#### CP Text: The member nations of the World Trade Organization should establish a global system that provides universal healthcare to all of those nations’ citizens. This system should centrally purchase medicines in accordance with all IP rights and laws and should then universally distribute that medicine, with funds from the richest and healthiest going to subsidize the care of the poorest and sickest as per recommendations made by the CP evidence.

2) In order for universal healthcare to be achieved for all citizens, the system has to be global so that inequity between countries (not just within countries) may be resolved.

Faulkner, 19 - ("Global Universal Healthcare: Is It Within Reach?," Middletown Media, 5-4-2019, https://muncievoice.com/22657/global-universal-healthcare-is-it-within-reach/)//va

One of the biggest questions about global healthcare is how the costs will be distributed. In developed countries, raising taxes is a valid answer, but in some poorer nations, there is little room for tax reform on an already underprivileged population. So what can be done about it? ¶ For global universal healthcare to work, costs must be shared globally. This may mean [charity in third-world nations](https://borgenproject.org/fighting-poverty-developing-countries/), and more public and private partnerships in those areas. In other cases, global organizations can be formed, and surrounding nations that are more prosperous will need to help share the burden of costs with their neighbors. ¶ The biggest key with global universal healthcare is a shift in mentality from [selfishness and nationalism](https://www.muncievoice.com/11582/gop-just-trying-derail-affordable-health-care/) to a worldwide perspective on healthcare and the welfare of world citizens. No one entity can do it alone. ¶ Is [global universal healthcare within reach](https://www.economist.com/leaders/2018/04/26/universal-health-care-worldwide-is-within-reach)? With modern technology and communication and the innovations we have seen in healthcare, the answer is yes. The question then becomes: “Will we reach for it together?” ¶

3) Most people lack access to quality basic healthcare even though they spend shocking amounts of money trying to get it – a global universal healthcare system would pool resources to ensure everyone’s access at a much more efficient price and would solve better than the money currently spent on aid because it would establish infrastructure and employ rural community health workers

Guardian, 18 - ("Universal health care, worldwide, is within reach," Economist, 4-26-2018, https://www.economist.com/leaders/2018/04/26/universal-health-care-worldwide-is-within-reach)//va

BY MANY measures the world has never been in better health. Since 2000 the number of children who die before they are five has fallen by almost half, to 5.6m. Life expectancy has reached 71, a gain of five years. More children than ever are vaccinated. Malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS are in retreat. ¶ Yet the gap between this progress and the still greater potential that medicine offers has perhaps never been wider. At least half the world is without access to what the World Health Organisation deems essential, including antenatal care, insecticide-treated bednets, screening for cervical cancer and vaccinations against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough. Safe, basic surgery is out of reach for 5bn people. ¶ Those who can get to see a doctor often pay a crippling price. More than 800m people spend over 10% of their annual household income on medical expenses; nearly 180m spend over 25%. The quality of what they get in return is often woeful. In studies of consultations in rural Indian and Chinese clinics, just 12-26% of patients received a correct diagnosis. ¶ That is a terrible waste. As this week’s special report shows, the goal of universal basic health care is sensible, affordable and practical, even in poor countries. Without it, the potential of modern medicine will be squandered. ¶ How the other half dies Universal basic health care is sensible in the way that, say, universal basic education is sensible—because it yields benefits to society as well as to individuals. In some quarters the very idea leads to a dangerous elevation of the blood pressure, because it suggests paternalism, coercion or worse. There is no hiding that public health-insurance schemes require the rich to subsidise the poor, the young to subsidise the old and the healthy to underwrite the sick. And universal schemes must have a way of forcing people to pay, through taxes, say, or by mandating that they buy insurance. ¶ But there is a principled, liberal case for universal health care. Good health is something everyone can reasonably be assumed to want in order to realise their full individual potential. Universal care is a way of providing it that is pro-growth. The costs of inaccessible, expensive and abject treatment are enormous. The sick struggle to get an education or to be productive at work. Land cannot be developed if it is full of disease-carrying parasites. According to several studies, confidence about health makes people more likely to set up their own businesses. ¶ Universal basic health care is also affordable. A country need not wait to be rich before it can have comprehensive, if rudimentary, treatment. Health care is a labour-intensive industry, and community health workers, paid relatively little compared with doctors and nurses, can make a big difference in poor countries. There is also already a lot of spending on health in poor countries, but it is often inefficient. In India and Nigeria, for example, more than 60% of health spending is through out-of-pocket payments. More services could be provided if that money—and the risk of falling ill—were pooled. ¶ The evidence for the feasibility of universal health care goes beyond theories jotted on the back of prescription pads. It is supported by several pioneering examples. Chile and Costa Rica spend about an eighth of what America does per person on health and have similar life expectancies. Thailand spends $220 per person a year on health, and yet has outcomes nearly as good as in the OECD. Its rate of deaths related to pregnancy, for example, is just over half that of African-American mothers. Rwanda has introduced ultrabasic health insurance for more than 90% of its people; infant mortality has fallen from 120 per 1,000 live births in 2000 to under 30 last year. ¶ And universal health care is practical. It is a way to prevent free-riders from passing on the costs of not being covered to others, for example by clogging up emergency rooms or by spreading contagious diseases. It does not have to mean big government. Private insurers and providers can still play an important role. ¶ Indeed such a practical approach is just what the low-cost revolution needs. Take, for instance, the design of health-insurance schemes. Many countries start by making a small group of people eligible for a large number of benefits, in the expectation that other groups will be added later. (Civil servants are, mysteriously, common beneficiaries.) This is not only unfair and inefficient, but also risks creating a constituency opposed to extending insurance to others. The better option is to cover as many people as possible, even if the services available are sparse, as under Mexico’s Seguro Popular scheme. ¶ Small amounts of spending can go a long way. Research led by Dean Jamison, a health economist, has identified over 200 effective interventions, including immunisations and neglected procedures such as basic surgery. In total, these would cost poor countries about an extra $1 per week per person and cut the number of premature deaths there by more than a quarter. Around half that funding would go to primary health centres, not city hospitals, which today receive more than their fair share of the money. ¶ The health of nations Consider, too, the $37bn spent each year on health aid. Since 2000, this has helped save millions from infectious diseases. But international health organisations can distort domestic institutions, for example by setting up parallel programmes or by diverting health workers into pet projects. A better approach, seen in Rwanda, is when programmes targeting a particular disease bring broader benefits. One example is the way that the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria finances community health workers who treat patients with HIV but also those with other diseases. ¶ Europeans have long wondered why the United States shuns the efficiencies and health gains from universal care, but its potential in developing countries is less understood. So long as half the world goes without essential treatment, the fruits of centuries of medical science will be wasted. Universal basic health care can help realise its promise. ¶

4**)** The body responsible for medicine acquisition would be able to negotiate lower prices from pharma firms without violating IPR – having seven billion customers at a lower price is better than the status quo, so innovation ramps UP because there’s a guaranteed market. This is especially true for diseases like malaria that still haven’t been cured because it’s not profitable – the system is prepared to buy those medicines on a massive scale.

5) This is the best way to maintain health equity – nothing is uneven because everyone gets the same response

5) A global system will be able to protect against future pandemics as soon as they start and do so in a unified manner

## Dollar Heg DA

#### IPR is key for U.S Dollar Centrality – it allows US firms near if not complete monopolies pushing dollars into international markets and stabilizing US financial influence

Schwartz ‘19

Schwartz, Herman Mark (2019). American hegemony: intellectual property rights, dollar centrality, and infrastructural power. Review of International Political Economy, (), 1–30. doi:10.1080/09692290.2019.1597754 // Phoenix

Mechanism one relates to Strange’s (1989) financial power: US current account deficits generate the dollar centrality that network analyses reveal through self-reinforcing dynamics prior to the network. US current account deficits result from deep seated domestic institutional arrangements in current account surplus economies that produce chronic domestic demand shortfalls. The more those export-led economies run surpluses with the United States, the more dollars they accumulate; the more dollars they accumulate, the more dollars flow through their banking systems back into dollar assets and liabilities; the more dollar assets and liabilities those banks hold on their balance sheets, the more those banks both rely on the Federal Reserve Bank (FED) as a lender of last resort or a supplier of outside money during (the inevitable) crises, and the more their staff develop habitus (Bourdieu, 1977) or the routinized behaviors at the heart of infrastructural power (Mann, 1986) that support continued use of the dollar in non-crisis times; the more those banks lend in dollars, the more counterparty debtor economies are drawn into use of the dollar; a parallel habitus emerges among export firms that reinforces use of the dollar in a Hirschman (1945)-like dynamic. If suppliers (or debtors) are borrowing those recycled dollars, they will demand payment in dollars to meet their liabilities. Contemporary late developers similarly need export markets to grow, and the United States constitutes both the biggest import market and biggest net importer in the global economy (netting intra-EU trade). This mechanism originates from institutional responses to the problem of late development and not, via lower transaction costs, the emergent network of dollar claims and liabilities itself. That said, surely dollar acceptability faces limits set by persistent US current account deficits? Prudent actors might well balk at accepting more assets denominated in a currency at risk of sustained depreciation (Bergsten & Williamson, 2004). Indeed, the 1960s Triffin dilemma pitted declining confidence about the dollar as a store of value given rising US inflation rates and a declining productivity gap between the United States and its main competitors against the need for global liquidity supplied by a US current account deficit. Today, as Eichengreen (2010) has argued, centrality for the dollar faces a similar collective action problem among holders of dollar-denominated assets – why do US current account deficits not motivate individual countries with relatively smaller dollar holdings to defect for fear of depreciation or capital losses? In today’s flexible exchange rate world, only above average US economic growth and/or profits for the firms constituting the bulk of equity market capitalization validates confidence in dollar assets. Because economic activity is organized through capitalist markets, the critical issue for differential growth (Nitzan, 1998) and asset validation is always: ‘who gets the profits and in what proportion’? Mechanism two is thus about profits, which corresponds to Strange’s (1989) productive power. US firms capture a disproportionate share of global profits, and within this firms with robust intellectual property rights (IPRs – patent, copyright brand and trademark) capture a disproportionate share of US and global profits. Here compliance with international trade treaties protecting IPRs is the focal point or center of gravity for this disproportionality. IPRs give some US firms monopoly or near monopoly power in the global (and local) commodity chains they construct. The extension of US IPR law through various trade treaties (Drahos & Braithwaite, 2003; Sell, 2003; Sell & Prakash, 2004) allows US IPR firms to capture a disproportionate share of global profits via that monopoly power. This shifts claims on value added towards those firms, concentrating profits into a small number of US firms. Though we explore this below in more depth, US firms account for a disproportionate 33.9% of cumulative profits generated by any firm appearing on the Forbes Global 2000 list from 2006 to 2018 and firms in sectors characterized by robust IPRs account for a disproportionate 26.6% of those profits. Profitability thus also rests on infrastructural power, via compliance with trade treaties and enmeshment in global value chains orchestrated by US firms. As with bank behavior, this compliance is not purely voluntary (Gruber, 2000), but rather reflects a gradient in which mutually beneficial cooperation shades into coercion as the proportion of local firms benefiting from those treaties declines. US firms are not the only ones that possess marketable intellectual property. Non-US firms that also benefit from robust global IPRs broaden the global political coalition for creating and expanding those IPRs. Yet US firms tend to control the commodity chains in which those foreign firms participate. These two mechanisms are connected: the first explains why non-US actors receive dollars (more precisely, dollar-denominated assets) and the second explains why they opt to hold those assets; put differently, the supply of and demand for dollars. The two mechanisms transform the exorbitant burden – current account deficits associated with use of the dollar as the international reserve currency – back into an exorbitant privilege. They represent a transfer of real resources back to the US economy in exchange for promises to pay back something in the future. Finally, though we will not explore this in depth, these two mechanisms are also linked to the military side of US power, where a similar logic of dominance over potential peer rivals has driven science policy and technological innovation. Put bluntly, a military-innovation complex (c.f. Eisenhower’s military-industrial complex (Hozic, 1999; Hurt, 2010; Mazzucato, 2015; Weiss, 2014)) is the research foundation for the high profit US IPR firms that in turn feed a substantial portion of cash back into the IMS. As with all such systems of power, these structural strengths contain endogenously generated weaknesses and face on-going challenges from the less powerful. Financialization and profit strategies built on IPRs endogenously produce income inequality among firms and people, which erodes compliance, potentially slows growth and destabilizes the global financial system. Domestically, the current account deficits necessary for a dollar-centric IMS (Germain & Schwartz, 2014) generated part of the anger motivating the populist voting bloc that elected Trump. In turn, the Trump Administration’s erratic trade policy, its assaults on parts of the military-innovation complex, and, most significantly, its efforts to eviscerate financial regulation simultaneously threaten the dollar’s role in the IMS and US firms’ ability to capture global profits.3 The Trump administration is one logical consequence of current account deficits that have hollowed out manufacturing employment and limited upward mobility to a narrow slice of the US population. The paper thus has four sections corresponding to the issues: Why does infrastructural power matter? Why the IMS? Why IPRs? The conclusion considers critical endogenous sources of decay.

**Collapse of dollar centrality decks the US economy, prevents stimulus, and undermines security spending which emboldens China aggression.**

**Zoffer 12** - Josh Zoffer (Legal Intern at the IMF, Yale Law), "Future of Dollar Hegemony", Harvard International Review, July 7, 2012. [http://hir.harvard.edu/article/?a=2951] DM

Despite the dollar’s long history as the international reserve currency, the past few years have seen a growing number of calls for the end of dollar hegemony. Countries as diverse as France, Russia, and China have decried the dollar’s monopoly in foreign exchange markets, while in 2009 reports of a shift away from dollar-based oil trading surfaced in the Middle East. Reported plans to move away from the dollar reflected international frustration at a system fueling the United States’ “exorbitant privilege,” as the French have called it, one that rests its stability on the financial conditions of a country mired in debt and facing a financial meltdown. **The implications of a** true **end to dollar hegemony, a shift away from the dollar as** a reserve currency and **pricing** standard **for oil** transactions**, could be catastrophic** for the United States. In the worst case scenario, **a drastic drop in demand for dollar-denominated assets would cause the interest rates** on Treasury Securities **to skyrocket, sending ripples through the US economy as the value of the dollar plummets.** What is certain, however, is that **whatever decrease in demand for US debt occurs will constrain the federal government’s ability to spend and** the ability of the United States **to defend itself.** The United States has built its foreign policy around its vast military capability; **a sudden budgetary shock and drop in military spending would leave the United States vulnerable as it scrambles to regroup** in a new security environment. **The ability** of the United States **to respond to threats** across the globe **would be diminished, and enemies would be incentivized to take aggressive action to take advantage of this new weakness. In particular, a rapidly militarizing China might be emboldened by its** partial **decoupling from US economic fortunes to adopt a bolder stance** in the South China Sea, **threatening US allies and heightening tensions** with the United States. While war with China is all but off the table in the status quo, **an international system devoid of both US military might and Chinese dependence on US debt as a place to park excess liquidity might lead to the conflict feared on both sides of the Pacific.**

**Economic collapse leads to oppressive populism and great power war.**

**Liu 11/13/18 -** Qian Liu [Economist; the first Chinese analyst to join The Economist Intelligence Unit, the research arm of the group. Before becoming the managing director, she was the director of the global economics unit and director of Access China for the EIU. She also served as the chairwoman for internal review at EIU with the European Securities and Markets Authority. Ms Liu adopted econometric models to analyse economic data and produce macroeconomic forecasts.; guest lecturer at New York University, Tsinghua University, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and Fudan University.; PhD in economics from Uppsala University, Sweden, and spent a year as a visiting researcher at the University of California, Berkeley.], “The next economic crisis could cause a global conflict. Here's why,” *World Economic Forum* (Web). Nov. 13, 2018. Accessed Feb. 16, 2019. <<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/11/the-next-economic-crisis-could-cause-a-global-conflict-heres-why/>> AT

As monetary tightening reveals the vulnerabilities in the real economy, the collapse of asset-price bubbles will trigger another economic crisis – one that could be even more severe than the last, because we have built up a tolerance to our strongest macroeconomic medications. A decade of regular adrenaline shots, in the form of **ultra-low interest rates and unconventional monetary policies, has severely depleted their power to stabilize and stimulate the economy.**¶ If history is any guide, the consequences of this mistake could extend far beyond the economy. According to Harvard’s Benjamin Friedman, **prolonged periods of economic distress have been characterized** also **by public antipathy toward minority groups or foreign countries** – attitudes that can help to **fuel unrest, terrorism, or** even **war.**¶ For example, during the Great Depression, US President Herbert Hoover signed the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, intended to protect American workers and farmers from foreign competition. In the subsequent five years, global trade shrank by two-thirds. Within a decade, World War II had begun.¶ To be sure, WWII, like World War I, was caused by a multitude of factors; there is no standard path to war. But there is reason to believe that high levels of inequality can play a significant role in stoking conflict.¶ According to research by the economist Thomas Piketty, a spike in income inequality is often followed by a great crisis. Income inequality then declines for a while, before rising again, until a new peak – and a new disaster. Though causality has yet to be proven, given the limited number of data points, this correlation should not be taken lightly, especially with wealth and income inequality at historically high levels.¶ This is all the more worrying in view of the numerous other factors stoking social unrest and diplomatic tension, including technological disruption, a record-breaking migration crisis, anxiety over globalization, political polarization, and rising nationalism. All are symptoms of failed policies that could turn out to be trigger points for a future crisis.¶ Voters have good reason to be frustrated, but the emotionally appealing **populists to whom they are increasingly giving their support** are offering ill-advised solutions that will only **make matters worse.** For example, despite the world’s unprecedented interconnectedness, multilateralism is increasingly being eschewed, as **countries** – most notably, Donald Trump’s US – **pursue unilateral, isolationist policies.** Meanwhile, proxy wars are raging in Syria and Yemen.¶ Against this background, we must take seriously the possibility that **the next economic crisis could lead to** a **large-scale military confrontation.** By the logic of the political scientist Samuel Huntington, considering such a scenario could help us avoid it, because it would force us to take action. In this case, the key will be for policymakers to pursue the structural reforms that they have long promised, while replacing finger-pointing and antagonism with a sensible and respectful global dialogue. The alternative may well be global conflagration.

## China CP

#### CP: The member nations of the World Trade Organization except the People’s Republic of China should reduce intellectual property protections on COVID-19 vaccines

#### Makes sure that only American vaccines are spread, which solves better because Chinese vaccines are too ineffective and gives countries options other than China for vaccines which prevents their rise. Mcdonald 21.

Joe Mcdonald, 21 - ("Top Chinese official admits vaccines have low effectiveness," AP NEWS, 4-10-2021, 9-5-2021https://apnews.com/article/china-gao-fu-vaccines-offer-low-protection-coronavirus-675bcb6b5710c7329823148ffbff6ef9)//AW

China currently has five vaccines in use in its mass immunization campaign, three inactivated-virus vaccines from Sinovac and Sinopharm, a one-shot vaccine from CanSino, and the last from Gao’s team in partnership with Anhui Zhifei Longcom. The effectiveness of the vaccines range from just over 50% to 79%, based on what the companies have said. The shot from Gao’s team, was given emergency use approval a month ago, and has not publicly disclosed data yet about its efficacy. Pfizer and Moderna’s vaccines, which are primarily being used in developed countries, have both been shown to be about 95% in protecting against COVID-19 in studies. As of April 2, some 34 million people in China have received the full two doses of Chinese vaccines and about 65 million received one, according to Gao.

# Moderna CP

**Text: The US should disseminate data on the Moderna Covid vaccine development and manufacturing, and use its existing IP to force Moderna to transfer its vaccine technology.**

**The US already owns Moderna IP – it doesn’t have to waive anything. It can give away the formulas and manufacturing process, and strong arm Moderna into cooperating with the threat of patent litigation – this way the US is directly responsible for providing vaccine access to the world, which solves the first advantage**

Sam **Mellins, 9-7**, 21, Jacobin, Joe Biden Should Share US Vaccine Data With the Rest of the World, https://www.jacobinmag.com/2021/09/biden-vaccine-data-moderna-covid-intellectual-property

The Biden administration may possess unilateral rights to the biochemical makeup and manufacturing process of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, a new report from advocacy group Public Citizen asserts. In a 2020 contract with Moderna, a division of the Department of Health and Human Services agreed to bankroll much of the vaccine development and manufacturing process, partially in exchange for “access to all documentation and data generated under this contract.” That documentation and data likely include the vaccine “recipe” and manufacturing process, the report finds. Disseminating that data would allow countries with fewer or less effective vaccines available to begin the process of manufacturing the Moderna jab, an important step in getting the worldwide pandemic under control, especially as the European Union continues to resist Joe Biden’s push for a temporary intellectual property waiver for COVID-19 vaccines. Wealthy vaccine-manufacturing countries like Germany, France, and the United States have pledged to fully vaccinate their own populations while also sharing doses with the developing world. But it’s not clear that a sufficient number of doses currently exist for them to make good on this promise. The European Union, for example, is on track to fall far short of its goal of donating 200 million doses to nonmember states by the end of the year. And, as of August, COVAX, the World Health Organization’s (WHO) vaccine sharing initiative, had distributed 188 million vaccines worldwide, just 19 percent of the 1.1 billion the WHO says are needed to end the pandemic. The more people that remain unvaccinated worldwide, the likelier it is that new variants will emerge, endangering vaccinated and unvaccinated alike. The Biden administration’s strategy for expanding worldwide vaccine access has largely relied on pushing for vaccine patent waivers through negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO). But those negotiations have been stymied by strong opposition from member states of the European Union, meaning that unilateral American action may be necessary to expand vaccine access on the necessary scale. Legally, the United States may already have the ability to do so. **The terms between Moderna and the federal government specify that the government possesses rights to the vaccine technology developed under the contract,** meaning that **it can unilaterally publish or share the data with anyone**. Furthermore, an essential component of the Moderna vaccine was invented and patented by US government researchers, meaning that the government could threaten a patent infringement suit against Moderna if the company refuses to share its vaccine know-how. “Moderna did not invent the vaccine by itself,” said Zain Rizvi, law and policy researcher at Public Citizen and author of the report. “This private corporation learned how to scale up and scale out manufacturing on the taxpayers’ dime. Public dollars should come with public obligations.” Moderna’s stock price has increased from $30 in March 2020 to $425 today. Government Rights to Vaccine Know-How **Countries** such as South Korea **have expressed eagerness for the** intellectual property **(IP) that would allow them to make vaccines, and they are confident that their manufacturing sectors will be able to exploit it**. But efforts to secure it have been rebuffed by the American government, Korean officials say. “We have asked Washington to transfer technology for vaccine production, but US officials said it is something that should be decided by the private sector,” one Korean official told the Financial Times. Korean biotech companies are poised to make significant investments in increasing the country’s vaccine manufacturing capacity. Making the Moderna production data available could provide a boost to these efforts. The question at the heart of his report, Rizvi said, is whether all of the data essential to the vaccine manufacture process is covered by the government’s contract. Parts of the process may have been developed before the contract went into effect or may be outside of the contract’s purview. The federal government would have only “limited” rights to this data and would need to compensate Moderna for its use. While Rizvi’s analysis argues that the government possesses “unlimited” rights to all necessary data, his report’s scope was limited by a lack of transparency in the government’s contract with Moderna, he admits. “The part of the contract that says what is limited-rights data is redacted. That’s a big problem, and the US government should clarify the scope of the rights it may hold,” he said. But judging from what is publicly available, it seems likely that the government possesses significant rights to the vaccine data. This is true of the Moderna vaccine because, unlike most other COVID-19 vaccine makers, Moderna was not a large pharmaceutical company before becoming a major vaccine supplier — in 2019, it produced fewer than one hundred thousand doses across all of its products. The contract between Moderna and the US government included federal support for increasing mRNA vaccine manufacture and expanding it to many more locations — meaning that the technology for how to do those things may be part of the data to which the US government possesses unlimited rights. “Based off of publicly available records, we can tell that the US government made pivotal contributions to Moderna’s scaling up and scaling out process,” Rizvi said. “These were not just minor modifications. They were substantial contributions.”The contract also required Moderna to provide the government with copies of documents submitted to the FDA that include the chemical recipe for the vaccine, a component as necessary as the technical know-how, states the report. Moderna is unlikely to respond favorably to a claim that their most valuable intellectual property is co-owned by the US government. “They’ll argue that some of the technologies that were used to develop the vaccine were things they’d already developed in earlier years . . . that the government had fewer rights in,” said James Love, director of Knowledge Ecology International, a nonprofit that researches intellectual property rights in health care technology. Should those arguments prevail, some purchase of Moderna’s intellectual property may be necessary. “There’s still space for buyouts to acquire what you don’t get through all those other measures,” Love said. Moderna did not respond to a request for comment. Secret Trump Deals? It’s also possible that Alex Azar, a former pharmaceutical executive who served as Donald Trump’s secretary of Health and Human Services, signed away the government’s vaccine rights to Moderna. Without access to the unredacted contract, it’s difficult to know for sure. But even if the Trump administration gave away the US government’s rights in the Moderna vaccine, the government possesses another point of leverage: patent rights over a key vaccine component. In 2016, a team of researchers working for the US government, Dartmouth College, and the Scripps Research Institute developed and patented a technology for producing antibodies that neutralize coronavirus spike proteins — a piece of molecular engineering essential in the development of the COVID-19 vaccines. Moderna and other pharmaceutical companies, including Pfizer-BioNTech and Johnson & Johnson, used this technology in developing its vaccines, but only Pfizer-BioNTech acquired the rights to the patent. This means that the threat of a patent infringement suit could be used to convince Moderna to share its vaccine tech, said Christopher Morten, a law professor Columbia University. “It’s an extra tool the US government has to cut a meaningful deal with Moderna,” Morten told us. “In exchange for waiving potentially multibillion-dollar liability that Moderna faces for using the US government’s tech without its permission, the US government could get Moderna to commit to sharing its process with the WHO.” Chemical and technical know-how aren’t the only obstacles to wider vaccine manufacturing. Even if the US government were to publish the data, some level of collaboration with Moderna might still be necessary to ensure that vaccines were being produced safely. “You really need to have deep technology transfer,” Love said. “People need to walk you through it and hold your hand, show you how things are actually done, and certify that you’re doing it the same way.” And material obstacles might arise as well. Shortages of both specialized biochemical products like lipid nanoparticles, essential to the manufacture of mRNA vaccines, and more prosaic items like glass vials could make it difficult to increase vaccine production on a global scale, even if all necessary knowledge became public. But while kinks in the supply chain might initially present obstacles, they’re likely not insurmountable. “I think the bottlenecks on inputs are kind of an exaggerated problem,” Love said. “In the short run, there are all kinds of supply problems and spikes in prices, and you can’t get what you need. But as prices rise, markets respond fairly fast.”