## 1 - CP

#### Counterplan: A just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike except in the instance that strikes directly demand discrimination towards certain groups of individuals

**BPSC** [Unfair Labor Practices by Union, http://bpscllc.com/unfair-labor-practices-by-unions.html, N.D., Business & People Strategy Consulting Group, California's trusted source for workplace human resources and employment law] [SS]

Causing or Attempting to Cause Discrimination: Section 8(b)(2) makes it an unfair labor practice for a labor organization to cause or attempt to cause an employer to discriminate against an employee in violation of Section 8(a)(3). The section is violated by agreements or arrangements with employers, other than lawful union-security agreements, that condition employment or job benefits on union membership, on the performance of union membership obligations or on arbitrary grounds. But union action that causes detriment to an individual employee does not violate Section 8(b)(2) if it is consistent with nondiscriminatory provisions of a bargaining contract negotiated for the benefit of the total bargaining unit, or if the action is based on some other legitimate purpose. A union’s conduct, accompanied by statements advising or suggesting that action is expected of an employer, may be enough to find a violation of this section if the union’s action can be shown to be a causal factor in the employer’s discrimination. Contracts or informal arrangements with a union under which an employer gives preferential treatment to union members also violate Section 8(b)(2). However, an employer and a union may agree that the employer will hire new employees exclusively through the union hiring hall if there is no discrimination against nonunion members on the basis of union membership obligations. In setting referral standards, a union may consider legitimate aims such as sharing available work and easing the impact of local unemployment. The union may also charge referral fees if the amount of the fee is reasonably related to the cost of operating the referral service. A union that attempts to force an employer to enter into an illegal union-security agreement, or that enters into and keeps in effect such an agreement, also violates Section 8(b)(2), as does a union that attempts to enforce such an illegal agreement by bringing about an employee’s discharge. Even when a union-security provision of a bargaining contract meets all statutory requirements, a union may not lawfully require the discharge of employees under the provision unless they were informed of the union-security agreement and their specific obligation under it. A union violates Section 8(b)(2) if it tries to use the union-security provisions of a contract to collect payments other than those lawfully required, such as assessments, fines and penalties. Other examples of Section 8(b)(2) violations include: Causing an employer to discharge employees because they circulated a petition urging a change in the union’s method of selecting shop stewards Causing an employer to discharge employees because they made speeches against a contract proposed by the union Making a contract that requires an employer to hire only members of the union or employees “satisfactory” to the union Causing an employer to reduce employees’ seniority because they engaged in anti-union acts Refusing referral or giving preference on the basis of race or union activities when making job referrals to units represented by the union Seeking the discharge of an employee under a union-security agreement for failure to pay a fine levied by the union

#### Racist union strikes have happened before and renders marginalized voices as ungrievable

Allison **Keyes**, JUNE 30, **2017**, "The East St. Louis Race Riot Left Dozens Dead, Devastating a Community on the Rise," Smithsonian Magazine, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/east-st-louis-race-riot-left-dozens-dead-devastating-community-on-the-rise-180963885/ //SR

Racial tensions began simmering in East St. Louis—a city where thousands of blacks had moved from the South to work in war factories—as early as February 1917. The African-American population was 6,000 in 1910 and nearly double that by 1917. In the spring, the largely white workforce at the Aluminum Ore Company went on strike. Hundreds of blacks were hired. After a City Council meeting on May 28, angry white workers lodged formal complaints against black migrants. When word of an attempted robbery of a white man by an armed black man spread through the city, mobs started beating any African-Americans they found, even pulling individuals off of streetcars and trolleys. The National Guard was called in but dispersed in June.

## 2- Util K

#### The safety of the space is prima facie – we don’t know who’s winning if people can’t engage. Anything that doesn’t immediately denounce atrocities excludes people who have and can experience them.

**Teehan** Ryan Teehan [NSD staffer and competitor from the Delbarton School] – NSD Update comment on the student protests at the TOC in 2014. //Massa

Honestly, I don't think that 99% of what has been said in this thread so far actually matters. It doesn't matter whether you think that these types of assumptions should be questioned. It doesn't matter what accepting this intuition could potentially do or not do. It doesn't matter if you see fit to make, incredibly trivializing and misplaced I might add, links between this and the Holocaust. **All** of the **arguments that talk about how** debate isa **unique** space for questioning assumptions **make** an assumption of safety. They say that this is a space where one is safe to question assumptions and try new perspectives. **That is not true** for everyone. When we allow arguments that question the wrongness of racism, sexism, homophobia**, rape**, lynching, etc., we make debate unsafe for certain people. The idea that debate is a safe space to question all assumptions is the definition of privilege, it begins with an idea of a debater that can question every assumption. People who face the actual effects of the aforementioned things cannot question those assumptions, and making debate a space built around the idea that they can is hostile. So, you really have a choice. Either 1) say that you do not want these people to debate so that you can let people question the wrongness of everything I listed before, 2) say that you care more about letting debaters question those things than making debate safe for everyone, or 3) make it so that saying things that make debate unsafe has actual repercussions. On "**debate is not the real world**". **Only for people who can separate their existence in "the real world" from their existence in debate.** That means privileged, white, heterosexual males like myself. I don't understand how you can make this sweeping claim when some people are clearly harmed by these arguments. **At the end of the day, you have to figure out whether you care about debate being safe for everyone** involved. I don't think anyone has contested that these arguments make debate unsafe for certain people. If you care at all about the people involved in debate then **don't vote on these arguments**. If you care about the safety and wellbeing of competitors, then don't vote on these arguments. If you don't, then I honestly don't understand why you give up your time to coach and/or judge. The pay can't be that good. I don't believe that you're just in it for the money, which is why I ask you to ask yourselves whether you can justify making debate unsafe for certain people.

#### Utilitarian calculus fails to account for moral atrocities.

Jeffrey **Gold**, Utilitarian and Deontological Approaches to Criminal Justice Ethics //Massa

According to utilitarianism, an action is moral when it produces the great-est amount of happiness for the greatest number of people. A problem arises, however, when the greatest happiness is achieved at the expense of a few. For example, if a large group were to enslave a very small group, the large group would gain **certain comforts and** luxuries (and **the** pleasure **that accompanies those comforts) as a result of the servitude of the few**. If we were to follow the utilitarian calculus strictly, the suffering of a few **(even intense suffering)** would be outweighed by the pleasure of a large enough majority. A thousand people’s modest pleasure would outweigh the suffer-ing of 10 others. Hence, utilitarianism would seem to endorse slavery when it produces the greatest total amount of happiness for the greatest number of people. This is obviously a problem for utilitarianism. Slavery and oppression are wrong regardless **of the amount of pleasure accumulated by the oppressing class.** In fact, when one person’s pleasure results from **the** suffering **of another,** the pleasure seems all the more abhorrent. The preceding case points to a weakness in utilitarianism, namely, the weak-ness in dealing with certain cases of injustice. Sometimes it is simply unjust to treat people in a certain way regardless of the pleasurable consequences for others. A gang rape is wrong even if 50 people enjoy it and only one suffers. It is wrong because it is unjust. To use Kant’s formulation, it is always wrong to treat anyone as a mere means to one’s own ends. When we enslave, rape, and oppress, we are always treating the victim as a means to our own ends.

#### Util justifies horrific conclusions, since no state of affairs could be intrinsically bad from its standpoint – it also literally doesn’t believe in rights.

**Vallentyne**, Peter. *Against Maximizing Act-Consequentialism*. **2006**, mospace.umsystem.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10355/10174/AgainstMaximizingActConsequentialism.pdf?sequence=1. //Massa

If core consequentialism is true, then any action with maximally good consequences (in a given choice situation) is permissible. The main argument in favor of this claim is the following: P1: An action is **morally** permissible if **it is best** supported by insistent moral reasons for action. P2: The value of consequences is always an insistent moral reason **for action.** P3: The value of consequences is the only insistent moral reason **for action. C:** Thus, an action is **morally** permissible if it maximizes **the value of** consequences**.** This is the same argument given in the previous section for the impermissibility of actions that do not have maximally good consequences, except that (1) the appeal to insistent reasons has been made explicit, (2) the necessary conditions of the original P1 and C have been converted to sufficient conditions, and (3) the qualification in P3 that allowed the possibility of some prior constraints has been dropped. P1 is highly plausible. An action that is best supported by insistent moral reasons is surely permissible. P2 can be challenged, as I did earlier, on the ground that beyond some point the value of consequences ceases to be an insistent moral reason (once consequences are good enough, their value may only be a non-insistent reason). For the present purposes, however, we can grant this claim. The crucial claim is P3. It is implausible, because there are insistent moral reasons other than the value of consequences. There are also deontological insistent reasons, and these, or at least some of these, are lexical prior to the value of consequences. In particular**,** individuals have certain rights that may not be infringed **simply because the consequences are better.** Unlike prudential rationality, morality involves many distinct centers of will (choice) or 15 interests**, and these** cannot simply be lumped together and traded off **against each other.**16 **The basic problem with standard versions of core consequentialism is that** they fail to recognize **adequately** the normative separateness of persons**.** Psychological autonomous beings (as well, perhaps, as other beings with moral standing) are not merely means for the promotion of value. They must be respected and honored, and this means that at least sometimes certain things may not be done to them, even though this promotes value overall. An innocent person may not be killed against her will, for example, in order to make a million happy people slightly happier. This would be sacrificing her for the benefit of others.

#### The alt is to vote neg – it’s as simple as not to vibe with oppression – as an educator it’s your job to dismiss racist, sexist, homophobic, and ableist discourse that kills the spirit of marginalized debaters.

## 3 - Util Negates

#### Util negates –

#### A] It can’t justify the existence of rights because no state of affairs could be intrinsically bad from its standpoint.

Vallentyne 06, Peter. *Against Maximizing Act-Consequentialism*. 2006, mospace.umsystem.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10355/10174/AgainstMaximizingActConsequentialism.pdf?sequence=1. //Massa

If core consequentialism is true, then any action with maximally good consequences (in a given choice situation) is permissible. The main argument in favor of this claim is the following: P1: An action is morally permissible if it is best supported by insistent moral reasons for action. P2: The value of consequences is always an insistent moral reason for action. P3: The value of consequences is the only insistent moral reason for action. C: Thus, an action is morally permissible if it maximizes the value of consequences. This is the same argument given in the previous section for the impermissibility of actions that do not have maximally good consequences, except that (1) the appeal to insistent reasons has been made explicit, (2) the necessary conditions of the original P1 and C have been converted to sufficient conditions, and (3) the qualification in P3 that allowed the possibility of some prior constraints has been dropped. P1 is highly plausible. An action that is best supported by insistent moral reasons is surely permissible. P2 can be challenged, as I did earlier, on the ground that beyond some point the value of consequences ceases to be an insistent moral reason (once consequences are good enough, their value may only be a non-insistent reason). For the present purposes, however, we can grant this claim. The crucial claim is P3. It is implausible, because there are insistent moral reasons other than the value of consequences. There are also deontological insistent reasons, and these, or at least some of these, are lexical prior to the value of consequences. In particular, individuals have certain rights that may not be infringed simply because the consequences are better. Unlike prudential rationality, morality involves many distinct centers of will (choice) or 15 interests, and these cannot simply be lumped together and traded off against each other.16 The basic problem with standard versions of core consequentialism is that they fail to recognize adequately the normative separateness of persons. Psychological autonomous beings (as well, perhaps, as other beings with moral standing) are not merely means for the promotion of value. They must be respected and honored, and this means that at least sometimes certain things may not be done to them, even though this promotes value overall. An innocent person may not be killed against her will, for example, in order to make a million happy people slightly happier. This would be sacrificing her for the benefit of others.

#### Their extinction first justifications prove our argument – establishing conditions like “the strike doesn’t cause extinction” means it’s only a contingent right.

#### B] We can’t deductively prove the right to strike is consequentially beneficial in EVERY instance cuz we’re limited by our experience and can’t scenario plan infinite scenarios.

## Case –

## Turns

#### Workers don’t care about legality – strikes are on the rise absent the aff.

Notes 19 [Labor Notes; Media and organizing project that has been the voice of union activists who want to put the movement back in the labor movement since 1979; “Why Strikes Matter,” LN; 10/17/19; <https://labornotes.org/2019/10/why-strikes-matter>]//SJWen

“Why do you rob banks?” a reporter once asked Willie Sutton. “Because that’s where the money is,” the infamous thief replied. Why go on strike? Because that’s where our power is. Teachers in West Virginia showed it in 2018 when they walked out, in a strike that bubbled up from below, surprising even their statewide union leaders. No one seemed concerned that public sector strikes were unlawful in West Virginia. “What are they going to do, fire us all?” said Jay O’Neal, treasurer for the Kanawha County local. “Who would they get to replace us?” Already the state had 700 teaching vacancies, thanks to the rock-bottom pay the strikers were protesting. After 13 days out, the teachers declared victory and returned to their classrooms with a 5 percent raise. They had also backed off corporate education “reformers” on a host of other issues. The biggest lesson: “Our labor is ours first,” West Virginia teacher Nicole McCormick told the crowd at the Labor Notes Conference that spring. “It is up to us to give our labor, or to withhold it.” That’s the fundamental truth on which the labor movement was built. Strikes by unorganized workers led to the founding of unions. Strikes won the first union contracts. Strikes over the years won bigger paychecks, vacations, seniority rights, and the right to tell the foreman “that’s not my job.” Without strikes we would have no labor movement, no unions, no contracts, and a far worse working and living situation. In short, strikes are the strongest tool in workers’ toolbox—our power not just to ask, but to force our employers to concede something. DISCOVER YOUR POWER The key word is “force.” A strike is not just a symbolic protest. It works because we withhold something that the employer needs—its production, its good public image, its profits, and above all its control over us. As one union slogan has it, “this university works because we do”—or this company, or this city. A strike reveals something that employers would prefer we not notice: they need us. Workplaces are typically run as dictatorships. The discovery that your boss does not have absolute power over you—and that in fact, you and your co-workers can exert power over him—is a revelation. There’s no feeling like it. Going on strike changes you, personally and as a union. “Walking into work the first day back chanting ‘one day longer, one day stronger’ was the best morning I’ve ever had at Verizon,” said Pam Galpern, a field tech and mobilizer with Communication Workers Local 1101, after workers beat the corporate giant in a 45-day strike in 2016. “There was such a tremendous feeling of accomplishment. People were smiling and happy. It was like a complete 180-degree difference from before the strike,” when supervisors had been micromanaging and writing workers up for the smallest infractions. In a good strike, everyone has a meaningful role. Strikers develop new skills and a deeper sense that they own and run their union. New leaders emerge from the ranks and go on to become stewards. New friendships are formed; workers who didn’t know or trust one another before forge bonds of solidarity. A few stubborn co-workers finally see why the union matters and sign on as members. Allies from faith groups, neighborhood groups, or other unions adopt your cause. You and your co-workers lose some fear of the boss—and the boss gains some fear of you. In all these ways and more—not to mention the contract gains you may win—a strike can be a tremendous union-building activity.

#### only illegal strikes have the potential to be successful and change minds

Reddy 21-- Diana S. Reddy [Diana Reddy is a Doctoral Fellow at the Law, Economics, and Politics Center at UC Berkeley Law]; “There Is No Such Thing as an Illegal Strike”: Reconceptualizing the Strike in Law and Political Economy; Jan 6 2021; Yale Law Journal; <https://www.yalelawjournal.org/forum/there-is-no-such-thing-as-an-illegal-strike-reconceptualizing-the-strike-in-law-and-political-economy>. (AG DebateDrills)

In recent years, consistent with this vision, there has been a shift in the kinds of strikes [are] workers and their organizations engage in—increasingly public-facing, engaged with the community, and capacious in their concerns.178 They have transcended the ostensible apoliticism of their forebearers in two ways, less voluntaristic and less economistic. They are less voluntaristic in that they seek to engage and mobilize the broader community in support of labor’s goals, and those goals often include community, if not state, action. They are less economistic in that they draw through lines between workplace-based economic issues and other forms of exploitation and subjugation that have been constructed as “political.” These strikes do not necessarily look like what strikes looked like fifty years ago, and they often skirt—or at times, flatly defy—legal rules. Yet, they have often been successful. Since 2012, tens of thousands of workers in the Fight for $15 movement have engaged in discourse-changing, public law-building strikes. They do not shut down production, and their primary targets are not direct employers. For these reasons, they push the boundaries of exiting labor law.179 Still, the risks appear to have been worth it. A 2018 report by the National Employment Law Center found that these strikes had helped twenty-two million low-wage workers win $68 billion in raises, a redistribution of wealth fourteen times greater than the value of the last federal minimum wage increase in 2007.180 They have demonstrated the power of strikes to do more than challenge employer behavior. As Kate Andrias has argued: [T]he Fight for $15 . . . reject[s] the notion that unions’ primary role is to negotiate traditional private collective bargaining agreements, with the state playing a neutral mediating and enforcing role. Instead, the movements are seeking to bargain in the public arena: they are engaging in social bargaining with the state on behalf of all workers.”181 In the so-called “red state” teacher strikes of 2018, more than a hundred thousand educators in West Virginia, Oklahoma, Arizona, and other states struck to challenge post-Great Recession austerity measures, which they argued hurt teachers and students, alike.182 These strikes were illegal; yet, no penalties were imposed.183 Rather, the strikes grew workers’ unions, won meaningful concessions from state governments, and built public support. As noted above, public-sector work stoppages are easier to conceive of as political, even under existing jurisprudential categories.184 But these strikes were political in the broader sense as well. Educators worked with parents and students to cultivate support, and they explained how their struggles were connected to the needs of those communities.185 Their power was not only in depriving schools of their labor power, but in making normative claims about the value of that labor to the community. Most recently, 2020 saw a flurry of work stoppages in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.186 These ranged from Minneapolis bus drivers’ refusal to transport protesters to jail, to Service Employees International Union’s Strike for Black Lives, to the NBA players’ wildcat strike.187 Some of these protests violated legal restrictions. The NBA players’ strike for instance, was inconsistent with a “no-strike” clause in their collective-bargaining agreement with the NBA.188 And it remains an open question in each case whether workers sought goals that were sufficiently job-related as to constitute protected activity.189 Whatever the conclusion under current law, however, striking workers demonstrated in fact the relationship between their workplaces and broader political concerns. The NBA players’ strike was resolved in part through an agreement that NBA arenas would be used as polling places and sites of civic engagement.190 Workers withheld their labor in order to insist that private capital be used for public, democratic purposes. And in refusing to transport arrested protestors to jail, Minneapolis bus drivers made claims about their vision for public transport. Collectively, all of these strikes have prompted debates within the labor movement about what a strike is, and what its role should be. These strikes are so outside the bounds of institutionalized categories that public data sources do not always reflect them.191 And there is, reportedly, a concern by some union leaders that these strikes do not look like the strikes of the mid-twentieth century. There has been a tendency to dismiss them.192 In response, Bill Fletcher Jr., the AFL-CIO’s first Black Education Director, has argued, “People, who wouldn’t call them strikes, aren’t looking at history.”193 Fletcher, Jr. analogizes these strikes to the tactics of the civil-rights movement. As Catherine Fisk and I recently argued, law has played an undertheorized role in constructing the labor movement and civil-rights movement as separate and apart from each other, by affording First Amendment protections to civil rights groups, who engage in “political” activity, that are denied to labor unions, engaging in “economic” activity.194 Labor unions who have strayed from the lawful parameters of protest have paid for it dearly.195 As such, it is no surprise that some unions are reluctant to embrace a broader vision of what the strike can be. Under current law, worker protest that defies acceptable legal parameters can destroy a union. Recasting the strike—and the work of unions more broadly—as political is risky. Samuel Gompers defended the AFL’s voluntarism and economism not as a matter of ideology but of pragmatism; he insisted that American workers were too divided to unite around any vision other than “more.”196 He did not want labor’s fortunes tied to the vicissitudes of party politics or to a state that he had experienced as protective of existing power structures. Now, perhaps more than ever, it is easy to understand the dangers of the “political” in a divided United States. Through seeking to be apolitical, labor took its work out of the realm of the debatable for decades; for this time, the idea that (some) workers should have (some form of) collective representation in the workplace verged on hegemonic. And yet, labor’s reluctance to engage in the “contest of ideas” has inhibited more than its cultivation of broader allies; it has inhibited its own organizing. If working people have no exposure to alternative visions of political economy or what workplace democracy entails, it is that much harder to convince them to join unions. Similarly, labor’s desire to organize around a decontextualized “economics” has always diminished its power (and moral authority), given that the economy is structured by race, gender, and other status inequalities—and always has been. During the Steel Strike of 1919, the steel companies relied on more than state repression to break the strike. They also exploited unions’ refusal to organize across the color line. Steel companies replaced striking white workers with Black workers.197 Black workers also sought “more.” But given their violent exclusion from many labor unions at the time, many believed they would not achieve it through white-led unions.198

#### Illegal strike activity in the status quo solves the affirmative – the aff is an attempt to regulate the ongoing strike wave

**Olivier 10/28**

Indigo Olivier is a Brooklyn-based freelance journalist covering politics, labor, and higher education. “Striketober: America’s workers are rising up”, <https://conversationalist.org/2021/10/28/striketober-americas-workers-are-rising-up/>, published 10-28-21, accessed 11-4-21 / mk

Workers across the United States are finally saying they’ve had enough. Nineteen months into the pandemic, 24,000 of them are exercising the strongest tool they have: the power to withhold their labor. With the country already facing severe supply chain disruptions, these strikes have put added pressure on employers to improve wages and working conditions. At the John Deere factories in Iowa, Kansas, and Illinois, 10,000 employees represented by the United Auto Workers (UAW) went on strike after rejecting a proposed contract that included wage increases below inflation levels and the elimination of pensions for new employees. Other strikes include 2,000 [healthcare](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/mercy-hospital-nurses-strike-labor-shortage-2021/) workers at Buffalo’s Mercy Hospital; 1,800 telecom workers at California’s Frontier Communications; and 1,400 production workers at several Kellogg’s cereal plants. Thousands of additional workers have authorized strike votes. Earlier this month, an overwhelming majority of workers in the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), which represents over 60,000 people in the film and TV industry, [voted in favor](https://iatse.net/by-a-nearly-unanimous-margin-iatse-members-in-tv-and-film-production-vote-to-authorize-a-nationwide-strike/) of a strike. A few days later, [24,000](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/10/11/24000-kaiser-permanente-workers-authorize-strike-over-pay-working-conditions/) Kaiser Permanente healthcare workers in California and Oregon followed suit. Harvard’s graduate student union, with roughly 2,000 members, also authorized a strike with a 92 percent vote. “Workers are fed up working through the pandemic under the conditions they’ve been working in,” says Joe Burns, a former union president and [author of](https://www.akpress.org/strikebackupdated.html) “Strike Back: Using the Militant Tactics of Labor’s Past to Reignite Public Sector Unionism Today.” The strike wave “also reflects that there’s a tight labor market.” “We’ve noticed a considerable uptick in the month of October. ” says Johnnie Kallas, a PhD student at Cornell’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) and Project Director for the ILR [Labor Action Tracker](https://striketracker.ilr.cornell.edu/about.html). The ILR has tracked 189 strikes this year. Of those, 42 are ongoing in October while 26 were initiated this month Kallas and his team have been collecting data on strikes and labor protests since late 2020; they officially launched the Labor Action Tracker on May Day of this year. “There’s a lack of adequate strike data across the United States, says Kallas. “We thought this was a really important gap to fill.” The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), he explains, only keeps track of work stoppages involving 1,000 employees or more, and which last an entire shift. “As you can imagine, this leaves out the vast majority of labor activity,” Kallas says. Workers are demanding higher wages, adequate benefits like healthcare and pensions, improved safety and working conditions, especially concerning COVID-19, and reasonable working hours. The ILR Tracker has also been keeping tabs on “labor protests” —i.e., “collective action by a group of people as workers but without withdrawing their labor” —which aren’t recorded by BLS at all. The federal minimum wage has been stagnant at $7.25 an hour since 2009, even as inflation has increased by 28 percent since then. Meanwhile, over the past year consumers have seen a sharp increase in the cost of everyday goods such as bacon, gasoline, eggs, and toilet paper due to the pandemic. This means workers’ wages aren’t going nearly as far as they used to. For months, the media has been [reporting](https://www.reuters.com/business/no-end-sight-labor-shortages-us-companies-fight-high-costs-2021-10-26/) on a “labor shortage” that has purportedly left employers unable to fill jobs. Fast food restaurants have [posted signs](https://twitter.com/ABC15Patrick/status/1382415576006496264?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1382415576006496264%7Ctwgr%5E%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.the-sun.com%2Fnews%2F2741287%2Fsonic-viral-sign-workers-dont-want-to-work%2F) that read: “We are short-staffed. Please be patient with the staff that did show up. No one wants to work anymore.” Small business owners and corporate CEOs alike have gone on cable news to complain about the hundreds of thousands of people who prefer to live on government assistance rather than find a job. But the truth, said Kallas, is that there’s [no shortage of labor](https://www.orlandoweekly.com/Blogs/archives/2021/10/20/a-florida-man-applied-for-60-entry-level-jobs-in-a-month-to-prove-the-so-called-labor-shortage-is-a-myth). Rather, employers can’t find people to work [for the wages they’re offering](https://www.orlandoweekly.com/Blogs/archives/2021/10/20/a-florida-man-applied-for-60-entry-level-jobs-in-a-month-to-prove-the-so-called-labor-shortage-is-a-myth). Saturation coverage of the labor shortage has come at the expense of amplifying the human cost of the government’s having cut unemployment benefits for 7.5 million workers on Labor Day, while an additional three million lost their weekly $300 pandemic unemployment assistance. Time magazine [called it](https://time.com/nextadvisor/in-the-news/unemployment-benefits-expire-in-september/) the “largest cutoff of unemployment benefits in history.” Just two weeks earlier, a [flurry](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/08/23/ending-unemployment-benefits-had-little-impact-on-jobs-study-says.html) of newly published [studies](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/20/business/economy/unemployment-benefits-economy-states.html) showed that states that chose to withdraw earlier from federal benefits did not succeed in pushing people back to work. Instead, they [hurt their own economies](https://www.businessinsider.com/cutting-off-unemployment-hurts-states-did-not-help-employment-research-2021-9) as households cut their spending to compensate for the lost benefits. In Wisconsin, instead of increasing benefits or raising the minimum wage, state legislators have decided to address the labor shortage by putting children to work. Last week, the state senate [approved a bill](https://www.businessinsider.com/labor-shortage-wisconsin-senate-jobs-work-teenagers-child-labor-hours-2021-10) that would allow 15 and 16-year-olds to work as late as 9 p.m. on school nights and 11 p.m. on days that aren’t followed by a school day. The only state legislator to speak out against the bill was Senator Bob Wirch, who [said that](https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2021/10/21/senate-votes-to-extend-work-hours-for-some-teens-under-16/) “kids should be doing their homework, being in school, instead of working more hours.” Despite these setbacks, the tight labor market has given workers considerable leverage. “Workers are more confident that they can strike and not be replaced,” says Burns. In places where non-union labor, or “scabs,” have been brought in to replace striking workers, there have been several incidents that underscore the importance of a union in creating a safe work environment. Jonah Furman, a labor activist who has been covering the John Deere strike closely, reported that poorly trained replacement workers brought in to a company facility were involved in a serious [tractor accident](https://labor411.org/411-blog/scab-crashes-tractor-on-day-1-of-john-deeres-replacement-of-striking-workers/) on the morning of their first day. A higher profile and more deadly incident occurred last week when the actor Alec Baldwin fatally shot cinematographer Halyna Hutchins with a prop gun that was supposed to contain only blank rounds. According to [several](https://www.insider.com/rust-camera-crew-walked-off-protest-hours-before-fatal-shooting-2021-10) [reports](https://www.motherjones.com/media/2021/10/rust-alec-baldwin-strike-labor-gun-iatse/) on the incident, the union camera crew quit their jobs and walked off the set earlier that day to protest abysmal safety standards—and were immediately replaced with inexperienced, non-union labor. “Corners were being cut — and they brought in nonunion people so they could continue shooting,” one crew member told the [LA Times](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/business/story/2021-10-22/alec-baldwin-rust-camera-crew-walked-off-set). Kallas says the incident “clearly demonstrates the importance of workplace safety and the significance of capturing both strikes and labor protests” when collecting data. “What’s becoming increasingly common are these walkouts and mass resignations,” he says. He mentioned a Burger King in Nebraska where the entire [staff walked out](https://globalnews.ca/news/8023338/burger-king-sign-quit-employees-lincoln-nebraska/#:~:text=Fed%2Dup%20Burger%20King%20staff,%E2%80%9CSorry%20for%20the%20inconvenience.%E2%80%9D) to protest poor working conditions that included a broken air conditioner in 90° F temperatures and staff shortages. They left a note on the door that said, “We all quit. Sorry for the inconvenience.” In another non-strike labor action, dozens of non-union school bus drivers in Charles County, Maryland [called in sick](https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/education/150-school-bus-routes-affected-friday-in-charles-county-after-rumoured-driver-sick-out-maryland/65-88bf184f-0cf1-4182-aa06-05e983188934) to protest their low wages and lack of benefits. Over 160 bus routes were affected by the action. Meanwhile, adjacent school districts that are critically short of bus drivers find themselves unable to attract new candidates because of the perceived risk associated with driving a bus crowded with children during the pandemic. In an [Opinion piece](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/oct/13/american-workers-general-strike-robert-reich) for The Guardian US, former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich suggested that the United States was in the grips of an unofficial general strike, with workers quitting their jobs “at the highest rate on record.” Why? Because they were “burned out,” fed up with “back-breaking or mind-numbing low-wage shit jobs.” The pandemic, asserted Reich, was “the last straw.” In July, an anonymous group [called for a](https://boldtv.com/cheyenner/2021/07/19/did-you-know-theres-going-to-be-a-general-strike-in-2021/) general strike on October 15, but the day came and went without much fanfare. “Traditionally, general strikes happen because workers actually want to go on strike, and not because someone declares it on Facebook or Twitter,” says Burns. Rosa Luxemburg, the German socialist and philosopher who rose to prominence at the beginning of the last century, believed general strikes were the tool to usher in social revolution after developing class consciousness through the patient building of worker organizations, such as unions. “That’s not happening today,” says Burns. The 24,000 striking workers today pale in comparison to the mass strikes of the early to mid-twentieth century, when workers shut down production by the hundreds of thousands. Some [4.6 million workers](http://www.rochesterlabor.org/strike/) went on strike in 1946, accounting for 10 percent of the workforce. Today things aren’t as simple. In August 1981, President Ronald Reagan fired over 11,000 air traffic controllers who went on strike after negotiations between the Federal Aviation Administration broke down. These workers were prohibited from ever working for the federal government again, creating a chilling effect among unions. Reagan’s action set the tone for labor relations for the next four decades, while his administration ushered in a new era of corporate dominance, known as neoliberalism. Today, corporations such as Amazon regularly [use threats](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/technology/amazon-unions-virginia.html), [intimidation tactics](https://nowthisnews.com/news/amazon-accused-of-intimidating-workers-after-warehouse-votes-to-not-unionize), and [surveillance](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/mar/02/mcdonalds-unions-workers-rights) against employees to prevent them from unionizing. “When workers engage in a true strike wave, politicians want to step in and regulate it and establish some procedures,” says Burns. The Taft-Hartley Act was passed one year after the [general strikes of 1946](https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/strike-wave-united-states), making wildcat strikes, secondary boycotts, and union donations to federal political campaigns illegal. The act also allowed states to pass right-to-work laws, severely limiting effective union organizing, and required union officers to sign affidavits pledging they were not communists. The Red Scare, initially sparked by the Russian Revolution of 1917, resulted in sustained attacks against organized labor, particularly the leftist Industrial Workers of the World, or “Wobblies.” By the end of the Second World War, with labor militancy intensifying and the power of the Soviet Union growing, the Red Scare had morphed into a reign of terror against an “internal enemy.” Reagan later used language from the Taft-Hartley Act that prohibited workers from striking against the government to declare the air traffic controllers’ strike illegal. Today, workers face serious legal barriers to organizing under a system of labor law that favors the employer. Over the years, these laws have restricted the scale with which strikes can be organized and the total number of workers who belong to unions. At the peak of organized labor in 1954, [34.8 percent of](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/02/20/for-american-unions-membership-trails-far-behind-public-support/) American wage and salary workers belonged to a union; by 2020, that number was down [to](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20wage%20and,workers)%2C%20or%206.7%20percent.) 10.8 percent, a trend that has been closely linked to decreased wages over the last few decades. Against these grim numbers, legislation like the [Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act](https://www.npr.org/2021/03/09/975259434/house-democrats-pass-bill-that-would-protect-worker-organizing-efforts) could make a huge difference to labor organizing. The PRO Act would allow workers to engage in secondary boycotts, restrict right-to-work laws, ban anti-union captive audience meetings and exact financial penalties against companies found to be in violation of the law. The bill is something President Joe Biden campaigned on during the 2020 presidential election and has pushed to include in his Build Back Better agenda. “I’m skeptical based on actual history that we’re gonna see a legislative fix to this problem,” says Burns. “**When workers are militant and engaged in activity, legislation will follow.** Not the other way around.” The strike wave we’re witnessing today speaks to a growing militancy against several decades of sustained corporate combat. It’s an uphill battle that no one union can win in isolation. With organized labor depleted and battle weary, the only path forward is to enlist other workers to fight by organizing new unions and activating those that already exist. Only by growing its numbers will labor enact the systemic change necessary to put working people on better footing. As labor activists have long proclaimed, “**there’s no such thing as an illegal strike, only an unsuccessful one.”**

## Climate

Climate strikes aren’t sufficient to reduce reliance on fuels.

Hayes 19 [Jason; Contributor to The Hill, director of environmental policy at the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a research and education institute in Midland, Mich; “A global climate strike isn't enough,” The Hill; 9/19/19; <https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/461809-a-global-climate-strike-isnt-enough>] Justin

A collective of influential green groups and corporations is supporting a campaign for a global climate strike from Sept. 20-27. The strike pushes young people to walk out of schools and workplaces to protest the energy sources that keep us alive and thriving. That many people are concerned about the global climate is obvious, but how will encouraging them to abandon their jobs or schools for a day or two, or seven, reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

The campaign website — globalclimatestrike.net — tells people they must “demand an end to the age of fossil fuels.” But, in the United States, we rely on these fuels for over 80 percent of the energy we use to provide basic necessities such as food, clean water, heating and air conditioning, medicine, transportation and so much more.

To make things worse, the energy sources offered up as replacements for fossil fuels — typically wind and solar — couldn’t even exist without fossil fuels. Natural gas, oil and coal are needed to mine, refine, process and ship the metals, rare earth minerals, silicone, plastics and various chemicals that go into renewables. Without steel, there are no towers to hold up wind turbines. Without rare earths, there are no solar panels. Adding to this conundrum is the fact that wind and solar cannot provide reliable power. They are intermittent, meaning they must be propped up by more reliable energy sources, such as natural gas.

A group of environmental policy experts has put together MyClimatePledge.com as our response, because we’d like to challenge climate strikers and to help them appreciate that striking won’t be enough.

#### Climate strikers don’t have enough leverage.

Dolsak and Prakash 19 [Nives and Aseem; We write on environmental issues, climate politics and NGOs; “Climate Strikes: What They Accomplish And How They Could Have More Impact,” 9/14/19; Forbes; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2019/09/14/climate-strikes-what-they-accomplish-and-how-they-could-have-more-impact/?sh=2244a9bd5eed>] Justin

But strikers must have the leverage to accomplish their goals

Strikers represent the demand for climate action. But who will supply these policies and what leverage do strikers have over these policymakers? This is where climate strikes could run into a problem.

Strikers have leverage when their absence from work disrupts activities that are valuable to policymakers. If railway workers go on strike, trains cannot run and the public is upset. When airline pilots go on strike, people cannot fly, and airlines lose revenue. By some accounts, the 48-hour strike of British Airways pilots (regarding a pay dispute) in September 2019 will cost the company about £100 million.

What leverage do the climate strikers have? Assuming most of the strikers are students, what costs might their strikes impose on the actors that need to change their climate policies (namely, governments and fossil fuel firms)?

Student strikes probably do not disrupt the government or fossil fuel firms. The main bearer of these costs are the conscientious teachers who need to figure out how they are going to make up for the lost teaching time.

Democracy

#### Global democratization is high now – only a risk they flip it – other reports use incomplete metrics

Renat Kuenzi 18, University of Bern, head of the editorial dept @ Swiss Info, citing Bruno Kaufmann, Chairman of the Democracy Council and Election Commission, "Is global democracy in decline or development?", SWI swissinfo.ch, https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/directdemocracy/democracy-index-2017\_is-global-democracy-in-decline-or-development-/43896598

The Economist magazine’s Democracy Index 2017 sees “free speech under attack” and global democracy in “disturbing retreat”, but swissinfo.ch’s global democracy correspondent Bruno Kaufmann calls the findings into question. More than half the countries compared by British magazine Economistexternal link saw their democracy ratings drop last year – 89 out of 167 countries. The report, published last month, says that only 5% of the global population lived in “true democracies” in 2017, while nearly a third of the population was under authoritarian rule. The authors see “the biggest decline in years”. Switzerland is still among the top ten in the democracy rankings, but dropped from eighth to ninth position. Leading the table is Norway, followed by Iceland, Sweden, New Zealand, Denmark, Ireland, Canada and Australia. Switzerland shares its position with Finland, while Chad, Syria and North Korea are bottom of the list. Financial transparency “Switzerland continues to struggle when it comes to transparent rules on the financing of political parties,” says Kaufmann. “Efforts inside and outside parliament to tackle the issue are regularly dismissed as unnecessary. This undermines democracy.” Scandinavian countries are miles ahead of Switzerland with its opaque system, he adds. Kaufmann also says Switzerland lags behind in the political integration of foreign residents. “The Nordic countries are more progressive about granting participatory rights.” Narrow scope The comparison is based on 60 indicators and five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Kaufmann does not criticize the applied criteria as such, but argues that they are too few and the scope too narrow. “They only list voter turnout in elections and membership figures of trade unions under the category political participation. But it leaves out possibilities of direct democracy and citizens’ participation in a Swiss-style democracy with initiatives and referendums,” says Kaufmann. This explains why Nordic countries have such high scores, according to Kaufmann, who lives in Sweden and has dual Swiss-Swedish nationality. This is despite the fact that Swedes are among the citizens who hardly ever have a direct say in political decision making processes, he points out. Local democracy Kaufmann says the comparison is done only at the level of nation states. Possibilities and developments at a regional and local level, where it is often easier for citizens to play an active part, are not considered in the index. He points to the Global State of Democracies report published last September by the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), an organisation of 30 countries including Switzerland. “Globally democracies are astonishingly resilient, according to the IDEA report,” says Kaufmann. “Participatory rights have even become stronger at a local and regional level over the past few years.” He says the research project Varieties in Democracy (V-DEM), which used no less than 400 democracy indicators, confirms this. Kaufmann says he can’t turn a blind eye to the pressure on democracies, including Turkey. “But in-depth analyses such as the reports by IDEA and V-DEM have found progress in the development of democracy. It’s out of place to speak of a ‘disturbing retreat of global democracy’”.