here, economic globalization as it has unfolded within the interstate system generates mounting international and geo-political tensions to the extent that the crisis exacerbates the problem of legitimacy and destabilizes national political systems and elite control. Inter-national tensions must be seen as derivative of the contradiction between the expansion of transnational capital within the framework of the nationstate/inter-state system, in which global capitalism pits nationally constrained workers against one another and sets up the conditions for the TCC to manipulate the crises of state legitimacy and the international tensions generated by this contradiction. The political tensions generated by this contradiction can and do take on the appearance of geo-political competition.16 Will the centrifugal pressures produced by this contradiction undercut the centripetal pressures brought about by economic globalization? Will these centrifugal pressures break out into open, largescale inter-state warfare?17 Will geo-political tensions “overdetermine” the corporate interests of the TCC? We need here to extend the analysis of transnational politics and the TNS in order to understand this dimension of global crisis, especially so considering that it is central to the story of global police state. Transnational elites have been clamoring for more effective TNS institutions, in part, in order to resolve this disjuncture between economic globalization and the nation-state system of political authority. However, the fragmentary and highly emergent nature of TNS apparatuses makes the effort problematic given both the dispersal of formal political authority across many nation-states and the loose nature of TNS apparatuses with no center or formal constitution. The more “enlightened” elite representatives of the TCC are now searching for ways to develop a more powerful TNS, one that could impose regulation on the global market and certain controls on unbridled global accumulation. They are seeking transnational mechanisms of “governance” that would allow the global ruling class to rein in the anarchy of the system in the interests of saving global capitalism from itself and from radical challenges from below—from both an insurgent Left and extreme Right. More than in any other forum, the politicized strata of the transnational elite comes together in the activities of the WEF, a “network of networks” for the TCC and the transnational elite that holds its famed annual meeting in Davos. Indeed, it is not for nothing that “Davos Man” has been used to describe the new global ruling class. WEF founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab called in 2008 for renovated forms of “global leadership” by the TCC: Whether it is poverty in Africa or the Haze over Southeast Asia, an increasing number of problems require bilateral, regional or global solutions and, in many cases, the mobilization of more resources than any single government can marshal … The limits of political power are increasingly evident. The lack of global leadership is glaring, not least because the existing global governance institutions are hampered by archaic conventions and procedures devised, in some instances, at the end of World War II. Sovereign power still rests with national governments, but authentic and effective global leadership has yet to emerge. Meanwhile, public governance at the local, national, regional, and international levels has weakened. Even the best leaders cannot operate successfully in a failed system.18 But if the transnational elite wants a stronger TNS in order to cement the TCC’s rule and stabilize the system, it has not been able to resolve the contradictory mandate it has accorded to the TNS. On the one hand, the TNS sets out to promote the conditions for capitalist globalization; on the other, it tries to resolve the myriad problems globalization creates: economic crisis, poverty, environmental degradation, chronic political instability, and military conflict. The TNS has had great difficulty addressing these issues because of the dispersal of formal political authority across many nation-states. To reiterate, TNS apparatuses are fragmentary; there is no center or formal constitution, and there is certainly no transnational enforcement capacity. These TNS apparatuses have not been able to substitute for a leading nation-state—what the international relations literature refers to as a “hegemon”—with enough power and authority to organize and stabilize the system, much less to impose regulations on transnational capital. The politicized strata of the TCC and transnationally oriented elites and organic intellectuals, including those who staff TNS institutions, attempt to define the long-term interests of the system and to develop policies, projects, and ideologies to secure these interests. Since the specific interests of the various components of the global power bloc are divergent, it is the TNSs’ role to unify and organize the various classes and fractions to uphold their long-term political interests against the threat of the exploited and oppressed classes around the world. But the inability of the TNS to impose coherence and regulation on transnational accumulation and to stabilize the system is also due to the vulnerability of the TCC as a class group in terms of its own internal disunity and fractionation, and its ~~blind~~ pursuit of immediate accumulation—that is, of its immediate and particular profit-seeking interests over the long-term or general interests of the class. There is of course a profound social dimension of global crisis. In these times of unprecedented worldwide inequalities, capitalist crisis breaks apart the social fabric and devastates communities everywhere. Billions of people around the world face struggles to survive from one day to the next, with no guarantee that they will succeed in this struggle (indeed, many are not and many more won’t). In academic terms we could call this a crisis of social reproduction, but this phrase does nothing to capture the depths of misery that poverty, disease, un- and underemployment, food insecurity, social exclusion, racist, xenophobic, and other forms of social violence into which billions are thrust on a daily basis, or to the persecution that they face as migrants, refugees, surplus labor, and so on. The next two chapters will take up these matters. However, let us point out that the social crisis is decidedly not a crisis for capital, and may even help it to reproduce its rule, until or unless it leads to mass rebellion that threatens the ruling groups’ control.

#### Vote neg to join the party – dual power organizing is the only path to revolutionary change.

Escalante ‘18

[Alyson, philosophy at U of Oregon. 08/24/2018. “Against Electoralism, For Dual Power!” <https://theforgenews.org/2018/08/24/against-electoralism-for-dual-power/>] pat

I am sure that at this point, the opportunists reading this have already begun to type out their typical objection: the world is different than it was in 1917, and the conditions of the United States in no way echo the conditions which enabled the Bolsheviks to achieve revolutionary success.

To this tried and true objection, there is one simple answer: you are entirely correct, and that is why we need to abandon electoralism and working within the bourgeois state.

What were the conditions which allowed the Bolsheviks to successfully revolt? The conditions were that of Dual Power. Alongside the capitalist state, there existed a whole set of institutions and councils which met the needs of the workers. The soviets, a parallel socialist government made up of individual councils, successfully took over many governmental responsibilities in some parts of Petrograd. In the radical Viborg district, the Bolshevik controlled soviets provided government services like mail, alongside programs that could meet the needs of workers. When a far right coup was attempted against the provisional government, it was troops loyal to the Bolshevik factions within the soviet who repelled the coup plotters, proving concretely to the workers of Petrograd that the socialists could not only provide for their needs, but also for their defense.

In short: the Bolsheviks recognized that instead of integrating into the bourgeois state, they could operate outside of it to build dual power. They could establish programs of elected representatives who would serve the workers. They would not bolster the capitalist state in the name of socialism, they would offer an alternative to it.

And so, when the time came for revolt, the masses were already to loyal to the Bolsheviks. The only party who had never compromised, who had denounced the unpopular imperialist wars, who had rejected the provisional government entirely, was the party who successfully gained the support of the workers.

And so, many of us on the more radical fringes of the socialist movement wonder why it is the the DSA and other socialist opportunists seem to think that we can win by bolstering the capitalist state? We wonder, given this powerful historical precedent, why they devote their energy to getting more Ocasios elected; what good does one more left democrat who will abandon the workers do for us?

The answer we receive in return is always the same: we want to win small changes that will make life for the workers easier; we want to protect food stamps and healthcare.

And do this, we reply: what makes you think reformism is the only way to do this. When the bourgeois state in California was happy to let black children go to school unfed, the Black Panthers didn’t rally around democratic candidates, they became militant and fed the children themselves. In the 40s and 50s, socialists in New York saw people going without healthcare and instead of rallying behind democratic candidates, they built the IWO to provide healthcare directly. Both these groups took up our pressing revolutionary task: building dual power.

Imagine if all those hours the DSA poured into electing Ocasio were instead used to feed the people of New York, to provide them with medical care, to ensure their needs were met. Imagine the masses seeing socialism not as a pipe dream we might achieve through electing more imperialists, but as a concrete movement which is currently meeting their needs?

The fact is, we are not nearly ready for revolution. Socialists in the United States have failed to meet the needs of the people, and as long as their only concrete interaction with the masses is handing them a voter registration form, they will continue to fail the people. Our task now is not to elect representatives to advocate for the people; it is much more gruelingly laborious than that. Our task is to serve the people. Our task is to build dual power.

The movement to do this is underway. Members of the DSA refoundation caucus have begun to move the left of the DSA in this direct, socialist groups like Philly Socialists have begun to build dual power through GED programs and tenants unions, many branches of the Party For Socialism and Liberation have begun to feed the people and provide for their concrete needs, and Red Guard collectives in Los Angeles have built serve the people programs and taken on a stance of militant resistance to gentrification. The movement is growing, its time is coming, and dual power is achievable within our life time.

The opportunists are, in a sense, correct. We are not where we were in 1917, but we can begin to move in that direction and dual power can take us there. In order to achieve dual power we have to recognize that Lenin was right: there will be no socialist gains by working within state institutions designed to crush socialism. Furthermore, we must recognize that the strategies of the electoral opportunists trade off with dual power. Electing candidates drains resources, time, and energy away from actually serving the people.

And so, we should commit to undertake the difficult and dangerous task of building dual power. We must reject opportunism, we must name the democratic party as our enemy, we must rally around power directly in the hands of the socialist movement. We do not have a parallel system of soviets in the United States. We can change that. Someday the cry “all power to the soviets” will be heard again. Lets make it happen.

### 1NC – 3

#### Lula wins now but its close.

Spigariol 11-3 (, A., 2021. Lula still polling first for 2022, but no longer pulling away. [online] The Brazilian Report. Available at: <https://brazilian.report/liveblog/2021/11/03/lula-polling-first-bolsonaro-2022/> [Accessed 21 November 2021].)-rahulpenu

Lula still polling first, but no longer pulling away

Lula’s **support** **slipped** by a single point compared with late September, with Mr. **Bolsonaro** polling at a **stable** **28** **percent**. Center left candidate Ciro Gomes is the only “third-way option” above the 10-percent mark, with others at 4 percent or less.

The pollster included a scenario with former Justice Minister Sergio Moro, poised to join the center-right Podemos party, reportedly with presidential ambitions. However, the former federal judge managed no more than 8 percent of support.

Chart, line chart

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#### Bolsonaro is making key changes.

AP 11-10 (,Associated Press, 2021. Bolsonaro Joins a Centrist Party in Brazil Ahead of 2022 Re-election Bid. [online] Nytimes.com. Available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/americas/brazil-bolsonaro-liberal-party.html> [Accessed 21 November 2021].)-rahulpenu

**Bolsonaro** **Joins** a **Centrist** **Party** in Brazil Ahead of 2022 Re-election Bid

President Jair Bolsonaro, who has not belonged to any political party for two years, is joining the centrist Liberals, they said on Wednesday.

BRASILIA, Brazil — After going two years without belonging to a political party, President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil sealed an agreement with the centrist Liberal Party to back his 2022 re-election bid, according to a party statement released on Wednesday.

The decision followed a meeting between Mr. Bolsonaro and the Liberal Party leader, Valdemar Costa Neto, in Brasília, the capital, the statement said. The president’s formal enrollment in the party’s ranks will take place on Nov. 22.

Joining one of the parties that form part of the so-called Cenbtrao **group** seems to signal that Mr. Bolsonaro, a right-wing populist, is shifting course from his 2018 campaign strategy, when he criticized the group’s old-school political practices.

In early polls ahead of the October 2022 vote, Mr. Bolsonaro trails former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the leftist who led Brazil from 2003 to 2010.

The Liberal Party, or P.L., is known along with other Centrao parties for **ideological** **malleability**, often **exchanging** **support** **for** **gov**ernment **appointments** and earmarks. Mr. Bolsonaro was affiliated with such parties during most of his seven terms as a federal lawmaker, but cast himself as a political outsider during his 2018 presidential campaign. He vowed then not to embrace the horse trading that benefited entrenched actors and enabled corruption.

“It is very **symbolic** **how** **Bolsonaro** has **started** **to** **play** the **traditional** game of Brazilian **politics**,” said Maurício Santoro, a political science professor at the State University of Rio de Janeiro. “The P.L. is helping Bolsonaro survive.”

When Mr. Bolsonaro ran in 2018, it was under the banner of the Social Liberal Party, which he left one year after his election victory amid disagreements with its leadership over funding and regional nominations. He set out to forge his own party, but failed to garner enough signatures and has been without a political home since.

The presidential press office didn’t respond to a request for comment from The Associated Press to confirm the P.L.’s statement. Earlier Wednesday, Mr. Bolsonaro had said in a radio interview that there was a “99.9 percent chance” he would join the P.L.

Reports that Mr. Bolsonaro was seeking a Centrao party to sponsor his re-election bid had already generated commentary from analysts that he was departing from his prior anti-establishment stance. As rumors of his agreement with the P.L. intensified this week, comments criticizing Mr. Costa Neto, the party leader, were deleted from the social media accounts of some of Mr. Bolsonaro’s family members.

Editors’ Picks

‘When Are You Getting Married?’

Taylor Swift’s ‘All Too Well’ and the Weaponization of Memory

The Real Surprise of ‘Passing’: A Focus on Black Women’s Inner Lives

Mr. Bolsonaro himself has previously said that Mr. Costa Neto was corrupt, noted Carlos Melo, a political analyst and professor at Insper University in São Paulo. In 2012, Mr. Costa Neto, then a lawmaker, was convicted of corruption and money laundering in a vast vote-buying scandal that almost brought down Mr. da Silva’s administration. He served time in prison.

Over the past year, Mr. Bolsonaro has turned to the Centrao for political shelter from increasing pressure on his administration, including more than 100 impeachment requests, a Senate investigation into his handling of the Covid-19 pandemic and his plunging popularity. In August, he appointed a senator from the Centrao to be his chief of staff.

“If you take away the Centrao, there’s the left,” the president told a small conservative news outlet, Jornal da Cidade Online, on Tuesday. “So where do I go?”

#### Strike crackdowns is prompting polling for Lula---the plan’s radical change is key to building Bolsonaro voter popularity.

Castanheira 10-14 (, T., 2021. São Paulo teachers and public employees strike against attack on pensions. [online] World Socialist Web Site. Available at: <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2021/10/15/braz-o15.html> [Accessed 21 November 2021].)-rahulpenu

The criminal agreement between the Unions’ Forum and the government for the unsafe return to in-person classes included the requirement that educators pay back the hours spent on strike. Therefore, teachers are now working grueling overtime, exposing themselves even more to the risk of infection with the coronavirus in order not to have their salaries cut. This situation, which threatens teachers with having their salaries completely cut off if they join the new strike, is seen by many workers as the opportunity the government saw to advance its attacks. In the face of these threats, the **broad** **participation** of workers **in** the **strike** movement **is** a **direct** **response** **to** the terrible **social** **crisis** **facing** the entire Brazilian **working** **class**. With millions having fallen into poverty in Brazil since last year, workers are seeing their purchasing power violently eroded by high inflation, especially in food and fuel prices. Recently, strikes in defense of wages have broken out at General Motors in São Paulo, at the Jurong shipyard in Espírito Santo, among metalworkers in Paraná, and app delivery workers in several Brazilian cities. The World Socialist Web Site interviewed workers participating in Wednesday’s protest in São Paulo. Leandro, who works at a Child Education Center (CEI), serving children under the age of 2, explained to the WSWS what led him to the demonstration. “We who work double shifts, 12 hours a day, pay the maximum income tax rate of 27.5 percent of our salaries and another 14 percent in pension contributions,” he said. “In other words, almost half of what I earn is only for taxes. They want to raise this even more. And after I retire, even though I would have contributed for more than 40 years, I will continue to pay the same tax rate. Today, this percentage is only charged on [monthly] salaries exceeding 6,433 reais (US$ 1,166). With this new change, it will be charged of everyone who earns more than a minimum wage (US$200).” Leandro’s wife, Kauane, an educator at an Early Childhood Education School (EMEI), serving children from 2 to 6 years old, added that it is inconceivable for “a 60-year-old teacher to remain in an early childhood education classroom, with toddlers [as the new bill imposes]. They won’t have the physical or psychological structure to cope with that.” She also noted that “in the last four years we have been without any wage adjustment, not even for inflation. But our latest struggles have been only against the removal of rights. We are losing right after right. We see all the services being scrapped, there is no investment in health care. We are treated as numbers. If something happens to us, tomorrow they’ll put someone new in our place. We are not seen as human beings, who have families.” Kauane and Leandro have children, one of them with asthma, and are seriously concerned about the unsafe reopening of schools. On Wednesday, hours before the demonstration, São Paulo Governor João Doria (PSDB) announced the mandatory return to in-person classes in state schools with 100 percent occupation of classrooms, eliminating any mandatory distancing between students. Later that day, Mayor Nunes announced the same measure will be followed by municipal schools. “Now we’ve had the news that they’re going to fully open schools and we have a very big concern, especially for the children who have not been vaccinated,” said Kauane. “As long as it is not safe and I can, my children will stay at home. But we know that this is not a reality for everyone. There are younger children whose parents need to work, and there are many parents who have no one to leave their children with.” Sheila, a kindergarten teacher, declared that the strike movement is also “in the name of quality public education.” She and her school colleagues denounced the homicidal operation of schools in São Paulo. “How can we take 1-year-old babies, who are just starting to walk, and have distancing? It was really a reckless act by the mayor,” she declared. “In the beginning there were only a few children, but now it is practically full,” said Sheila. “As soon as he approved 60 percent [of occupancy of the CEIs] several children in our CEI had COVID. Only 10 days went by, and children already started to show basic symptoms like coryza, malaise. Now I ask myself, how could we guarantee the safety of such small children? Infection was inevitable.” Sheila said that “in other CEIs near ours, some teachers died of COVID but were not counted. At no time were infections of teachers and children with COVID mentioned by the media. It was simply, ‘teachers return, the families need it,’ they never worried about infections.” The same situation was denounced by educators in Elementary Schools (EMEFs). Márcia, an art educator on the east side of São Paulo, described the situation as “chaos.” She said: “Every week, in my school two or three people are dismissed because of COVID, employees and children. They dismiss only those in the same classroom, but we, who are ‘specialist teachers’ and teach all the classrooms, are not dismissed. These are super unhealthy conditions.” The demonstration had a significant participation by retired teachers and employees, who will immediately suffer a 14 percent cut in their income with the approval of the bill. Amalia, a retired English teacher, declared: “I’ve been in these movements for 40 years and there are few times I haven’t participated. Municipal teachers are always overwhelmed, for lack of staff in the schools, lack of salaries.” “City councilors should have the role of defending us against authoritarian government projects, but what happens is that we have to fight against both the government and the councilors,” she continued. “The public service is scrapped, everyone says that. In my opinion, the intention of these governments is to privatize them. Meanwhile, we pay absurd taxes that nobody can explain. What I’m looking to learn is what the state is for.” Tatiana, an English teacher working with Márcia, said that “as long as these people are in power, I think it’s very difficult for us to solve these problems. **Until** **we** have a really **popular** **government**, **for** the **workers**, **there** **isn’t** much of **a** **perspective**.” Talking about the latest strikes, she said that “the performance of the union was sad. It is the same thing that I saw [with the São Paulo state teacher’s union, APEOESP] in the 2015 90-day strike. I saw them ending the strike despite the vote to continue it, and here it was the same thing. I think it’s sad, because we don’t know who is really on our side.” The unions and political parties linked to them, principally the PT and the Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL), are once again striving to divert workers from confronting the capitalist system which is responsible for the successive attacks on public employees and the working class as a whole. These **political** **forces** **advance** as the only viable strategy for the workers’ movement the pressuring of “indecisive council members” **to** “**flip their vote**.” In their speeches, the union officials claimed that councilors who vote against the workers should face a settling of scores in the next elections: in 2024! This criminal proposition unequivocally exposes the reactionary character of the trade unions and the pseudo-left, who work to disarm the working class in face of the bourgeois state. Other **union leaders** who took the stage also **claimed** that the **election of** a new PT **government headed by** Luiz Inácio **Lula** da Silva **is the real solution to workers’ problems**. This perspective is a complete fraud. Lula is openly working to reestablish his corrupt alliances with the right-wing parties and to present himself to the capitalist class as their best representative to contain an imminent social explosion in Brazil and defend their economic interests against the working class. São Paulo municipal **workers** **can** **advance** **their** **struggle** **only** **by** **breaking** the **political** **control** of their movement by the unions, the PT and its pseudo-left satellites. They cannot accept new betrayals, and having their strikes broken through the same antidemocratic maneuvers used in 2019 and earlier this year!

Workers in São Paulo must orient themselves not to the bourgeois state, but to their fellow workers throughout Brazil and internationally who face the same attacks from the capitalist class.

A rank-and-file workers’ rebellion is already taking place around the world. On October 1, parents and rank-and-file workers called an independent strike against the unsafe reopening of schools, receiving global support. A second strike has been called for October 15. Across the United States, the strongest wave of strikes in decades is erupting, with workers rejecting rotten contracts promoted by the unions and the companies.

Brazilian workers must unite their struggles with this global movement, building independent rank-and-file committees in every workplace and joining the Rank-and-File Committee for Safe Education in Brazil (CBES-BR). The CBES-BR calls upon all workers to participate in the event How to end the pandemic: The case for eradication that will be held October 24 by the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) and the WSWS.

#### And, Lula is hope for workers---plan is a 180.

Fogel 21 (, B., 2021. Brazil: Lula’s Return Means There Is Finally Some Hope for Workers. [online] The Wire. Available at: <https://thewire.in/world/brazil-lulas-return-means-there-is-finally-some-hope-for-workers> [Accessed 21 November 2021].)-rahulpenu

Brazil: **Lula’s** **Return** **Means** There Is Finally Some **Hope** **for** **Workers**

Despite being imprisoned for nearly two years, the centre-left leader enjoys far more popularity than President Jair Bolsonaro, who he could take on in the next elections.

On March 8, Brazilian Supreme Court judge Luiz Edson Fachin ruled to annul all of the former president Lula da Silva’s convictions. Fachin said that the court that convicted Lula in the southern city of Curitiba did not have the legal authority to convict Brazil’s first Workers’ Party (PT) president. As such, he must be retried by a federal court in the capital city of Brasília.

The most important effect of the overturning is that it restores Lula’s political rights, allowing him to run in next year’s presidential election. Under Brazil’s Ficha Limpa (“Clean Slate”) law — ironically passed by the PT government — politicians convicted of crimes or impeached are unable to run for elected office.

Lula was convicted of money laundering and corruption in 2016 for making improvements to a beachfront apartment he never lived in and served 580 days in prison before being released on appeal in November 2019.

The case against Lula was always weak, but it didn’t stop him from getting convicted due to the fact that Sergio Moro, the judge hearing the trial, was illegally colluding with prosecutors to make a case against the former labour leader. His conviction was the crowning achievement of Brazil’s historic Operação Lava Jato (“Operation Car Wash”) investigation, but we now have clear evidence that prosecutors and judges conspired to imprison him explicitly to prevent him from competing in the 2018 elections, which saw the election of the far-right Jair Bolsonaro.

Lula’s legal team declared on Twitter that “The decision that today affirms the incompetence of the Federal Justice of Curitiba is the recognition that we have always been correct in this long legal battle.” Another twist in this saga is possible that is the Supreme Court still has to affirm this ruling, and another court could convict him again. But, for now, the centre-left Lula is back.

Lula versus Bolsonaro

Lula’s return to the political arena has already sent shock waves throughout Brazil, and judging by the latest polling, he is still the most popular politician in Brazil even after being imprisoned and years of media smears. And while he may not have the historic approval ratings he enjoyed after leaving office, his PT is still the largest party in the country.

A recent poll published in the Estado de S. Paulo newspaper found that 50% of those surveyed would definitely or probably vote for Lula as opposed to 38% for Bolsonaro. Lula’s disapproval rate of 44% is also lower than any of the other potential candidates such as right-wing São Paulo governor João Doria and the vacuous TV personality Luciano Huck. In fact, Lula was the only one of the 10 candidates surveyed that outperformed Bolsonaro.

Brazil’s centre-right is also in full-on panic mode as their own electoral chances are going to sink rapidly. Despite their official opposition to Bolsonaro, many of them would prefer a second term of the far-right president to a PT government. The “moderates” have been vainly searching for somebody — a Brazilian Macron — **who can pose as the leader of the broad front for democracy against Bolsonaro**, while pursuing the more or less same economic agenda as Brazil’s president.

For all the moderate opposition’s talk about democracy, it is unlikely that they would back a centre-left candidate in the second round against Bolsonaro. Brazil’s centrists not only removed Dilma Rousseff from office in 2016 but helped elect Bolsonaro in his contest against the PT’s Fernando Haddad. Some of the names being floated as potential candidates like former health minister Luiz Henrique Mandetta served in Bolsonaro’s cabinet and others like Doria and Huck supported Bolsonaro in 2018.

Bolsonaro himself shrugged off the news, claiming that “I believe that the Brazilian people don’t even want to have a candidate like this in 2022, much less think of the possibility of electing him.” The manufactured disasters of the Bolsonaro government could make many who voted against the PT in 2018 or voted null consider Lula as a viable alternative candidate in 2022.

It’s telling, though, that Brazil’s stock market fell by 4%, and the real slipped to record lows against the dollar following the news of the verdict. Investors apparently were not too worried about the apocalyptic COVID-19 death numbers coming out of Brazil — but the return of Lula led to full-on panic.

Last week was the deadliest week for the country since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic with a record 1,910 deaths recorded on Thursday alone. Brazil has recorded over 265,000 deaths and 11 million cases. Intensive care wards across the country are fast running out of space, cities are running out of vaccines, and government appears to be encouraging the virus to rage out of control.

The department of health is warning that Brazil could see as many as three thousand deaths per day in the coming weeks, and the country still lacks a national vaccination campaign. Health experts are warning the effects of letting a pandemic spread uncontained in such a large country could even threaten the global COVID-19 vaccination campaign as the virus mutates and new variants emerge.

Bolsonaro’s latest gambit involves pushing an untested nasal spray as the latest miracle cure. All the while, he continues to attack public health responses and incite his supporters against anyone who tries to control the spread of COVID-19. Congress has so far done almost nothing to hold Bolsonaro and his government accountable for its homicidal response to the pandemic.

Despite Bolsonaro’s murderous response to the COVID-19 crisis, open criminality, and the fact that Lula presided over one of the greatest economic booms in Brazilian history, big capital, much of the mainstream media, and Brazil’s centrists continue to depict Lula and Bolsonaro as two sides of the same coin. This type of mendacious “pox on both sides” type of politics is backed up by the united hostility to the Left among Brazil’s respectable opposition and the forces that back Bolsonaro.

#### American democracy is systematically blamed for liberal erosion under 4 more years of Bolsonaro---spills over and decimates US democratic institutions.

Adler and Long 11-15 (, D. and Long, G., 2021. We need a new observatory of democracy in the Americas | David Adler and Guillaume Long. [online] the Guardian. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/nov/15/organization-of-american-states-democracy-observatory> [Accessed 21 November 2021] David Adler is the general coordinator of the Progressive International. Guillaume Long is a senior policy analyst at the Center for Economic and Policy Research and former foreign minister of Ecuador.)-rahulpenu

We need a new observatory of democracy in the Americas

On 20 October, the US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, traveled to Ecuador to set out a vision for democracy in the Americas. Over the past five years, the **hemisphere** has **suffered** an **assault** **on** its **democratic** **institutions**, as political leaders from Donald Trump to Jair Bolsonaro have adopted a new authoritarian playbook: lies, violence, repression, and more lies. Two-thirds of US citizens now believe that democracy is under threat, while a majority of Brazilians fear a military dictatorship will return to the country. “We find ourselves in a moment of **democratic** **reckoning**,” announced Blinken.

But the Biden administration continues to put the US on the wrong side of this reckoning. Consider Blinken’s recent trip. In Quito, he lavished praise on President Guillermo Lasso in the same week that Lasso declared a nationwide state of emergency to intimidate critics of his government and distract from an investigation into alleged tax fraud following his appearance in the Pandora Papers leak. In Bogotá hours later, Blinken applauded the democratic credentials of the Colombian president, Iván Duque – “We have no better ally on the full range of issues that our democracies face in this hemisphere,” Blinken said – while his government stands accused of targeting protesters and allowing an unprecedented number of assassinations of Indigenous, Black, and peasant leaders to take place under his watch.

The **US** government is **complicit** **in** these **attacks** **on** **democracy**, not only as an “ally” but also **as** a **leading** **member** **of** the Organization of American States (**OAS**). Just two days after Blinken’s South America jaunt, the governments of Bolivia, Argentina, and Mexico held their own event at the Washington DC headquarters of the OAS to discuss the organization’s controversial role in the 2019 Bolivian election. The experts’ findings were clear – and damning: while the OAS found no evidence of fraud in the election of President Evo Morales, it lied to the public and manipulated its own findings to help depose him. “It was later reported that the US representative to the OAS actually pressured and steered the observation mission to reach a determination of fraud,” testified Jake Johnston of the Center for Economic and Policy Research.

Bolivia is not an isolated case. In Haiti, for example, the anti-democratic interventions of the OAS stretch over decades. In 2000, the OAS observer mission concluded that the Haitian election had been a “great success” only to change its position under pressure from Washington to claim it was illegitimate. The goal was evident: “to dislodge the Aristide administration”, as Dr Paul Farmer, deputy special envoy for Haiti at the United Nations, testified to Congress. Then, 10 years later, the OAS intervened again to reverse the result of the 2010 presidential election on the basis of faulty statistical methods. It is difficult to overstate the destabilizing consequences of these interventions. Juan Gabriel Valdés, the former head of the UN in Haiti, recently described the 2010 OAS decision as “the origin of the present tragedy” in the country.

The OAS, then, is **no** **longer** a **credible** observer of democracy in the Americas – particularly under the present **leadership** of Luis Almagro, which has been described as the “**worst** **in** **history**”. In the eyes of several member states, the **institution** **is** **too** **beholden** to **US** **interests** to provide an effective defense of democratic institutions, **leading** some to call for “**autonomous**” **organizations** **to** **contest** **it**. “The world is currently going through a very worrying moment, where attacks on democratic institutions happen with frightening frequency,” said Brazil’s former foreign minister Celso Amorim. “The creation of an international electoral observatory – popular and non-partisan – will fill an important gap in defense of democracy and human rights.”

What would such an observatory do? Three capacities are critical. The first would be to organize delegations to countries where democratic institutions are clearly under threat – both by domestic actors and international observers like the OAS. Bringing together data scientists and parliamentary representatives, these delegations would provide independent analysis of the electoral process and a defense against false narratives that threaten to derail it. The goal is not only to observe how votes are cast and counted; it is also to observe the observers.

The second critical capacity would be to launch investigations of unlawful interventions in the democratic process. Over the course of the last decade, the dominant mechanism of democratic undoing has been legal, namely the weaponization of the judicial system to intimidate, exclude, and even incarcerate political opponents – a tactic known across Latin America as legal warfare, or “lawfare”. Deploying a global network of legal experts, a new observatory could challenge these tactics to help ensure a free and fair democratic process.

The third and final capacity of the new observatory would be communications. In the technological era, bad information often travels faster than good. Big tech platforms such as Facebook not only serve to disseminate false stories and stir civic conflict; evidence suggests that their executives intervene to favor some candidates and ban others from the platform altogether. In the context of such bias, this new observatory would need to build an autonomous communications infrastructure to ensure that the findings of its delegations and investigations are rapidly spread, widely read, and well understood.

The call for a new observatory could not be more urgent. Contentious elections lie just on the horizon in 2022. In May, Colombia will head to the polls after a year of roiling protests against government violence, corruption, and a failed pandemic response. Five months later, Jair **Bolsonaro** will **face** **Lula** da Silva after **profiting** **from** his **flagrant** **persecution** on the road to the presidency in 2018. **Bolsonaro** and his allies in Congress have already pushed a legislative package to **rewrite** **Brazil’s** **electoral** **laws**, while **parroting** **lies** **about** potential **fraud** in the country’s electoral system.

Meanwhile, back in Washington DC, Secretary Blinken is moving ahead with plans for a Summit for Democracy. Convening leaders from “a diverse group of the world’s democracies” in early December, the summit aims to encourage commitments to fight corruption and respect human rights – an opportunity, as the White House press release suggests, to “speak honestly about the challenges facing democracy so as to collectively strengthen the foundation for democratic renewal”.

But the crisis of democracy will not be solved by summitry alone. We cannot delegate “democratic renewal” to our presidents, nor to the OAS that claims to represent them. We need an observatory to defend democracy from the bottom up – an institution with the capacity and credibility to fight authoritarian tactics and even the playing field for democracy to flourish. That fight starts now.

#### Internationalism grounded in democratic norms averts a laundry list of existential catastrophes.

Brooks 14 [Rosa; November 14; Professor of Law at Georgetown University, Senior Fellow with the New America and Arizona State University Future of War Project, former Senior Advisor at the U.S. State Department; Foreign Policy, “Embrace the Chaos,” https://foreignpolicy.com/2014/11/14/embrace-the-chaos/; RP] – recut rahulpenu

I. The Character of the Mess

Defining the character of the current mess is the easy part. Briefly:

* The last century’s technological revolutions have made our world more globally interconnected than ever.
* Power (along with access to power) has become more democratized and diffuse in some ways, but more concentrated in other ways.
* For most individuals around the globe, day-to-day life is far less dangerous and brutal than in previous eras; for the species as a whole, however, the risk of future global catastrophe has increased.
* The continuously accelerating rate of technological and social change makes it increasingly difficult to predict the geopolitical future.

Nothing is particularly original about these observations; they’re repeated in some fashion in every major national strategic document produced over the last decade. They probably teach this stuff to kindergarteners now. Indeed, we’ve heard it all so often that it’s tempting to dismiss such claims as meaningless platitudes: Been there; theorized that. Can we get please get back to foreign-policy business as usual?

No, we can’t. Not if we want our children and grandchildren to live decent lives. If we care about the future at all, we need to do more than prattle on at cocktail parties about globalization, interconnectedness, complexity, danger, and uncertainty. We need to feel these seismic changes in our bones.

So bear with me. Let’s try to breathe some life into the clichés.

I’ve written about these issues before (here and here), and at risk of being both a narcissist and a broken record, I’ll quote myself:

The world has grown more complex. Believe it. The world now contains more people living in more states than ever before, and we’re all more interconnected. A hundred years ago, the world population was about 1.8 billion, there were roughly 60 sovereign states in the world, the automobile was still a rarity, and there were no commercial passenger flights and no transcontinental telephone service. Fifty years ago, global population had climbed to more than 3 billion and there were 115 U.N. member states, but air travel was still for the wealthy and the personal computer still lay two decades in the future.

Today? We’ve got 7 billion people living in 192 U.N. member states and a handful of other territories. These 7 billion people take 93,000 commercial flights a day from 9,000 airports, drive 1 billion cars, and carry 7 billion mobile phones around with them.

In numerous ways, life has gotten substantially better in this more crowded and interconnected era. Seventy years ago, global war killed scores of millions, but interstate conflict has declined sharply since the end of World War II, and the creation of the United Nations ushered in a far more egalitarian and democratic form of international governance than existed in any previous era. Today, militarily powerful states are far less free than in the pre-U.N. era to use overt force to accomplish their aims, and the world now has numerous transnational courts and dispute-resolution bodies that collectively offer states a viable alternative to the use of force. The modern international order is no global utopia, but it sure beats colonial domination and world wars.

In the 50 years that followed World War II, medical and agricultural advances brought unprecedented health and prosperity to most parts of the globe. More recently, the communications revolution has enabled exciting new forms of nongovernmental cross-border alliances to emerge, empowering, for instance, global human rights and environmental movements. In just the last two decades, the near-universal penetration of mobile phones has had a powerful leveling effect: All over the globe, people at every age and income level can use these tiny but powerful computers to learn foreign languages, solve complex mathematical problems, create and share videos, watch the news, move money around, or communicate with far-flung friends.

All this has had a dark side, of course. As access to knowledge has been democratized, so too has access to the tools of violence and destruction, and greater global interconnectedness enables disease, pollution, and conflict to spread quickly and easily beyond borders. A hundred years ago, no single individual or nonstate actor could do more than cause localized mayhem; today, we have to worry about massive, bioengineered threats created by tiny terrorist cells and globally devastating cyberattacks devised by malevolent teen hackers.

Even as many forms of power have grown more democratized and diffuse, other forms of power have grown more concentrated. A very small number of states control and consume a disproportionate share of the world’s resources, and a very small number of individuals control most of the world’s wealth. (According to a 2014 Oxfam report, the 85 richest individuals on Earth are worth more than the globe’s 3.5 billion poorest people).

Indeed, from a species-survival perspective, the world has grown vastly more dangerous over the last century. Individual humans live longer than ever before, but a small number of states now possess the unprecedented ability to destroy large chunks of the human race and possibly the Earth itself — all in a matter of days or even hours. What’s more, though the near-term threat of interstate nuclear conflict has greatly diminished since the end of the Cold War, nuclear material and know-how are now both less controlled and less controllable.

Amid all these changes, our world has also grown far more uncertain. We possess more information than ever before and vastly greater processing power, but the accelerating pace of global change has far exceeded our collective ability to understand it, much less manage it. This makes it increasingly difficult to make predictions or calculate risks. As I’ve written previously:

We literally have no points of comparison for understanding the scale and scope of the risks faced by humanity today. Compared to the long, slow sweep of human history, the events of the last century have taken place in the blink of an eye. This should … give us pause when we’re tempted to conclude that today’s trends are likely to continue. Rising life expectancy? That’s great, but if climate change has consequences as nasty as some predict, a century of rising life expectancy could turn out to be a mere blip on the charts. A steep decline in interstate conflicts? Fantastic, but less than 70 years of human history isn’t much to go on….

That’s why one can’t dismiss the risk of catastrophic events [such as disastrous climate change or nuclear conflict] as “high consequence, low probability.” How do we compute the probability of catastrophic events of a type that has never happened? Does 70 years without nuclear annihilation tell us that there’s a low probability of nuclear catastrophe — or just tell us that we haven’t had a nuclear catastrophe yet?…

Lack of catastrophic change might signify a system in stable equilibrium, but sometimes — as with earthquakes — pressure may be building up over time, undetected….

Most analysts assumed the Soviet Union was stable — until it collapsed. Analysts predicted that Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak would retain his firm grip on power — until he was ousted. How much of what we currently file under “Stable” should be recategorized under “Hasn’t Collapsed Yet”?

This, then, is the character of world messiness in this first quarter of the 21st century. So on to the next question: Where, in all this messiness, does the United States find itself?

II. The United States in the Mess: Goodbye, Lake Wobegon?

For Americans, the good news is that the United States remains an extraordinarily powerful nation. The United States has “the most powerful military in history,” Obama declared in a recent speech. Measured by sheer destructive capacity, he is surely right. The United States spends more on its military than China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, and India combined. The U.S. military can get to more places, faster, with more lethal and effective weapons, than any military on Earth.

The United States also manages to gobble up a disproportionate share of the world’s wealth and resources. By the year 2000, wrote Betsy Taylor and Dave Tilford, the United States, with “less than 5 percent of the world’s population,” was using “one-third of the world’s paper, a quarter of the world’s oil, 23 percent of the coal, 27 percent of the aluminum, and 19 percent of the copper.” In 2010, Americans possessed 39 percent of the planet’s wealth.

The bad news for Americans? U.S. power and global influence have been declining. In part, this is because various once-weak states have been growing stronger, and in part, it’s because no state can be as autonomous today as it might have been in the past. The United States’ geographical position long helped protect it from external interference, while its strong military and economy enabled it to dominate or control numerous less powerful states. But globalization has reduced every state’s autonomy, creating collective challenges — from climate change to the regulation of capital — that no state can fully address on its own.

U.S. power and global influence have also declined in absolute terms, as America’s own political and economic health has been called into question. The United States now has greater income inequality than almost every other state in the developed world — and most states in the developing world. American life expectancy ranks well below that of other industrialized democracies, and the same is true for infant mortality and elementary school enrollment. Meanwhile, the United States has the world’s highest per capita incarceration rate, and on international health and quality-of-life metrics, the United States has been losing ground for several decades. This domestic decline jeopardizes the country’s continued ability to innovate and prosper; it also makes American values and the American political and economic systems less appealing to others.

Worse, the political system that Americans rely on for reform and repair seems itself to be broken; the federal government shutdown in 2013 offered the world a striking illustration of U.S. political dysfunction. Add to this the divisive national security policies of George W. Bush’s administration — many of which were continued or expanded by the Obama administration — and it’s no surprise that the United States has recently become less admired and less emulated around the globe, reducing American “soft power.”

No matter how you slice it, it comes to the same thing: Compared with 30 years ago, the United States today has a greatly reduced ability to control its own destiny or the destiny of other states. The United States still has unprecedented power to destroy (Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden both discovered this, to their detriment). But the country’s capacity for destruction is not equaled by its capacity to shape the behavior of other states or their populations, and the United States has less and less ability to insulate itself from the world’s woes.

Unfortunately, American political leaders share a bipartisan inclination to deny these realities. Mostly, they succumb to the Lake Wobegon effect: “Declinism” and “declinist” have entered the American political vocabulary, but only as purely pejorative terms.

This is both stupid and dangerous. How can we adapt our global strategy to compensate for the ways in which U.S. power has been declining if we refuse to admit that decline?

Continued U.S. decline is certainly not inevitable, and some argue that the United States is in fact poised for an economic and political resurgence. There is no way to know for sure — but it’s worth recalling that, historically, every significant empire has eventually declined. Are we prepared to bet that the United States will prove an exception?

There is also no way to know for sure what form continued or eventual U.S. decline will take. We don’t know whether it will be fast or slow; we don’t know whether the American Empire is in for a hard landing or a soft one. Will the United States crash, like the former Soviet Union? Or will a slow decline in power leave the country an intact and influential nation, like the United Kingdom? Will America’s future be more like Canada’s present, or more like Brazil’s?

III. Behind the Veil of Ignorance: Uncertainty as Lodestone

We don’t know what America’s future will look like, and we can make fewer and fewer geopolitical predictions with confidence. The world has changed too much and too fast for us to accurately assess the probabilities of many types of future events. Perhaps this is why it’s so tempting for Americans to stay in Lake Wobegon, with eyes closed and fingers crossed. Uncertainty is frightening.

But paradoxically, this very uncertainty should be a lodestone, pointing realists and idealists alike toward a sensible, forward-looking global strategy. In fact, radical uncertainty can be a powerful tool for strategic planning.

That may seem oxymoronic, but consider one of the 20th century’s most influential thought experiments: In his 1971 book, A Theory of Justice, philosopher John Rawls famously sought to use a hypothetical situation involving extreme uncertainty to derive optimal principles of justice.

Imagine, said Rawls, rational, free, and equal humans seeking to devise a set of principles to undergird the structure of human society. Imagine further that they must reason from behind what Rawls dubbed a “veil of ignorance,” which hides from them their own future status or attributes. Behind the veil of ignorance, wrote Rawls, people still possess general knowledge of economics, science, and so forth, and they can draw on this knowledge to assist them in designing a future society. Their ignorance is limited to their own future role in the society they are designing: “no one knows his place in society, his class position or social status, nor does any one know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, his intelligence, strength, and the like.”

If we were collectively designing social structures and rules, but could not know our own individual future positions in that social structure, what structures and rules would we come up with? Applying a version of decision theory, Rawls concluded that in the face of such radical uncertainty, rational, free, and equal beings behind the veil of ignorance would be drawn toward a “maximin” (or “minimax“) rule of decision, in which they would seek to minimize their losses in a worst-case scenario. Since those behind the veil of ignorance don’t know whether they’ll be among the haves or among the have-nots in the society they are designing, they should seek to build a society in which they each will be least badly off — even the luck of the draw leads them to start with the fewest advantages.

Rawls posited that such a rule of decision should lead those behind the veil of ignorance to support two core principles: the first relating to liberty (“each person [should] have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others”), and the second relating to social and economic goods. (Social goods should be distributed equally, unless an unequal distribution would serve the common good and be “to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged,” while “offices and positions [should remain] open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity.”)

This is in some ways intuitive: On a national level, it is the reason Americans across the political spectrum continue to express substantial support for the maintenance of unemployment benefits, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, and so on. Any one of us might someday face a job loss or illness; nearly all of us will eventually face old age. We know we might someday need those benefits ourselves. In the face of uncertainty about the future, we all recognize the value of insurance, savings, and at least some minimal social safety net.

In the international arena, the same is true.

This has obvious implications for global strategy. Empires, like individuals, can sink into poverty, illness, or simple old age — and in an era of uncertainty, empires, like individuals, would do well to hedge against the possibility of future misfortune.

Indeed, two decades after the publication of A Theory of Justice, Rawls sought to apply a form of this thought experiment to derive the core principles that he believed would characterize a just global order. His arguments are complex, and I can’t do justice to them here — but fortunately, unlike Rawls, I am not interested in coming up with abstract principles of global justice. My less lofty agenda is limited to arguing that a crude version of Rawls’s thought experiment can help us delineate the contours of a sensible U.S. global strategy — a “maximin” strategy that is well-suited to protecting the interests of the United States and its people, both in today’s messy world and in a wide range of future messes.

Here’s my thought experiment.

Imagine a crude version of Rawls’s veil of ignorance, with only the United States behind it. This veil of ignorance doesn’t require us to disavow what we know of history (America’s or the world’s), nor does it require us to disavow what we know of recent trends, present global realities, U.S. values, or our current conception of the good. It only hides our future from us: Behind this veil of ignorance, we don’t know whether energy, food, water, and other vital resources will be scarcer or more plentiful in the decades to come; we don’t know whether global power will be more or less centralized; we don’t know whether new technologies and new forms of social organization will make existing technologies and institutions obsolete.

Most of all, we don’t know whether, in the decades to come, the United States will be rich or poor, weak or strong, respected or hated. For that matter, we don’t know whether the United States — or even the form of political organization we call the nation-state — will exist at all a century or two from now. In the face of such radical uncertainty, what kind of grand strategy should a rational United States adopt?

Of course, this shouldn’t really be called a “thought experiment” at all: The United States already operates behind a veil of ignorance, if we could only bring ourselves to admit it. We know the past; we have a reasonable understanding of recent trends; we know that the world is messy and dangerous; we know that the potential for rapid and potentially catastrophic change is real; and we know that our ability to predict future changes and quantify various risks is profoundly limited.

This knowledge is profoundly unsettling. Thus, we try our best to know and not know, at the same time: We speak glibly of complexity, accelerating change, danger, and uncertainty, but then fall back into the comfortable assumption that continued U.S. global dominance is a given and that catastrophic change is unlikely to occur. As long as we remain willfully ignorant of the veil of ignorance that hangs over us, we can avoid asking hard questions and making harder choices.

But this is shortsighted and dangerous. Empires that refuse to accept reality tend to rapidly decline. A clear-eyed acceptance of uncertainty and risk is the surest route to a more secure future. Instead of blinding us or paralyzing us, the uncertainty of our future should motivate us to engage in more responsible strategic planning.

If the United States can manage to be as rational as Rawls’s hypothetical decision-makers, it should adopt a similar maximin rule of decision: It should prefer international rules and institutions that will maximize America’s odds of thriving, even in a worst-case future scenario. In fact, we should wish for international rules and institutions that will be kindest to the individuals living in what is now the United States and their descendants, even if the United States should someday cease to exist entirely.

Could happen, folks. Look around you. Do you see the Roman Empire, or the Aztec Empire, or the Ottoman Empire?

IV. From Messiness to Strategy: A Preliminary Sketch

This has urgent implications for U.S. strategic planning. Precisely because U.S. global power may very well continue to decline, the United States should use the very considerable military, political, cultural, and economic power it still has to foster the international order most likely to benefit the country if it someday loses that power.

The ultimate objective of U.S. grand strategy should be the creation of an equitable and peaceful international order with an effective system of global governance — one that is built upon respect for human dignity, human rights, and the rule of law, with robust mechanisms for resolving thorny collective problems.

We should seek this not because it’s the “morally right” thing for the United States to do, but because a maximin decision rule should lead us to conclude that this will offer the United States and its population the best chance of continuing to thrive, even in the event of a radical future decline in U.S. wealth and power.

But, one might argue, the United States already tries to promote such a global order — right?

Sure it does — but only inconsistently, and generally as something of an afterthought. We pour money into our military and intelligence communities, but starve our diplomats and development agencies. We fixate on the threat du jour, often exaggerating it and allowing it to distort our foreign policy in self-destructive ways (cf. Iraq War), while viewing matters such as United Nations reform or reform of global economic institutions or environmental protection rules as tedious and of low priority. If we take seriously the many potential dangers lurking in the unknowable future, however, fostering a stronger, fairer, and more effective system of international governance would become a matter of urgent national self-interest and our highest strategic priority — something that should be reflected both in our policies and in our budgetary decisions.

An effective global governance system would need to be built upon the recognition that states remain the primary mode of political and social organization in the international sphere, but also upon the recognition that new forms of social organization continue to evolve and may ultimately displace at least some states. An effective and dynamic international system will need to develop innovative ways to bring such new actors and organizations within the ambit of international law and institutions, both as responsible creators of law and institutions and as responsible subjects.

## 1NC – Case