## 1

#### Counterplan Text: Do the plan but have a prestrike ballot before we do rev strike

#### That solves

Tenza 19 -- Mlungisi Tenza (LLB, LLM, LLD @ University of KwaZulu-Natal), Investigating the need to reintroduce a ballot requirement for a protected strike in South Africa, August 1 2019, *Obiter*Volume 40, Issue 2, https://journals.co.za/doi/10.10520/EJC-1936af7594 WJ

Violent protracted strikes can have devastating effects on employers, employees and the economy at large. Despite the fact that workers have a constitutional right to strike, it is important that the exercising of such a right not be allowed to go beyond the necessary limits. Currently, strikes are often characterised by violent conduct. Resolution of strikes also takes a long time, leaving many people unemployed by the time a solution is found. This not only affects the employees concerned, but is a contributing factor to poverty. To prevent long and violent strikes from taking place, it is suggested that there should be changes to existing labour law so as to include a ballot requirement. The law should compel a convening union to ballot members before staging a strike. To be credible, the balloting process should be chaired by an independent body, such as the IEC or a representative from the CCMA. This is the position in Australia and Canada. In these countries, if a union calls a strike without having balloted its members, such a strike is unlawful and civil action can be taken against the union and its members. Balloting members prior to strike action would help to establish their willingness to embark on a strike. If the majority vote in favour of a strike, it would send a signal to the employer that workers are serious and that it must consider their concerns or demands in a serious light. The employer and employee representatives are expected to engage fruitfully during negotiations and to avoid impending industrial action.

#### Non-consultation leads to intensifying violence and uncertain results

Tenza 19 -- Mlungisi Tenza (LLB, LLM, LLD @ University of KwaZulu-Natal), Investigating the need to reintroduce a ballot requirement for a protected strike in South Africa, August 1 2019, *Obiter*Volume 40, Issue 2, https://journals.co.za/doi/10.10520/EJC-1936af7594 WJ

If a ballot is made a requirement for a protected strike, the process of casting votes will give the union leadership the opportunity to advise its members on how to conduct themselves during a strike (at the time of the ballot and afterwards) – an opportunity that the union must exercise faithfully, honestly and with care and diligence, considering that it could be held accountable for the actions of its members during the strike or picket.58 The possibility that violence could erupt under these circumstances is probably minimal, as employees will have reached consensus and will not act as fragmented factions. In the end, ballots can offer legitimacy, transparency and inclusivity to the process leading up to a strike.

The aim of balloting members before a strike is to prevent industrial action that has little or no support. There are several reasons for the eruption of violence during strike action. One is fear that the employer will continue with production and make profit as normal without feeling the economic harm that employees want to inflict. This may happen where industrial action enjoys little support since the question then arises whether the employer feels harm as a result of the withdrawal of labour if a reasonable number of employees are not on strike and continue with their normal duties. If the answer is in the negative, the danger of violence emerges. In Security Services Employers Organisation v SA Transport & Allied Workers Union (SATAWU),59 the strike was convened by SATAWU. During the strike, it was reported that about 20 people were thrown out of moving trains in Gauteng Province; most of them were security guards who were not on strike and who were believed to be targeted by their striking colleagues. Two of them were killed, while others ended up in a serious condition in hospital.

In Food & Allied Workers Union obo Kapesi v Premier Foods,60 certain of the workers at the Salt River plant chose not to participate in the strike. Several of these workers, as well as members of management, were thereafter subjected to violent acts of a severe criminal nature. The court heard that during the strike, several non-striking employees and members of the management were subjected to violent criminal acts: employees were threatened with physical harm and death and were assaulted; homes were fire-bombed; cars were set alight; one employee who identified his attackers was shot and killed; and a conspiracy to assassinate a director was uncovered. The court held that strikers should not be allowed to terrorise and harm non-striking workers with impunity.61 This means that it is crucial that a strike should go ahead only if the majority of employees supports the strike so that no or little production then takes place. If it is the other way round, those employees who participate in the strike might perceive that the employer does not feel the economic harm – since most of the workforce would be providing services and, for the employer, it would be business as usual. The possibility is that strikers will then start to victimise non-striking employees,62 using various means such as intimidation, assaults and killing of those who offer their services.63 It is not only non-striking employees who become victims; replacement labourers and members of the public also face the same treatment.64 It is suggested that all members of the union should be balloted prior to a strike, and they should have to be balloted again after two or three weeks until the strike has ended. Balloting members every two or three weeks after an original ballot would help to test the appetite of workers to continue with the strike.

#### Protracted and violent strikes are likely and wreck developing economies

Tenza 20 -- Mlungisi Tenza, The Effects of Violent Strikes on the Economy of a Developing Country: a Case of South Africa, http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004, Obiter vol.41 n.3, 2020 WJ

1 INTRODUCTION

Economic growth is one of the most important pillars of a state. Most developing states put in place measures that enhance or speed-up the economic growth of their countries. It is believed that if the economy of a country is stable, the lives of the people improve with available resources being shared among the country's inhabitants or citizens. However, it becomes difficult when the growth of the economy is hampered by the exercise of one or more of the constitutionally entrenched rights such as the right to strike.1 Strikes in South Africa are becoming more common, and this affects businesses, employees and their families, and eventually, the economy. It becomes more dangerous for the economy and society at large if strikes are accompanied by violence causing damage to property and injury to people. The duration of strikes poses a problem for the economy of a developing country like South Africa. South Africa is rich in mineral resources, the world's largest producer of platinum and chrome, the second-largest producer of zirconium and the third-largest exporter of coal. It also has the largest economy in Africa, both in terms of industrial capacity and gross domestic product (GDP).2 However, these economic advantages have been affected by protracted and violent strikes.3 For example, in the platinum industries, labour stoppages since 2012 have cost the sector approximately R18 billion lost in revenue and 900 000 oz in lost output. The five-month-long strike in early 2014 at Impala Platinum Mine amounted to a loss of about R400 million a day in revenue.4 The question that this article attempts to address is how violent strikes and their duration affect the growth of the economy in a developing country like South Africa. It also addresses the question of whether there is a need to change the policies regulating industrial action in South Africa to make them more favourable to economic growth.

2 BACKGROUND

When South Africa obtained democracy in 1994, there was a dream of a better country with a new vision for industrial relations.5 However, the number of violent strikes that have bedevilled this country in recent years seems to have shattered-down the aspirations of a better South Africa. South Africa recorded 114 strikes in 2013 and 88 strikes in 2014, which cost the country about R6.1 billion according to the Department of Labour.6 The impact of these strikes has been hugely felt by the mining sector, particularly the platinum industry. The biggest strike took place in the platinum sector where about 70 000 mineworkers' downed tools for better wages. Three major platinum producers (Impala, Anglo American and Lonmin Platinum Mines) were affected. The strike started on 23 January 2014 and ended on 25 June 2014. Business Day reported that "the five-month-long strike in the platinum sector pushed the economy to the brink of recession".7 This strike was closely followed by a four-week strike in the metal and engineering sector. All these strikes (and those not mentioned here) were characterised with violence accompanied by damage to property, intimidation, assault and sometimes the killing of people. Statistics from the metal and engineering sector showed that about 246 cases of intimidation were reported, 50 violent incidents occurred, and 85 cases of vandalism were recorded.8 Large-scale unemployment, soaring poverty levels and the dramatic income inequality that characterise the South African labour market provide a broad explanation for strike violence.9 While participating in a strike, workers' stress levels leave them feeling frustrated at their seeming powerlessness, which in turn provokes further violent behaviour.10

These strikes are not only violent but take long to resolve. Generally, a lengthy strike has a negative effect on employment, reduces business confidence and increases the risk of economic stagflation. In addition, such strikes have a major setback on the growth of the economy and investment opportunities. It is common knowledge that consumer spending is directly linked to economic growth. At the same time, if the economy is not showing signs of growth, employment opportunities are shed, and poverty becomes the end result. The economy of South Africa is in need of rapid growth to enable it to deal with the high levels of unemployment and resultant poverty.

One of the measures that may boost the country's economic growth is by attracting potential investors to invest in the country. However, this might be difficult as investors would want to invest in a country where there is a likelihood of getting returns for their investments. The wish of getting returns for investment may not materialise if the labour environment is not fertile for such investments as a result of, for example, unstable labour relations. Therefore, investors may be reluctant to invest where there is an unstable or fragile labour relations environment.

#### Economic Collapse goes Nuclear.

Tønnesson 15, Stein. "Deterrence, interdependence and Sino–US peace." International Area Studies Review 18.3 (2015): 297-311. (the Department of Peace and Conflict, Uppsala University, Sweden, and Peace research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway)

Several recent works on China and Sino–US relations have made substantial contributions to the current understanding of how and under what circumstances a combination of nuclear deterrence and economic interdependence may reduce the risk of war between major powers. At least four conclusions can be drawn from the review above: first, those who say that interdependence may both inhibit and drive conflict are right. Interdependence raises the cost of conflict for all sides but asymmetrical or unbalanced dependencies and negative trade expectations may generate tensions leading to trade wars among inter-dependent states that in turn increase the risk of military conflict (Copeland, 2015: 1, 14, 437; Roach, 2014). The risk may increase if one of the interdependent countries is governed by an inward-looking socio-economic coalition (Solingen, 2015); second, the risk of war between China and the US should not just be analysed bilaterally but include their allies and partners. Third party countries could drag China or the US into confrontation; third, in this context it is of some comfort that the three main economic powers in Northeast Asia (China, Japan and South Korea) are all deeply integrated economically through production networks within a global system of trade and finance (Ravenhill, 2014; Yoshimatsu, 2014: 576); and fourth, decisions for war and peace are taken by very few people, who act on the basis of their future expectations. International relations theory must be supplemented by foreign policy analysis in order to assess the value attributed by national decision-makers to economic development and their assessments of risks and opportunities. If leaders on either side of the Atlantic begin to seriously fear or anticipate their own nation’s decline then they may blame this on external dependence, appeal to anti-foreign sentiments, contemplate the use of force to gain respect or credibility, adopt protectionist policies, and ultimately refuse to be deterred by either nuclear arms or prospects of socioeconomic calamities. Such a dangerous shift could happen abruptly, i.e. under the instigation of actions by a third party – or against a third party. Yet as long as there is both nuclear deterrence and interdependence, the tensions in East Asia are unlikely to escalate to war. As Chan (2013) says, all states in the region are aware that they cannot count on support from either China or the US if they make provocative moves. The greatest risk is not that a territorial dispute leads to war under present circumstances but that changes in the world economy alter those circumstances in ways that render inter-state peace more precarious. If China and the US fail to rebalance their financial and trading relations (Roach, 2014) then a trade war could result, interrupting transnational production networks, provoking social distress, and exacerbating nationalist emotions. This could have unforeseen consequences in the field of security, with nuclear deterrence remaining the only factor to protect the world from Armageddon, and unreliably so. Deterrence could lose its credibility: one of the two great powers might gamble that the other yield in a cyber-war or conventional limited war, or third party countries might engage in conflict with each other, with a view to obliging Washington or Beijing to intervene.

#### Extinction

Edwards 17 [Paul N. Edwards, CISAC’s William J. Perry Fellow in International Security at Stanford’s Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. Being interviewed by EarthSky. How nuclear war would affect Earth’s climate. September 8, 2017. earthsky.org/human-world/how-nuclear-war-would-affect-earths-climate] Note, we are only reading parts of the interview that are directly from Paul Edwards --

In the nuclear conversation, what are we not talking about that we should be?

We are not talking enough about the climatic effects of nuclear war. The “nuclear winter” theory of the mid-1980s played a significant role in the arms reductions of that period. But with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the reduction of U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals, this aspect of nuclear war has faded from view. That’s not good. In the mid-2000s, climate scientists such as Alan Robock (Rutgers) took another look at nuclear winter theory. This time around, they used much-improved and much more detailed climate models than those available 20 years earlier. They also tested the potential effects of smaller nuclear exchanges. The result: an exchange involving just 50 nuclear weapons — the kind of thing we might see in an India-Pakistan war, for example — could loft 5 billion kilograms of smoke, soot and dust high into the stratosphere. That’s enough to cool the entire planet by about 2 degrees Fahrenheit (1.25 degrees Celsius) — about where we were during the Little Ice Age of the 17th century. Growing seasons could be shortened enough to create really significant food shortages. So the climatic effects of even a relatively small nuclear war would be planet-wide. What about a larger-scale conflict? A U.S.-Russia war currently seems unlikely, but if it were to occur, hundreds or even thousands of nuclear weapons might be launched. The climatic consequences would be catastrophic: global average temperatures would drop as much as 12 degrees Fahrenheit (7 degrees Celsius) for up to several years — temperatures last seen during the great ice ages. Meanwhile, smoke and dust circulating in the stratosphere would darken the atmosphere enough to inhibit photosynthesis, causing disastrous crop failures, widespread famine and massive ecological disruption. The effect would be similar to that of the giant meteor believed to be responsible for the extinction of the dinosaurs. This time, we would be the dinosaurs. Many people are concerned about North Korea’s advancing missile capabilities. Is nuclear war likely in your opinion? At this writing, I think we are closer to a nuclear war than we have been since the early 1960s. In the North Korea case, both Kim Jong-un and President Trump are bullies inclined to escalate confrontations. President Trump lacks impulse control, and there are precious few checks on his ability to initiate a nuclear strike. We have to hope that our generals, both inside and outside the White House, can rein him in. North Korea would most certainly “lose” a nuclear war with the United States. But many millions would die, including hundreds of thousands of Americans currently living in South Korea and Japan (probable North Korean targets). Such vast damage would be wrought in Korea, Japan and Pacific island territories (such as Guam) that any “victory” wouldn’t deserve the name. Not only would that region be left with horrible suffering amongst the survivors; it would also immediately face famine and rampant disease. Radioactive fallout from such a war would spread around the world, including to the U.S. It has been more than 70 years since the last time a nuclear bomb was used in warfare. What would be the effects on the environment and on human health today? To my knowledge, most of the changes in nuclear weapons technology since the 1950s have focused on making them smaller and lighter, and making delivery systems more accurate, rather than on changing their effects on the environment or on human health. So-called “battlefield” weapons with lower explosive yields are part of some arsenals now — but it’s quite unlikely that any exchange between two nuclear powers would stay limited to these smaller, less destructive bombs.

## 2

#### The standard is maximizing expected well being

#### Phenomenal introspection --- it’s the most epistemically reliable --- historical moral disagreement over internal conceptions of morality such as questions of race, gender, class, religion, etc prove the fallibility of non-observational based ethics --- introspection means we value happiness because we can determine that we each value it --- just as I can observe a lemon’s yellowness, we can make those judgements about happiness.

#### 

#### Thus, the standard is maximizing expected utility. Prefer-

#### Pleasure/pain is intrinsically valuable

**Moen 16** [Ole Martin Moen, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo “An Argument for Hedonism” Journal of Value Inquiry (Springer), 50 (2) 2016: 267–281] SJDI

Let us start by observing, empirically, that a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value and disvalue is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable. On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues. This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for there is something undeniably good about the way pleasure feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have. “Pleasure” and “pain” are here understood inclusively, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative.2 The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values. If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store, I might ask: “What for?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable. You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. The reason is that the pleasure is not good for anything further; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good.3 As Aristotle observes: “We never ask [a man] what his end is in being pleased, because we assume that pleasure is choice worthy in itself.”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad. If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that pleasure and pain are both places where we reach the end of the line in matters of value.

#### Extinction must be relevant given inevitable moral uncertainty

Pummer 15 [Theron, Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy at St. Anne's College, University of Oxford. “Moral Agreement on Saving the World” Practical Ethics, University of Oxford. May 18, 2015] AT

There appears to be lot of disagreement in moral philosophy. Whether these many apparent disagreements are deep and irresolvable, I believe there is at least one thing it is reasonable to agree on right now, whatever general moral view we adopt: that it is very important to reduce the risk that all intelligent beings on this planet are eliminated by an enormous catastrophe, such as a nuclear war. How we might in fact try to reduce such existential risks is discussed elsewhere. My claim here is only that we – whether we’re consequentialists, deontologists, or virtue ethicists – should all agree that we should try to save the world. According to consequentialism, we should maximize the good, where this is taken to be the goodness, from an impartial perspective, of outcomes. Clearly one thing that makes an outcome good is that the people in it are doing well. There is little disagreement here. If the happiness or well-being of possible future people is just as important as that of people who already exist, and if they would have good lives, it is not hard to see how reducing existential risk is easily the most important thing in the whole world. This is for the familiar reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. There are so many possible future people that reducing existential risk is arguably the most important thing in the world, even if the well-being of these possible people were given only 0.001% as much weight as that of existing people. Even on a wholly person-affecting view – according to which there’s nothing (apart from effects on existing people) to be said in favor of creating happy people – the case for reducing existential risk is very strong. As noted in this seminal paper, this case is strengthened by the fact that there’s a good chance that many existing people will, with the aid of life-extension technology, live very long and very high quality lives. You might think what I have just argued applies to consequentialists only. There is a tendency to assume that, if an argument appeals to consequentialist considerations (the goodness of outcomes), it is irrelevant to non-consequentialists. But that is a huge mistake. Non-consequentialism is the view that there’s more that determines rightness than the goodness of consequences or outcomes; it is not the view that the latter don’t matter. Even John Rawls wrote, “All ethical doctrines worth our attention take consequences into account in judging rightness. One which did not would simply be irrational, crazy.” Minimally plausible versions of deontology and virtue ethics must be concerned in part with promoting the good, from an impartial point of view. They’d thus imply very strong reasons to reduce existential risk, at least when this doesn’t significantly involve doing harm to others or damaging one’s character. What’s even more surprising, perhaps, is that even if our own good (or that of those near and dear to us) has much greater weight than goodness from the impartial “point of view of the universe,” indeed even if the latter is entirely morally irrelevant, we may nonetheless have very strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Even egoism, the view that each agent should maximize her own good, might imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. It will depend, among other things, on what one’s own good consists in. If well-being consisted in pleasure only, it is somewhat harder to argue that egoism would imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk – perhaps we could argue that one would maximize her expected hedonic well-being by funding life extension technology or by having herself cryogenically frozen at the time of her bodily death as well as giving money to reduce existential risk (so that there is a world for her to live in!). I am not sure, however, how strong the reasons to do this would be. But views which imply that, if I don’t care about other people, I have no or very little reason to help them are not even minimally plausible views (in addition to hedonistic egoism, I here have in mind views that imply that one has no reason to perform an act unless one actually desires to do that act). To be minimally plausible, egoism will need to be paired with a more sophisticated account of well-being. To see this, it is enough to consider, as Plato did, the possibility of a ring of invisibility – suppose that, while wearing it, Ayn could derive some pleasure by helping the poor, but instead could derive just a bit more by severely harming them. Hedonistic egoism would absurdly imply she should do the latter. To avoid this implication, egoists would need to build something like the meaningfulness of a life into well-being, in some robust way, where this would to a significant extent be a function of other-regarding concerns (see chapter 12 of this classic intro to ethics). But once these elements are included, we can (roughly, as above) argue that this sort of egoism will imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Add to all of this Samuel Scheffler’s recent intriguing arguments (quick podcast version available here) that most of what makes our lives go well would be undermined if there were no future generations of intelligent persons. On his view, my life would contain vastly less well-being if (say) a year after my death the world came to an end. So obviously if Scheffler were right I’d have very strong reason to reduce existential risk. We should also take into account moral uncertainty. What is it reasonable for one to do, when one is uncertain not (only) about the empirical facts, but also about the moral facts? I’ve just argued that there’s agreement among minimally plausible ethical views that we have strong reason to reduce existential risk – not only consequentialists, but also deontologists, virtue ethicists, and sophisticated egoists should agree. But even those (hedonistic egoists) who disagree should have a significant level of confidence that they are mistaken, and that one of the above views is correct. Even if they were 90% sure that their view is the correct one (and 10% sure that one of these other ones is correct), they would have pretty strong reason, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, to reduce existential risk. Perhaps most disturbingly still, even if we are only 1% sure that the well-being of possible future people matters, it is at least arguable that, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, reducing existential risk is the most important thing in the world. Again, this is largely for the reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. (For more on this and other related issues, see this excellent dissertation). Of course, it is uncertain whether these untold trillions would, in general, have good lives. It’s possible they’ll be miserable. It is enough for my claim that there is moral agreement in the relevant sense if, at least given certain empirical claims about what future lives would most likely be like, all minimally plausible moral views would converge on the conclusion that we should try to save the world. While there are some non-crazy views that place significantly greater moral weight on avoiding suffering than on promoting happiness, for reasons others have offered (and for independent reasons I won’t get into here unless requested to), they nonetheless seem to be fairly implausible views. And even if things did not go well for our ancestors, I am optimistic that they will overall go fantastically well for our descendants, if we allow them to. I suspect that most of us alive today – at least those of us not suffering from extreme illness or poverty – have lives that are well worth living, and that things will continue to improve. Derek Parfit, whose work has emphasized future generations as well as agreement in ethics, described our situation clearly and accurately: “We live during the hinge of history. Given the scientific and technological discoveries of the last two centuries, the world has never changed as fast. We shall soon have even greater powers to transform, not only our surroundings, but ourselves and our successors. If we act wisely in the next few centuries, humanity will survive its most dangerous and decisive period. Our descendants could, if necessary, go elsewhere, spreading through this galaxy…. Our descendants might, I believe, make the further future very good. But that good future may also depend in part on us. If our selfish recklessness ends human history, we would be acting very wrongly.” (From chapter 36 of On What Matters)

## 3

1. Must
2. Ground: What is a revoluntioary general strike. Their model kills da + cp ground for the neg since they can always skirt the debate
3. Clash: R

## Case

#### Batailles history of consumption is backwards – ancients founded consumption on definitive concepts of wealth and class – the alt reinforces class binaries

Ishay Landa, Ph.D., Dept. of History, Philosophy and Judaic Studies, Open University of Israel, ’14

(“Bataille’s Libidinal Economics: Capitalism as an Open Wound,” Critical Sociology ﻿1-16)

From Capitalism to the Sun

Bataille’s economic conception – as unfolded in The Accursed Share – has the strange effect that while pretending to submit capitalism, ‘the restricted economy’, to a radical critique from the point of view of ‘general economy’ – the laws of circulation of energy in the cosmos, which he claims to have fathomed – **it rather ends up** projecting capitalism, particularly its specific failings – its irrationality, its wastefulness, its crises – **onto nature**. Here again capitalism is provided with an indirect apologetic outlet, inasmuch as attention is diverted from society and history to natural, and hence insurmountable, ‘deeper’ causes which humanity can hardly expect to control.

Accompanying such move is a related elimination of the historically positive contribution of capitalism – its unprecedented development of the productive forces – and a belittling of human creativity, manifested in labor. **The result is deeply pessimistic, with** debilitating consequences **for human agency, since both human culpability and capability are downplayed**.

Let us first address the way capitalism is naturalized. General economy to start with attributed to nature the crucial feature of capitalist production, the very creation of a surplus, the ‘excess’ of ‘the accursed share’. ‘I will begin,’ Bataille apodictically claims, ‘with a basic fact: the living organism … ordinarily receives more energy than is necessary for maintaining life … On the surface of the globe, for living matter in general, energy is always in excess; the question is always posed in terms of extravagance. The choice is limited to how the wealth is squandered’ (1991: 21–23, emphasis in the original). General economy is thus all about wealth, and how best to consume it. Economic crisis, according to Bataille, is therefore primarily a result of alienated humanity causing a bottleneck in the overflowing channels of cosmic energy. Stingy humanity is finally overwhelmed by the lavish gifts showered on it by nature. Bataille contrasts the ‘Poverty of Organisms or Limited Systems and the Excess Wealth of Living Nature’. Humanity myopically tries to turn the boons of nature into capitalist profits at all costs, without realizing that squandering the surplus is inevitable. The result of such misapprehension is economic crisis, and often catastrophic wars, forcing the system to vomit the excess: ‘The final dissipation cannot fail to carry out the movement that animates terrestrial energy.’ (Bataille, 1991: 22) In that way, Bataille ascribes to nature both the historical achievements of human beings – the creation of wealth – and their failures: the inability of the system they have created to sustain growth. For wealth is anything but natural; plenty and surplus, even on a very small scale, is an extremely rare phenomenon, and far from pertaining to the ‘living organism’ as such it is specifically human. Moreover, for almost the entire course of their existence on ‘the globe’ human beings, too, hardly had to deal with an excess, accursed or otherwise. If we consider that humanity’s early forefathers, the first hominines, first walked the earth about six million years ago, and that homo sapiens is about 125,000 years old, **we can see that wealth of any form, for humanity, is a striking historical novelty.** Indeed, placed on the time scale of historical humanity (to say nothing about that of living matter), the ‘ancient’ civilizations that Bataille takes for his examples of extravagant consumption, conducted in intuitive synchrony with nature, such as the Aztec empire, happened merely seconds ago, themselves being examples of humanity at an **extremely advanced and sophisticated historical phase.** For almost the entire course of their long trajectory humans lived from hand to mouth, and could only dream of significant surplus, which they knew neither how to produce nor – in times of particularly favorable natural conditions – how to store. Excess is therefore not a cosmic natural gift living organisms ‘receive’ but a product of humanity advancing through history in an arduous struggle with a rather tight-fisted and indifferent nature, that has left humanity to fend for itself (these are conscious anthropomorphisms of nature, meant to dialogue with Bataille’s).7

Wealth is thus a colossal human achievement**, due primarily not to nature but to labor working on nature:** a point which Bataille, furiously resisting the master-slave dialectic, was keen to downplay. In his alternative scheme, the cowardly slave was denied not only heroism – which Hegel, too, regarded as the prerogative of the master – **but also ingenuity, creativity and productivity. It is as if the base labor of the slave is to be erased out of the picture altogether**, leaving consumption as a strictly aristocratic interplay between the master and the life-giving sun. Bataille so radically transfigured the dialectic to the point that the master does not consume the slave’s labor as much as he consumes the slave himself, whom he sacrifices.

The problematic nature of abundance, for its part, is a still younger phenomenon than wealth. The key adjective ‘accursed’ belongs to indirect apologetics, since material growth only becomes a problem under a historically specific mode of production. Only under capitalism do we have crises of over-production, since here one produces precisely not in order to serve a useful purpose, as Bataille argues, but in order to make profit. And to understand over-production we need to examine the laws of motion of capitalism, not of nature or of terrestrial energy. Yet Bataille (1991: 24) proposed, on the contrary, to naturalize such problems, turn them into ahistorical givens. ‘These excesses of life force,’ he contended, ‘are in fact the most dangerous factors of ruination … Ancient societies found relief in festivals; some erected admirable monuments that had no useful purpose.’ **Already the ancients are said to have suffered from over-production** **and to have had to seek ‘relief’ from the burden of wealth, rather than to enjoyably consume such wealth**. Similarly, Bataille insists that the monuments the ancients built were useless, whereas actually their use was exactly the fact that they were ‘admirable’. **Such monuments** had the same use-value **for their contemporaries**, as countless goods that the moderns consume because they find them beautiful, pleasant, decorative, etc. In reality, one can turn against Bataille his admiration for ancient times where sacred sentiment was rife, and hence, allegedly, indifference to utility was great, as compared to profane modernity, obsessed with utility. One might argue exactly the reverse: precisely because they were religious the monuments the ancients built and their **extravagant practices were still useful in the sense of enticing or** placating the gods. Modern consumption, in that sense, is more deeply indifferent to ulterior consideration of benefits. **Think of a** cinema or a football stadium **as compared to an Aztec temple or a medieval cathedral. In the former, the pleasure from the consumer’s point of view is more properly sovereign than that of the ancient person, in thrall to his sovereign divinities**.

#### Submission to nature is unsustainable – can’t eliminate the means to control nature which makes instrumentalization inevitable

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A final note, before we part ways with Bataille-1: **the subordination of humanity to nature has serious consequences**, in addition to those mentioned above, for the very cornerstone of Bataille’s theory, the notion of sovereignty, which is supposed to empower humanity and upgrade it from ‘objects’ to ‘subjects’. This promise proves deceptive inasmuch as humanity is indeed urged to shake off (at least on certain proper occasions, under the guise of night and darkness) social and moral conventions, hence becoming sovereign vis-a-vis society, at the same time that it becomes the docile object of another, higher subject, a thoroughly non-human one, which is ‘the impersonality of life’ (1991: 35). **Life recurrently surfaces as the real sovereign,** using humans as its unwitting tools. ‘Beyond our immediate ends, man’s activity in fact pursues the useless and infinite fulfillment of the universe’ (1991: 21). In reality, humanity’s submission in the latter case is more complete since subordination to things is still subordination at a **second remove to human activity**, **to say nothing of the fact that it can be seen as human accomplishment, not degradation**. This is what Marx referred to as ‘objectification’, Vergegenständlichung, which, as explained by Lucio Colletti, ‘is man’s natural means of projecting himself through his productive activity into nature’ affording ‘a free man the possibility of contemplating himself in a world of his own making’ (in Marx, 1975: 431). Nature, by comparison, is a tyrant infinitely more implacable. This explains why submission to such forces, in contrast to the satisfaction – no matter how allegedly insignificant – which the world of things can afford, is often associated in Bataille with sheer horror and complete human abdication, and indeed loss of self. He once described, for example, the unbearable ecstasy he felt when looking at a series of photographs taken during the Boxer revolution and documenting the successive dismemberment, while alive, of a young Chinese man, who had assassinated a prince. This experience afforded him, he claimed, the opportunity he wanted ‘to ruin in me that which is opposed to ruin’ (Bataille, 1988: 120). For Bataille, the problem with objectification, with the hated world of things, is not so much alienation and loss of humanity, but precisely the opposite fact that it enables ‘a free man the possibility of contemplating himself in a world of his own making.’ **This is exactly where the rub is, since a world of human making,** for Bataille, **is ultimately inferior to the world of nature.** **It is an artificial, profane and disenchanted world,** catering to humanity at the expense of the truly uplifting and sacred worship of nature (or any other alternative term: life, the cosmos, the universe, the sun, the nothing, etc., etc.). Instructively, while looking at said photographs, what Bataille saw was not a social sect inflicting punishment on a rebel, not so much an act of unspeakable human violence and cruelty; abstracting from society and humanity, Bataille glimpsed here rather the glories of nature. ‘Excessive acts are signs,’ he claimed, ‘suddenly given support, of what the world sovereignly is’ (Bataille, 1988: 121). The problem with the world of things is thus not that it is not human enough, but that it is human, all too human, offering no room for religious epiphany, no opportunity of losing oneself in the nothing.10 The re-submission to the world of nature rekindles a religious awe, in a way which the human world of things cannot. The contrast with Marx’s position is again very revealing. The following lines, from the Grundrisse, read almost as if they were written with Bataille in mind:

Hence the great civilizing influence of capital; its production of a stage of society in comparison to which all earlier ones appear as mere local developments of humanity and as nature-idolatry. For the first time, nature becomes purely an object for humankind, purely a matter of utility; ceases to be recognized as a power for itself; and the theoretical discovery of its autonomous laws appears merely as a ruse so as to subjugate it under human needs, whether as an object of consumption or as a means of production. In accord with this tendency, capital drives beyond … nature worship, as well as all traditional, confined, complacent, encrusted satisfactions of present needs, and reproductions of old ways of life. (Marx, 1993: 410–411, emphasis in the original)

Yet for Bataille, the fact that capitalism demolishes nature-idolatry clearly does not recommend it. Let us not forget, however, that this is just one aspect of the capitalist dialectics, to which Marx associated another movement, which impedes human sovereignty, keeping humanity at the beck and call of ‘higher’ forces. And this dimension Bataille looked upon with keen interest; Bataille-1, at any rate. The striking terminological innovations notwithstanding, Bataille most of the time advances a rather typical condemnation of mass consumption. Under Nietzsche’s influence, the potentially subversive critique of the frugality of capitalism, its ultimate emphasis on production, becomes another means of discarding mass consumption as ignoble, and romantically embellishing pre-industrial conditions. Postmodernism, in Bataille, is really a form of pre-modernism.

#### The New International fails and the aff’s a DA---theorizing away global politics doesn’t make it go away, only engagement can prevent violence

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There are a number of problems. The prognosis Derrida outlines in “Autoimmunity” ostensibly writes off the possible spark of revolutionary upheavals in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. He exclusively locates the center of transition as originating in Europe and spreading outward from there. One may, of course, argue in Derrida’s case by citing the eruption of mass protests and street battles in Greece after the December 5, 2008, police killing of fifteen-year-old student Alexis Grigoropoulos in Athens. As the Associated Press reported on December 11, “The unrest that has gripped Greece is spilling over into the rest of Europe,” but “the clashes have been isolated so far, and nothing like the scope of the chaos in Greece.” “Nevertheless, authorities in Europe worry conditions are ripe for the contagion to spread.”[17]

Other than the Enlightenment tradition, an ideological tradition, what is the economic basis and justification for the “new” European prognosis? Fundamentally, the events in Greece were underlain by the deepening, still ongoing, world economic crisis and the prospects of unemployment confronting students and workers. Thereupon arose the mass social struggle. On one hand, Derrida admonishes against semanticism and concept fixation, adding, “We must also recognize here strategies and relations of force.”[18] On the other hand, he makes ideology and hope, an ideology of hope, integral components of his theory of the future, revealing that his method is based on pure speculation, not social and economic analysis.

Besides Derrida’s reference to his 1993 book Specters of Marx—which argues for a politically heterogeneous New International “without party” and “without common belonging to a class”[19]—it is obvious that he hopes for the construction of some form of communist society. But whatever inspiration he may take from classical Marxism, there is nothing particularly Marxist in his line of argumentation in “Autoimmunity.” Derrida, for one, does not identify the world proletariat as the revolutionary subject of history. He does, of course, imply that, in the future society, there will be (1) no oppression by work conditions, (2) people will be able to find the work they desire, and (3) there will be neither “certain countries” nor “certain classes” that benefit from an unequal world economic system.[20]

Nonetheless, that remains wishful thinking without party organization and program, strategy and tactics, and political initiatives. Confirming the Utopian heritage in which he writes, Derrida does not speak of the international working class and its independent forms of mass political organization, that is, of revolutionary parties. Rather, he invokes faith in the memory of the Enlightenment and to Reason, and proposes a de facto middle-class front, a petty-bourgeois front, of intellectuals, writers, scholars, professors, artists, and journalists who must “stand up together” against violence and discrimination.[21]

Derrida advises studying the struggle against intolerance in “Europe and elsewhere.” Three figures he highlights are French: Voltaire, Zola, and Sartre. He also urges ripostes and acts of resistance: “Our acts of resistance must be, I believe, at once intellectual and political. We must join forces to exert pressure and organize ripostes, and we must do so on an international scale and according to new modalities.”[22] This is evidently a broad-based middle-class radical movement whose struggle for state deconstruction is constituted in international pressure groups and pressure politics. That is not the same as workers’ struggles, which have traditionally consisted of picketing, stop-work meetings, rallies, trade union action, walk-outs, office and factory occupations, asset seizures, and general strikes against the assault on workers’ jobs, wages, and rights.

There is a reference in “Autoimmunity” to philosophers of the future, philosophers of the European tradition, “philosopher-deconstructors” who will be part of the struggle. They “will not necessarily be professional philosophers but jurists, politicians, citizens, even European non-citizens.”[23] Frederick Engels declared in Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy (1886) that the German proletariat is the heir of classical German philosophy.[24] Can Derrida’s European philosopher-deconstructors come from the broad layers of the working class: autoworkers, coalminers, cooks, janitors, mechanics, nurses, postal workers, sanitation workers, store clerks, tailors, transit workers, tree trimmers, truck drivers, etc.?

These matters and many others are not addressed in the “Autoimmunity” discussion. The interviewer Giovanna Borradori says: “This dialogue is a quintessential example of his [Derrida’s] unique style of thinking: a fascinating mix of erudition and exuberance and intellectual sophistication, timelessness and timeliness.”[25] That is the overstated language of inflated panegyric. Derrida does not present himself as all that innovative, and he stumbles in the critique of political economy. (Does deconstruction have a political economy?) This is obvious when he attempts to deal with the matter of globalization:

[G]lobalization is not taking place. It is a simulacrum, a rhetorical artifice or weapon that dissimulates a growing imbalance, a new opacity, a garrulous and hypermediatized noncommunication, a tremendous accumulation of wealth, means of production, teletechnologies, and sophisticated military weapons, and the appropriation of all these powers by a small number of states or international corporations. And control over these is becoming at once easier and more difficult. The power to appropriate has such a structure (most often deterritorizable, virtualizable, capitalizable) that, at the very moment when it seems controllable by a small number (of states, for example), it escapes right into the hands of international nonstate structures and so tends toward dissemination in the very movement of its concentration. Terrorism of the “September 11” sort (wealthy, hypersophisticated, telecommunicative, anonymous, and without an assignable state) stems in part from this apparent contradiction.[26]

This is inaccurate. The arguments that there is no globalization and that globalization is a “rhetorical artifice” are ideological mantras of nationalist-oriented tendencies. The irony is that Derrida has declared opposition to the national state system. Globalization is an economic fact. It is a qualitative change in the economic infrastructure of international finance capitalism that developed towards the end of the twentieth century with the introduction of the microchip, integrated circuit, transnational corporations (which are not the same as multinational corporations), and globally integrated production processes.

Globalization represents (1) the inherent tendency of capital to expand and (2) the outgrowing of the productive forces from nation-state confines. This results in a complex and contradictory process that precludes harmonious development. Globalization does not mean greater equality, a more just distribution of wealth, or corporation among nations. The opposite takes place. Extraction of surplus value—the source of capitalist profits—is truly internationalized; the majority of humanity becomes wage workers; worldwide polarization of wealth and poverty is vastly intensified; and the antagonisms that lead to war in the world division of competing nation-states are exacerbated.[27]

Capitalist private property forms are rooted in the national state, a historically bourgeois socioeconomic formation, and now come into conflict with the global socialization of production. That contradiction cannot be resolved within the borders of the nation-state, which puts a break on the expansion of capital and development of the productive forces. Confronted with the economic limits set upon them by the nation-state system, transnational corporations “forsake,” in a manner of speaking, their national states of origin for more efficient exploitation of labor and maximization of profits elsewhere: dominating and organizing global production of commodities, distributing them to world markets, and dictating policy to national governments. The crisis of over-production remains all the while, even with globally organized capital.

Rather than dissimulating (concealing or disguising) imbalances, as Derrida mistakenly claims, capitalist globalization is the profoundest expression of national and international socioeconomic imbalances. The conclusion derived from affirming globalization as an economic reality is that the nation-state and its traditional property forms are obsolete. Derrida’s pseudo-communist social Utopianism (which hopes for a distant “democracy to come,” beyond law and beyond duty, of unconditional hospitality) works up from a leap of faith. Not surprisingly, he says he is a follower of the rightwing Romantic Danish theologian Søren Kierkegaard.[28] Without a philosophical science of perspective, deconstruction, even if well meaning, slides into eclectic prophetism. Derrida, in that respect, is rather conventional.

Jacques Derrida sets out to grapple a number of serious social and political problems in “Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides.” These are the post-Cold War world order, U.S. geostrategic interests, September 11, the “war on terror,” international law, Westernization, the nation-state, democracy, protest politics, and globalization. Being neither a political economist nor political scientist, however, he resorts to speculative philosophy, abstract dichotomizations, and intuitive prognostications that stand out for their ambiguities and inaccuracies under examination. These weaknesses are perhaps ascribable to Derrida’s descent from the non-quantitative, subjective idealist philosophical schools of existentialism and phenomenology. Notwithstanding his past declarations that he was convinced of “Marxism” (his quotation marks) and that there will be no future without Marx,[29] Derrida comes across as a pre-scientific and pre-Marxist Utopian socialist in the “Autoimmunity” interview.[30] Despite the radical-sounding phraseology and clever verbiage, deconstruction offers no truly independent philosophy, perspective, program, or initiatives in relation to capitalism as a world economic system.

**Capitalism is sustainable and self-correcting---alt can’t solve**

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There are those who say that if the world does not change their habits, even the end of economic growth, and assuming alternative ways of living, will be a catastrophe. “Our lifestyles are unsustainable. Our expectations of consumption are predatory.Either we change this, or will be chaos”. Others say that the pursuit of unbridled economic growth and the inclusion of more people in consumption is killing the Earth. We have to create alternative because economic growth is pointing to the global collapse. “What will happen when billions of Chinese decide to adopt the lifestyle of Americans?” I’ll disagree if you don’t mind… **They might be** wrong. **Completely wrong** .. Even very intelligent people wrongly interpret the implications of what they observe when they lose the perspective of time. In the vast scale of time (today, decades, not centuries) it is the opposite of what expected, because they start from a false assumption: the future is the extrapolation of this. But not necessarily be. How do I know? Looking at history. What story? The history of innovation, this thing generates increases in productivity, wealth, quality of life in an unimaginable level. It is innovation that will defeat pessimism as it always did. It was innovation that made life today is incomparably better than at any other time in human history. And will further improve. Einstein, who was not a stupid person, believed that capitalism would generate crisis, instability, and growing impoverishment. He said: “The economic anarchy of capitalist society as it exists today is, in my opinion, the true source of evil.” The only way to eliminate this evil, he thought, was to establish socialism, with the means of production are owned by the company. A centrally controlled economy would adjust the production of goods and services the needs of people, and would distribute the work that needed to be done among those in a position to do so. This would guarantee a livelihood to every man, women and children. Each according to his possibilities. To each according to their needs. And guess what? What happened was the opposite of what Einstein predicted. Who tried the model he suggested, impoverished, screwed up. Peter Drucker says that almost of all thinking people of the late nineteenth century thought that Marx was right: there would be increased exploitation of workers by employers. They would become poorer, until one day, the thing would explode. Capitalist society was considered inherently unsustainable. It is more or less the same chat today. **Bullshit. Capitalism, with all appropriate regulations, self-**corrects. It is **an adaptive system that learns and changes by design. The design is just for the system to learn and change.** There was the opposite of what Einstein predicted, and held the opposite of what many predict, but the logic that “unlike” only becomes evident over time. It wasn’t obvious that the workers are those whom would profit from the productivity gains that the management science has begun to generate by organizing innovations like the railroad, the telegraph, the telephone .. to increase the scale of production and cheapen things. The living conditions of workers today are infinitely better than they were in 1900. They got richer, not poorer .. You do not need to work harder to produce more (as everyone thought), you can work less and produce more through a mechanism that is only now becoming apparent, and that brilliant people like Caetano Veloso still ignores. The output is pursuing growth through innovation, growth is not giving up. More of the same will become unsustainable to the planet, but most of it is not what will happen, will happen more different, than we do not know what is right. More innovative. Experts, such as Lester Brown, insist on statements like this: if the Chinese also want to have three cars for every four inhabitants, as in the U.S. today, there will be 1.1 billion cars there in 2030, and there is no way to build roads unless ends with the whole area used for agriculture. You will need 98 million barrels of oil per day, but the world only produces about 90 million today, and probably never produce much more. The mistake is to extrapolate today’s solutions for the future. We can continue living here for 20 years by exploiting the same resources that we explore today? Of course not. But the other question is: how can we encourage the stream of innovations that will enable the Chinese, Indians, Brazilians, Africans .. to live so as prosperous as Americans live today? Hey, wake up … what can not stop the engine of innovation is that the free market engenders. This system is self correcting, that is its beauty. We do not need to do nothing but ensure the conditions for it to work without distortion. The rest he does himself. It regulates itself.