### CP – Police

**CP Text: A just government should recognize the unconditional right of workers to strike with the exception of police officers**

#### The status of the counterplan is Conditional

**Police strikes are the blue flu and allow for power grabbing through fearmongering and public pressure – that shores up police authority and legitimizes police brutality**

**Grim 20 Andrew Grim, 7-1-2020, Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, is at work on a dissertation on anti-police brutality activism in post-WWII Newark. "Perspective," Washington Post,** [**https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/07/01/what-is-blue-flu-how-has-it-increased-police-power/**](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/07/01/what-is-blue-flu-how-has-it-increased-police-power/)**] //ww dl**

What is the “blue flu,” and why might it strike New York City police? This weekend, officers from the New York City Police Department are rumored to be planning a walkout to protest calls to defund the police. This builds on a similar tactic used by police in Atlanta less than a month ago. On June 16, Fulton County District Attorney, Paul L. Howard Jr. announced that Garrett Rolfe, the Atlanta police officer who fatally shot Rayshard Brooks, would face charges of felony murder and aggravated assault. That night, scores of Atlanta Police Department officers caught the “blue flu,” calling out sick en masse to protest the charges against Rolfe. Such walkouts constitute, in effect, illegal strikes — laws in all 50 states prohibit police strikes. Yet, there is nothing new about the blue flu. It is astrategy long employed by police unions and rank-and-file officers during contract negotiations, disputes over reforms and, like in Atlanta, in response to disciplinary action against individual officers. The intent is to dramatize policedisputes with municipal government and rally the citizenry to their side. But the result of such protests matter deeply as we consider police reform today. Historically, blue flu strikes have helped expand police power, ultimately limiting the ability of city governments to reform, constrain or conduct oversight over the police. They allow the police to leverage public fear of crime to extract concessions from municipalities. This became clear in Detroit more than 50 years ago. In June 1967, tensions arose between Detroit Mayor Jerome Cavanagh and the Detroit Police Officers Association (DPOA), which represented the city’s 3,300 patrol officers. The two were at odds primarily over police demands for a pay increase. Cavanagh showed no signs of caving to the DPOA’s demands and had, in fact, proposed to cut the police department’s budget. On June 15, the DPOA escalated the dispute with a walkout: 323 officers called in sick. The number grew over the next several days as the blue flu spread, reaching a height of 800 absences on June 17. In tandem with the walkout, the DPOA launched a **fearmongering** media campaign to win over the public. They took out ads in local newspapers warning Detroit residents, “How does it feel to be held up? Stick around and find out!” This campaign took place at a time of rising urban crime rates and uprisings, and only a month before the 1967 Detroit riot, making it especially potent. The DPOA understood this climate and used it to its advantage. With locals already afraid of crime and displeased at Cavanagh’s failure to rein it in, they would be more likely to demand the return of the police than to demand retribution against officers for an illegal strike. The DPOA’s strategy paid off. The walkout left Detroit Police Commissioner Ray Girardin feeling “practically helpless.” “I couldn’t force them to work,” he later told The Washington Post. Rather than risk public ire by allowing the blue flu to continue, Cavanagh relented. Ultimately, the DPOA got the raises it sought, making Detroit officers the highest paid in the nation. This was far from the end of the fight between Cavanagh and the DPOA. In the ensuing months and years, they continued to tussle over wages, pensions, the budget, the integration of squad cars and the hiring of black officers. The threat of another blue flu loomed over all these disputes, helping the union to win many of them. And Detroit was not an outlier.Throughout the 1960s, ’70s and ’80s, the blue flu was a [ubiquitous and highly effective](https://www.akpress.org/our-enemies-in-blue.html) tactic in Baltimore, Memphis, New Orleans, Chicago, Newark, New York and many other cities. In most cases, as author Kristian Williams writes, “When faced with a walkout or slowdown, the authorities usually decided that the pragmatic need to get the cops back to work trumped the city government’s long term interest in diminishing the rank and file’s power.” But each time a city relented to this pressure, they ceded more and more power to police unions, which would turn to the strategy repeatedly to defend officers’ interests — particularly when it came to efforts to address systemic racism in police policies and practices. In 1970, black residents of Pittsburgh’s North Side neighborhood raised an outcry over the “hostile sadistic treatment” they experienced at the hands of white police officers. They lobbied Mayor Peter F. Flaherty to assign more black officers to their neighborhood. The mayor agreed,transferring several white officers out of the North Side and replacing them with black officers. While residents cheered this decision, white officers and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), which represented them, were furious. They slammed the transfer as “**discrimination**” against whites. About 425 of the Pittsburgh Police Department’s 1,600 police officers called out sick in protest. Notably, black police officers broke with their white colleagues and refused to join the walkout. They praised the transfer as a “long overdue action” and viewed the walkout as a betrayal of officers’ oath to protect the public. Nonetheless, the tactic paid off. After several days, Flaherty caved to the “open revolt” of white officers, agreeing to halt the transfers and instead submit the dispute to binding arbitration between the city and the police union. Black officers, though, continued to speak out against their union’s support of racist practices, and many of them later resigned from the union in protest. Similar scenarios played out in Detroit, Chicago and other cities in the 1960s and ’70s, as white officers continually staged walkouts to preserve the segregated status quo in their departments. These blue flu strikes amounted to an authoritarian **power grab** by police officers bent on avoiding oversight, rejecting reforms and shoring up their own authority. In the aftermath of the 1967 Detroit walkout, a police commissioner’s aide strongly criticized the police union’s strong-arm tactics, saying “it smacks of a police state.” The clash left one newspaper editor wondering, “Who’s the Boss of the Detroit Police?” But in the “law and order” climate of the late 1960s, such criticism did not resonate enough to stir a groundswell of public opinion against the blue flu. And police unions dismissed critics by arguing that officers had “no alternative” but to engage in walkouts to get city officials to make concessions. Crucially, the very effectiveness of the blue flu may be premised on a myth. While police unions use public fear of crime skyrocketing without police on duty, in many cases, the absence of police did not lead to a rise in crime. In New York City in 1971, [for example](https://untappedcities.com/2020/06/12/the-week-without-police-what-we-can-learn-from-the-1971-police-strike/), 20,000 officers called out sick for five days over a pay dispute without any apparent increase in crime. The most striking aspect of the walkout, as one observer noted, “might be just how unimportant it seemed.” Today, municipalities are under immense pressure from activists who have taken to the streets to protest the police killings of black men and women. Some have already responded by enacting new policies and cutting police budgets. As it continues, more blue flus are likely to follow as officers seek to wrest back control of the public debate on policing and reassert their independence.

**These strikes strengthen unions that contribute to increased violence, and protection of misconduct**

**Serwer 6/24 [**Serwer, Adam. “Bust the Police Unions.” The Atlantic, Atlantic Media Company, 24 June 2021, [www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/07/bust-the-police-unions/619006/](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/07/bust-the-police-unions/619006/)] //recut ww dl

**Police unions found that they had new leverage at the bargaining table**. In contract negotiations with cities**, they soughtnot merely higher pay or better benefits, but protections for officers accused of misconduct.** At this, they proved remarkably successful. **Reviewing 82 active police-union contracts in major American cities, a 2017 Reuters investigation found that a majority “call for departments to erase disciplinary records, some after just six months.” Many contracts allow officers to access investigative information about complaints or charges against them before being interrogated, so they can get their stories straight. Some require the officer’s approval before making information regarding misconduct public; others set time limits on when citizens can file complaints. A 2017 Washington Post investigation found that since 2006, of the 1,881 officers fired for misconduct at the nation’s largest departments, 451 had been reinstated because of requirements in union contracts. For many police unions, enacting and enforcing barriers to accountability became a primary concern.** In 2014, in San Antonio, the local police union was willing to accept caps on pay and benefits as long as the then–city manager abandoned her efforts to, among other reforms, prevent police from erasing past misconduct records. The damage that these types of provisions have done is hard to overstate. In one recent study, the economist Rob Gillezeau of the University of Victoria found that **after departments unionized, there was a “substantial increase” in police killings of civilians. Neither crime rates nor the safety of officers themselveswas affected. The provisions do more than simply protect bad actors. They cultivate an unhealthy and secretive culture within police departments, strengthening a phenomenon known as the code of silence**. In a 2000 survey of police officers by the National Institute of Justice, only 39 percent of respondents agreed with the statement “Police officers always report serious criminal violations involving abuse of authority by fellow officers.”

**That leads to endless amounts of racist violence and the bolstering of the prison industrial complex.**

**Chaney and Ray 13**, Cassandra (Has a PhD and is a professor at LSU. Also has a strong focus in the structure of Black families) , and Ray V. Robertson (Also has a PhD and is a criminal justice professor at LSU). "Racism and police brutality in America." *Journal of African American Studies* 17.4 (2013): 480-505. SM//do I really need a card for this

Racism and Discrimination According to Marger (2012), “racism is an ideology, or belief system, designed to justify and rationalize racial and ethnic inequality” (p. 25) and “discrimination, most basically, is behavior aimed at denying members of particular ethnic groups’ equal access to societal rewards” (p. 57). Defining both of these concepts from the onset is important for they provide the lens through which our focus on the racist and discriminatory practices of law enforcement can occur. Since the time that Africans [African Americans] were forcibly brought to America, they have been the victims of racist and discriminatory practices that have been spurred and/or substantiated by those who create and enforce the law. For example, The Watts Riots of 1965, the widespread assaults against Blacks in Harlem during the 1920s (King 2011), law enforcement violence against Black women (i.e., Malaika Brooks, Jaisha Akins, Frankie Perkins, Dr. Mae Jemison, Linda Billups, Clementine Applewhite) and other ethnic women of color (Ritchie 2006), the beating of Rodney King, and the deaths of Amadou Diallo in the 1990s and Trayvon Martin more recently are just a few public examples of the historical and contemporaneous ways in which Blacks in America have been assaulted by members of the police system (King 2011; Loyd 2012; Murch 2012; Rafail et al. 2012). In Punishing Race (2011), law professor Michael Tonry’s research findings point to the fact that Whites tend to excuse police brutality against Blacks because of the racial animus that they hold against Blacks. Thus, to Whites, Blacks are viewed as deserving of harsh treatment in the criminal justice system (Peffley and Hurwitz 2013). At first glance, such an assertion may seem to be unfathomable, buy that there is an extensive body of literature which suggests that Black males are viewed as the “prototypical criminal,” and this notion is buttressed in the media, by the general public, and via disparate sentencing outcomes (Blair et al. 2004; Eberhardt et al. 2006; Gabiddon 2010; Maddox and Gray 2004; Oliver and Fonash 2002; Staples 2011). For instance, Blair et al. (2004) revealed that Black males with more Afrocentric features (e.g., dark skin, broad noses, full lips) may receive longer sentences than Blacks with less Afrocentric features, i.e., lighter skin and straighter hair (Eberhardt et al. 2006). Shaun Gabiddon in Criminological Theories on Race and Crime (2010) discussed the concept of “Negrophobia” which was more extensively examined by Armour (1997). Negrophobia can be surmised as an irrational of Blacks, which includes a fear of being victimized by Black, that can result in Whites shooting or harming an AfricanAmerican based on criminal/racial stereotypes (Armour 1997). The aforementioned racialized stereotypical assumptions can be deleterious because they can be used by Whites to justify shooting a Black person on the slightest of pretense (Gabiddon 2010). Finally, African-American males represent a group that has been much maligned in the larger society (Tonry 2011). Further, as victims of the burgeoning prison industrial complex, mass incarceration, and enduring racism, the barriers to truly independent Black male agency are ubiquitous and firmly entrenched (Alexander 2010; Chaney 2009; Baker 1996; Blackmon 2008; Dottolo and Stewart 2008; Karenga 2010; Martin et al. 2001; Smith and Hattery 2009). Thus, racism and discrimination heightens the psychological distress experienced by Blacks (Robertson 2011; Pieterse et al. 2012), as well as their decreased mortality in the USA (Muennig and Murphy 2011). Police Brutality Against Black Males According to Walker (2011), police brutality is defined as “the use of excessive physical force or verbal assault and psychological intimidation” (p. 579). Although one recent study suggests that the NYPD has become better behaved due to greater race and gender diversity (Kane and White 2009), Blacks are more likely to be the victims of police brutality. A growing body of scholarly research related to police brutality has revealed that Blacks are more likely than Whites to make complaints regarding police brutality (Smith and Holmes 2003), to be accosted while operating [driving] a motorized vehicle (“Driving While Black”), and to underreport how often they are stopped due to higher social desirability factors (TomaskovicDevey et al. 2006). Interestingly, data obtained from the General Social Survey (GSS), a representative sample conducted biennially by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago for the years 1994 through 2004, provide further proof regarding the acceptance of force against Blacks. In particular, the GSS found Whites to be significantly (29.5 %) more accepting of police use of force when a citizen was attempting to escape custody than Blacks when analyzed using the chi-squared statistical test (p The average Southern policeman is a promoted poor White with a legal sanction to use a weapon. His social heritage has taught him to despise the Negroes, and he has had little education which could have changed him….The result is that probably no group of Whites in America have a lower opinion of the Negro people and are more fixed in their views than Southern policeman. (Myrdal 1944, pp. 540–541) Myrdal (1944) was writing on results from a massive study that he undertook in the late 1930s. He was writing at a time that even the most conservative among us would have to admit was not a colorblind society (if one even believes in such things). But current research does corroborate his observations that less educated police officers tend to be the most aggressive and have the most formal complaints filed against them when compared to their more educated counterparts (Hassell and Archbold 2010; Jefferis et al. 2011). Tonry (2011) delineates some interesting findings from the 2001 Race, Crime, and Public Opinion Survey that can be applied to understanding why the larger society tolerates police misconduct when it comes to Black males. The survey, which involved approximately 978 non-Hispanic Whites and 1,010 Blacks, revealed a divergence in attitudes between Blacks and Whites concerning the criminal justice system (Tonry 2011). For instance, 38 % of Whites and 89 % of Blacks viewed the criminal justice system as biased against Blacks (Tonry 2011). Additionally, 8 % of Blacks and 56 % of Whites saw the criminal justice system as treating Blacks fairly (Tonry 2011). Perhaps most revealing when it comes to facilitating an environment ripe for police brutality against Black males, 68 % of Whites and only 18 % of Whites expressed confidence in law enforcement (Tonry 2011). Is a society wherein the dominant group overwhelming approves of police performance willing to do anything substantive to curtail police brutality against Black males? Police brutality is not a new phenomenon. The Department of Justice (DOJ) office of Civil Rights (OCR) has investigated more than a dozen police departments in major cities across the USA on allegations of either racial discrimination or police brutality (Gabbidon and Greene 2013). To make the aforementioned even more clear, according to Gabbidon and Greene (2013), “In 2010, the OCR was investigating 17 police departments across the country and monitoring five settlements regarding four police agencies” (pp. 119–120). Plant and Peruche (2005) provide some useful information into why police officers view Black males as potential perpetrators and could lead to acts of brutality. In their research, the authors suggest that since Black people in general, and Black males in particular, are caricatured as aggressive and criminal, police are more likely to view Black men as a threat which justifies the disproportionate use of deadly force. Therefore, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that police officers’ decisions to act aggressively may, to some extent, be influenced by race (Jefferis et al. 2011). The media’s portrayals of Black men are often less than sanguine. Bryson’s (1998) work in this area provides empirical evidence that the mass media that has been instrumental in portraying Black men as studs, super detectives, or imitation White men and has a general negative effect on how these men are regarded by others. Such characterizations can be so visceral in nature that “prototypes” of criminal suspects are more likely to be African-American (Oliver et al. 2004). Not surprisingly, the more Afrocentric the African-American’s facial features, the more prone he or she is expected to be deviant (Eberhardt et al. 2006). Interestingly, it is probable that less than flattering depictions of Black males on television and in news stories are activating pre-existing stereotypes possessed by Whites as opposed to facilitating their creation. According to Oliver et al. (2004), “it is important to keep in mind that media consumption is an active process, with viewers’ existing attitudes and beliefs playing a larger role in how images are attended to, interpreted, and remembered” (p. 89). Moreover, it is reductionist to presuppose that individual is powerless in constructing a palatable version of reality and is solely under the control of the media and exercises no agency. Lastly, Peffley and Hurwitz (2013) describe what can be perceived as one of the more deleterious results of negative media caricatures of Black males. More specifically, the authors posit that most Whites believe that Blacks are disproportionately inclined to engage in criminal behavior and are the deserving on harsh treatment by the criminal justice system. On the other hand, such an observation is curious because most urban areas are moderate to highly segregated residentially which would preclude the frequent and significant interaction needed to make such scathing indictments (Bonilla-Silva 2009). Consequently, the aforementioned racial animus has the effect of increased White support for capital punishment if questions regarding its legitimacy around if capital punishment is too frequently applied to Blacks (Peffley and Hurwitz 2013; Tonry 2011). Ultimately, erroneous (negative) portrayals of crime and community, community race and class identities, and concerns over neighborhood change all contribute to place-specific framing of “the crime problem.” These frames, in turn, shape both intergroup dynamics and support for criminal justice policy (Leverentz 2012).

#### Police violence leads to a variety of health issues including diabetes, obesity, and a decrease in years of life.

**Sandoiu 20** [Ana Sandoiu, Ana arrived at Medical News Today armed with two bachelor’s degrees, one master’s degree, and a strong belief in “combinatorial play” — the idea that we need to feed our brains with things as diverse as physics and poetry to come up with anything creative. “Police violence: Physical and Mental Health Impacts on Black Americans” Published June 22, 2020. https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/police-violence-physical-and-mental-health-impacts-on-black-americans/]

Data such as these reinforce the notion that officials should regard aggressive policing as a matter of public health. As Edwards and colleagues [say](https://www.pnas.org/content/116/34/16793) of their findings, “This study reinforces calls to treat police violence as a public health issue.” “Racially unequal exposure to the risk of state violence has profound consequences for public health, democracy, and racial stratification.” The lead author of the study also [commented](https://www.rutgers.edu/news/police-use-fatal-force-identified-leading-cause-death-young-men) on the results of the study at the time. Although they made these comments in August 2019, they express a sentiment that rings all the more true now, in light of the George Floyd murder and the BLM protests that started at the end of May this year. “The inequality is not surprising […]. All you have to do is turn on the news to see that people of color are at a much greater risk of police-related harm. What we lack in this country are the solid estimates of police-related deaths because there is no official database where this information is stored.” – Frank Edwards, Ph.D. “[I]f we are going to try and change police practices that aren’t working, we need to track this information better.” Further reasons for treating police violence as a public health issue include the effects it has on the health of Black communities. Research suggests that these effects are particularly heightened when police disproportionately apply use of force on Black men compared with white men in a community, and when people perceive this use of force as unfair. For instance, a [study](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/socf.12361) by Abigail A. Sewell — an associate professor of sociology at Emory University in Atlanta, GA — found a link between “living in minority communities with a high concentration of use of force by police against pedestrians” and a higher risk of diabetes and obesity. However, the use of force by police in these communities was also associated with a lower risk of “poor/fair health.” This was before the researcher accounted for the ethnoracial composition of the community. Once they had accounted for ethnoracial composition, the analysis showed that: “[L]iving in areas with a heavy presence of whites where there are large racial differences in police use of force is associated with an increased risk of poor/fair self‐rated health, high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity.” – Abigail A. Sewell. Other researchers have looked at the years of life lost (YLLs) as a result of police violence. YLLs estimate the number of years a person could have lived had they not died prematurely. The authors of a 2018 report appearing in the [*BMJ*](https://jech.bmj.com/content/72/8/715) explain that YLLs are a key metric for evaluating public health. “YLLs are a useful metric for comparing the burden of diseases and injuries across different populations and health conditions, and for setting priorities and agendas in health policy,” they write. The report found that 57,375 years of life were lost due to police violence in 2015, while 54,754 years of life were lost in 2016. Importantly, people of color accounted for 51.5% of YLLs, despite making up only 38.5% of the population**. The most affected age group was 25–34.** Anthony Bui, from the David Geffen School of Medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles, and colleagues conclude that: “YLLs highlight that police violence disproportionately impacts young people, and the young people affected are disproportionately people of color. Framing police violence as an important cause of deaths among young adults provides another valuable lens to motivate prevention efforts.”

### DA: Innovation - Generic

#### Uniqueness

#### Innovation is high now and it’s imperative to keep it up

Mercury News et al Mercury News & East Bay Times Editorial Boards, 6/4/21, "Editorial: How America can win the global tech war," Mercury News, <https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/06/04/editorial-why-silicon-valley-needs-endless-frontier-bill/>

The nation that wins the global tech race will dominate the 21st century. This has been true since the 1800s. Given the rapid pace of innovation and tech’s impact on our economy and defense capabilities in the last decade, there is ample evidence to suggest that the need for investment in tech research and development has never been greater. China has been closing the tech gap in recent years by making bold investments in tech with the intent of overtaking the United States. This is a tech war we cannot afford to lose. It’s imperative that Congress pass the Endless Frontier Act and authorize the biggest R&D tech investment in the United States since the Apollo years. Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Santa Clara, made a massive increase in science and technology investment a major part of his platform while campaigning for a seat in Congress in 2016. Now the co-author of the 600-page legislation is on the cusp of pushing through a bipartisan effort that has been years in the making. Khanna and his co-authors, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., Sen. Todd Young, R-Ind., and Rep. Mike Gallagher, R-Wisc., are shepherding the bill through the Senate, which is expected to approve it sometime later this month. That would set up a reconciliation debate between the House and Senate that would determine the bill’s final language. The ultimate size of the investment is still very much up in the air. Khanna would like Congress to authorize $100 billion over a five-year period for critical advancements in artificial intelligence, biotechnology, cybersecurity, semiconductors and other cutting-edge technologies. The Senate is talking of knocking that number down to $50 billion or $75 billion. They should be reminded of China Premier Li Keqiang’s March announcement that China would increase its research and development spending by an additional 7% per year between 2021 and 2025. The United States still outspends China in R&D, spending $612 billion on research and development in 2019, compared to China’s $514 billion. But the gap is narrowing. At the turn of the century, China was only spending $33 billion a year on R&D, while the United States was spending nearly 10 times that amount.

#### Links

#### Aff increases violent union strikes which kill productivity in tech companies

Chaithra Hanasoge, No Date, "The Union Strikes: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly," Supply Wisdom, <https://www.supplywisdom.com/resources/the-union-strikes-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/>

The strike witnessed several instances of social disorder, violence and clashes, ultimately calling for third party intervention (Secretary of Labor – Thomas Perez) to initiate negotiations between the parties. Also, as a result of the strike, Verizon reported lower than expected revenues in the second quarter of 2016. Trade unions/ labor unions aren’t just this millennia’s product and has been in vogue since times immemorial. Unions, to ensure fairness to the working class, have gone on strike for better working conditions and employee benefits since the industrial revolution and are as strong today as they were last century. With the advent of technology and advancement in artificial intelligence, machines are grabbing the jobs which were once the bastion of the humans. So, questions that arise here are, what relevance do unions have in today’s work scenario? And, are the strikes organized by them avoidable? As long as the concept of labor exists and employees feel that they are not receiving their fair share of dues, unions will exist and thrive. Union protests in most cases cause work stoppages, and in certain cases, disruption of law and order. Like in March 2016, public servants at Federal Government departments across Australia went on a series of strikes over failed pay negotiations, disrupting operations of many government departments for a few days. Besides such direct effects, there are many indirect effects as well such as strained employee relations, slower work processes, lesser productivity and unnecessary legal hassles. Also, union strikes can never be taken too lightly as they have prompted major overturn of decisions, on a few occasions. Besides the Verizon incident that was a crucial example of this, nationwide strikes were witnessed in India in March and April this year when the national government introduced reforms related to the withdrawal regulations and interest rate of employee provident fund, terming it as ‘anti-working class’. This compelled the government to withhold the reform for further review. In France, strike against labor law reforms in May turned violent, resulting in riots and significant damage to property. The incident prompted the government to consider modifications to the proposed reforms.

#### And, I.T. unions are unnecessary, but kill tech companies innovation

Vynck etal Gerrit De Vynck, Nitasha Tiku and Jay Greene , 4-30-2021, "Six things to know about the latest efforts to bring unions to Big Tech," Washington Post, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2021/01/26/tech-unions-explainer/> Gerrit De Vynck is a tech reporter for The Washington Post. He writes about Google and the algorithms that increasingly shape society. De Vynck also helps lead The Post's coverage of ransomware and misinformation. He previously covered tech for seven years at Bloomberg News.

Well before the digital era, the area now known as Silicon Valley was the largest fruit-producing region in the world and a hotbed of labor activity. That changed when tech took over in the 1960s. Robert Noyce, the founder of Intel, laid out the industry’s union-skeptical position early on. “Remaining nonunion is essential for survival for most of our companies. If we had the work rules of union companies, we’d all go out of business,” Noyce once said, according to “[Silicon Valley Fever](https://books.google.com/books/about/Silicon_Valley_Fever.html?id=frYrAAAAYAAJ),” a 1984 book chronicling the tech industry’s early years. Noyce’s position has remained an article of faith ever since. For tech founders, the ability to shift their businesses quickly, hiring and firing as needed and paying workers with stock options instead of offering traditional salaries and benefits, is key to success. In his book “Temp,” Cornell University history professor Louis Hyman argues that the use of contractors in Silicon Valley is an extension of that mind-set, allowing companies to downsize quickly without looking as though they were laying off hundreds of employees. Most Silicon Valley leaders still see their industry as a true meritocracy, where employees are generously compensated, can easily switch jobs and don’t need a union to advocate for them. But a growing number of activists both inside and outside the companies don’t agree. Union advocates say discrimination faced by women and people of color at the tech companies proves the need for stronger worker protections. Unions can also be a way for workers to have their voices heard about the issues they have with decisions executives are making, such as which politicians to give money to or whether to sell software to the military and police.

#### Impact

#### Tech innovation key to solve every existential threat – outweighs on probability and magnitude

Dylan Matthews; dylan@Vox.com, 10-26-2018, "How to help people millions of years from now," Vox, <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2018/10/26/18023366/far-future-effective-altruism-existential-risk-doing-good>

But what does prioritizing the far future even mean? The most literal thing it could mean is preventing human extinction, to ensure that the species persists as long as possible. For the long-term-focused effective altruists I know, that typically means identifying concrete threats to humanity’s continued existence — like unfriendly artificial intelligence, or a pandemic, or global warming/out of control geoengineering — and engaging in activities to prevent that specific eventuality. But in a set of slides he made in 2013, Beckstead makes a compelling case that while that’s certainly part of what caring about the far future entails, approaches that address specific threats to humanity (which he calls “targeted” approaches to the far future) have to complement “broad” approaches, where instead of trying to predict what’s going to kill us all, you just generally try to keep civilization running as best it can, so that it is, as a whole, well-equipped to deal with potential extinction events in the future, not just in 2030 or 2040 but in 3500 or 95000 or even 37 million. In other words, caring about the far future doesn’t mean just paying attention to low-probability risks of total annihilation; it also means acting on pressing needs now. For example: We’re going to be better prepared to prevent extinction from AI or a supervirus or global warming if society as a whole makes a lot of scientific progress. And a significant bottleneck there is that the vast majority of humanity doesn’t get high-enough-quality education to engage in scientific research, if they want to, which reduces the odds that we have enough trained scientists to come up with the breakthroughs we need as a civilization to survive and thrive. So maybe one of the best things we can do for the far future is to improve school systems — here and now — to harness the group economist Raj Chetty calls “lost Einsteins” (potential innovators who are thwarted by poverty and inequality in rich countries) and, more importantly, the hundreds of millions of kids in developing countries dealing with even worse education systems than those in depressed communities in the rich world. What if living ethically for the far future means living ethically now? Beckstead mentions some other broad, or very broad, ideas (these are all his descriptions): Help make computers faster so that people everywhere can work more efficiently Change intellectual property law so that technological innovation can happen more quickly Advocate for open borders so that people from poorly governed countries can move to better-governed countries and be more productive Meta-research: improve incentives and norms in academic work to better advance human knowledge Improve education Advocate for political party X to make future people have values more like political party X

### DA: Essential Workers - Public Transit

#### Link Story

#### Affirmative allow all workers to strike, but even short-term disruptions of public transportation, because of strikes, have long-term ramifications for accident risk and air pollution.

Bauernschuster, Stefan. “When Labor Disputes Bring Cities To A Standstill: The Impact Of Public Transit Strikes On Traffic, A.” American Economic Journal: Economic Policy 9:1. February, 2017. <[https://www.jstor.org/stable/26156424?seq=1#metadata\_info\_tab\_contents](http://www.jstor.org/stable/26156424?seq=1&metadata_info_tab_contents)>.

Mass Transit Externalities.—Our paper also makes contact with a growing literature in economics that examines the role of mass transit in mitigating agglomeration diseconomies, such as traffic congestion, accident risk, and pollution emissions.41 **Anderson (2014)** evaluates the congestion relief benefit of the Los Angeles public transportation system by exploiting a strike by transit workers in 2003 during which the entire system shut down for 35 days. The author uses the abrupt and complete cessation of service to quantify the effects of transit provision on congestion. His regression discontinuity estimates suggest that the total congestion relief benefit of operating the Los Angeles transit system lie between $1.2 billion to $4.1 billion per year. The strike episodes we exploit in this study differ from the 2003 Los Angeles transit strike in one important aspect: they did not lead to a complete shutdown of the entire system, but to substantial disruptions in terms of service frequency. While our empirical results can therefore not be thought of as capturing the effects of transit provision, they might to a certain degree reveal the effects of marginal changes in the transit network, such as an increase in service quality or connection frequency. However, one caveat in this respect is that the impact of long-term changes in service quality is likely different than the short-run effect resulting from strikes. One simple reason is that long-run adaptations in commuter behavior might differ from those in the short-run. Thus, our main contribution to the literature on mass transit externalities lies in showing that even short-term disruptions of public transport networks can have far reaching consequences for urban populations in terms of time lost to travel, accident risk, air pollution, and health.

#### And, Public transit strikes cause a long-term increase in greenhouse gas emissions---if strikes make public transit less reliable, people's commuting habits will fundamentally shift.

Biber, Eric. “Are Transit Strikes Bad For The Environment?” Legal Planet. January 03, 2014. Web. October 13, 2021. <https://legal-planet.org/2014/01/03/are-transit-strikes-bad-for-the- environment/>.

Even if you’re not from the Bay Area, you’ve probably heard about the labor troubles at the Bay Area Rapid Transit system (BART) – the rail system that is one of the largest public transit providers here in the Bay Area in terms of passengers. Hundreds of thousands of commuters use the BART system on a daily basis. But twice this year, those commuters had to find alternative routes to work because of strikes by the unions that operate the BART system. Those strikes have prompted a backlash, even in the union-friendly Bay Area and California. A recent poll found that for the first time a plurality of Californians stated that unions did more harm than good. A majority of Bay Area residents in the same poll supported a ban on strikes by public transit employees. Board members of BART are now pushing for such a strike ban, as is the leading Republican in the State Senate. There are a lot of issues that such a proposal brings up, but I want to focus on the environmental ones here. It seems clear that transit strikes have negative environmental impacts. First, during a strike more individuals will drive, simply because transit options they rely upon are no longer available. That means more congestion and more air pollution. But I think more important are the long-term impacts of a strike on the use of public transit by commuters. Reliability is one of the most important factors determining whether people will use a transit system. If they can’t count on the system, many people won’t use it. (Here is a recent study by Berkeley graduate students on the issue, with some related news coverage.) Reliability may be particularly important when people make major investment and lifestyle decisions. For instance, someone may be considering whether to buy or rent a residence in an area with minimal parking but excellent public transit service. Will that person make the commitment to an urban residential environment (including giving up their car) if they are not certain that transit service is reliable and regular? Lack of trust in the reliability of a public transit system may lead people to choose residential options that are more auto- dependent. The result may be increased greenhouse gas emissions, increased air pollution, and increased pressure for development in remote exurban areas that destroys important habitat for native species and ecosystems. There is another way that transit strikes can reduce usage of public transit systems. A lot of the day-to-day behavior for individuals, behavior such as daily commuting, is determined by habits. But habits can be broken – particularly when there is a major disruption that forces people to adjust their daily patterns. Ideally riding public transit is the kind of habit that we want to encourage for commuters, instead of driving by car. But a transit strike can be just the kind of major disruption that breaks the public transit habit, and instills a new habit of driving by car.