# Democracy AC

[brackets for clarification]

### 1AC – Advantage

#### The Advantage is Democracy –

#### Democracy is in decline – pressures from COVID-19 and the rise of authoritarianism around the world have caused loss of freedom and democracy.

Freedom House 21 [Freedom House, Press Release, “New Report: The global decline in democracy has accelerated,” March 3rd, 2021, [https://freedomhouse.org/article/new-report-global-decline-democracy-has-accelerated]/](https://freedomhouse.org/article/new-report-global-decline-democracy-has-accelerated%5d/) lm

The report found that the share of countries designated Not Free has reached its highest level since the deterioration of democracy began in 2006, and that countries with declines in political rights and civil liberties outnumbered those with gains by the largest margin recorded during the 15-year period. The report downgraded the freedom scores of 73 countries, representing 75 percent of the global population. Those affected include not just authoritarian states like China, Belarus, and Venezuela, but also troubled democracies like the United States and India.

In one of the year’s most significant developments, India’s status changed from Free to Partly Free, meaning less than 20 percent of the world’s people now live in a Free country—the smallest proportion since 1995. Indians’ political rights and civil liberties have been eroding since Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014. His Hindu nationalist government has presided over increased pressure on human rights organizations, rising intimidation of academics and journalists, and a spate of bigoted attacks—including lynchings—aimed at Muslims. The decline deepened following Modi’s reelection in 2019, and the government’s response to the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 featured further abuses of fundamental rights.

The changes in India formed part of a broader shift in the international balance between democracy and authoritarianism, with authoritarians generally enjoying impunity for their abuses and seizing new opportunities to consolidate power or crush dissent. In many cases, promising democratic movements faced major setbacks as a result.

In Belarus and Hong Kong, for example, massive prodemocracy protests met with brutal crackdowns by governments that largely disregarded international criticism. The Azerbaijani regime’s military offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh indirectly threatened recent democratic gains in Armenia, while the armed conflict in Ethiopia’s Tigray Region dashed hopes for the tentative political opening in that country since 2018. All four of these cases notably featured some degree of intervention by an autocratic neighbor: Moscow provided a backstop for the regime in Belarus, Beijing propelled the repression in Hong Kong, Turkey’s government aided its Azerbaijani counterpart, and Ethiopia’s leader called in support from Eritrea.

The malign influence of the regime in China, the world’s most populous dictatorship, ranged far beyond Hong Kong in 2020. Beijing ramped up its global disinformation and censorship campaign to counter the fallout from its cover-up of the initial coronavirus outbreak, which severely hampered a rapid global response in the pandemic’s early days. Its efforts also featured increased meddling in the domestic political discourse of foreign democracies, as well as transnational extensions of rights abuses common in mainland China. The Chinese regime has gained clout in multilateral institutions such as the UN Human Rights Council, which the United States abandoned in 2018, as Beijing pushed a vision of so-called noninterference that allows abuses of democratic principles and human rights standards to go unpunished while the formation of autocratic alliances is promoted.

“This year’s findings make it abundantly clear that we have not yet stemmed the authoritarian tide,” said Sarah Repucci, vice president of research and analysis at Freedom House. “Democratic governments will have to work in solidarity with one another, and with democracy advocates and human rights defenders in more repressive settings, if we are to reverse 15 years of accumulated declines and build a more free and peaceful world.”

A need for reform in the United States

While still considered Free, the United States experienced further democratic decline during the final year of the Trump presidency. The US score in [Freedom in the World](https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2021/democracy-under-siege) has dropped by 11 points over the past decade, and fell by three points in 2020 alone. The changes have moved the country out of a cohort that included other leading democracies, such as France and Germany, and brought it into the company of states with weaker democratic institutions, such as Romania and Panama.

Several developments in 2020 contributed to the United States’ current score. The Trump administration undermined government transparency by dismissing inspectors general, punishing or firing whistleblowers, and attempting to control or manipulate information on COVID-19. The year also featured mass protests that, while mostly peaceful, were accompanied by high-profile cases of violence, police brutality, and deadly confrontations with counterprotesters or armed vigilantes. There was a significant increase in the number of journalists arrested and physically assaulted, most often as they covered demonstrations. Finally, the outgoing president’s shocking attempts to overturn his election loss—culminating in his incitement of rioters who stormed the Capitol as Congress met to confirm the results in January 2021—put electoral institutions under severe pressure. In addition, the crisis further damaged the United States’ credibility abroad and underscored the menace of political polarization and extremism in the country.

”January 6 should be a wake-up call for many Americans about the fragility of American democracy,” said Michael J. Abramowitz, president of Freedom House. “Authoritarian powers, especially China, are advancing their interests around the world, while democracies have been divided and consumed by internal problems. For freedom to prevail [we] on a global scale, the United States and its partners must band together and work harder to strengthen democracy at home and abroad. President Biden has pledged to restore America’s international role as a leading supporter of democracy and human rights, but to rebuild its leadership credentials, the country must simultaneously address the weaknesses within its own political system.”

“Americans should feel gratified that the courts and other important institutions held firm during the postelection crisis, and that the country escaped the worst possible outcomes,” said Abramowitz. “But the Biden administration, the new Congress, and American civil society must fortify US democracy by strengthening and expanding political rights and civil liberties for all. People everywhere benefit when the United States serves as a positive model, and the country itself reaps ample returns from a more democratic world.”

The effects of COVID-19

Government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the global democratic decline. Repressive regimes and populist leaders worked to reduce transparency, promote false or misleading information, and crack down on the sharing of unfavorable data or critical views. Many of those who voiced objections to their government’s handling of the pandemic faced harassment or criminal charges. Lockdowns were sometimes excessive, politicized, or brutally enforced by security agencies. And antidemocratic leaders worldwide used the pandemic as cover to weaken the political opposition and consolidate power.

In fact, many of the year’s negative developments will likely have lasting effects, meaning the eventual end of the pandemic will not necessarily trigger an immediate revitalization of democracy. In Hungary, for example, the government of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán took on emergency powers during the health crisis and misused them to withdraw financial assistance from municipalities led by opposition parties. In Sri Lanka, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa dissolved Parliament in early March and, with new elections repeatedly delayed due to COVID-19, ruled without a legislature for several months. Later in the year, both Hungary and Sri Lanka passed constitutional amendments that further strengthened executive power.

#### 1] Authoritarianism increases nuclear prolif and instability.

Yulis 17 [Max Yulis, Penn Political Review. In Defense of Liberal Internationalism. April 8, 2017. pennpoliticalreview.org/2017/04/in-defense-of-liberal-internationalism/]

Over the past decade, international headlines have been bombarded with stories about the unraveling of the post-Cold War world order, the creation of revolutionary smart devices and military technologies, the rise of militant jihadist organizations, and nuclear proliferation. Indeed, times are paradoxically promising and alarming. In relation to treating the world’s ills, fortunately, there is a capable hegemon– one that has the ability to revive the world order and traditionally hallmarked human rights, peace, and democracy. The United States, with all of its shortcomings, had crafted an international agenda that significantly impacted the post-WWII landscape. Countries invested their ambitions into security communities, international institutions, and international law in an effort to mitigate the chances of a nuclear catastrophe or another World War. The horrors and atrocities of the two Great Wars had traumatized the global community, which spurred calls for peace and the creation of a universalist agenda. Today, the world’s fickle and declining hegemon still has the ability, but not the will, to uphold the world order that it had so carefully and eagerly helped construct. Now, the stakes are too high, and there must be a mighty and willing global leader to lead the effort of diffusing democratic ideals and reinforcing stability through both military and diplomatic means. To do this, the United States must abandon its insurgent wave of isolationism and protectionism, and come to grips with the newly transnational nature of problems ranging from climate change to international terrorism.

First, the increase in intra-state conflict should warrant concern as many countries, namely in Africa and the Middle East, are seeing the total collapse of civil society and government. These power vacuums are being filled with increasingly ideological and dangerous tribal and non-state actors, such as Boko Haram, ISIS, and Al-Shabaab. Other bloody civil wars in Rwanda, Sudan, and the Congo have contributed to the deaths of millions in the past two decades. As the West has seen, however, military intervention has not been all that successful in building and empowering democratic institutions in the Far East. A civil crusade, along with the strengthening of international institutions, may in fact be the answer to undoing tribal, religious, and sectarian divisions, thereby mitigating the prospects of civil conflict. During the Wilsonian era, missionaries did their part to internationalize the concept of higher education, which has contributed to the growth of universities in formerly underdeveloped countries such as China and South Korea.[1] In addition, the teachings of missionaries emphasized the universality of humanity and the oneness of man, which was antithetical to the justifications for imperialism and the rampant sectarianism that plagued much of the Middle East and Africa.[2] Seeing that an increase in the magnitude of human casualty is becoming more of a reality due to advancements in military technology and the increasing outbreaks of civil war, international cooperation and the diffusion of norms that highlight the importance of stable governance, democracy, and human rights is the only recourse to address the rise in sectarian divides and civil conflicts. So long as the trend of the West’s desire to look inward continues, it is likely that nation states mired in conflict will devolve into ethnic or tribal enclaves bent on relying on war to maintain their legitimacy and power. Aside from growing sectarianism and the increasing prevalence of failed states, an even more daunting threat come from weapons that transcend the costs of conventional warfare.

The problem of nuclear proliferation has been around for decades, and on the eve of President Trump’s inauguration, it appeared that Obama’s lofty goal of advocating for nonproliferation would no longer be a priority of American foreign policy.[3] In addition, now that the American president is threatening to undo much of the United States’ extensive network of alliances, formerly non-nuclear states may be forced to rearm themselves. Disarmament is central to liberal internationalism, as was apparent by the Washington Naval Treaty advocated by Wilson, and by the modern CTBT treaty. The reverse is, however, being seen in the modern era, with cries coming from Japan and South Korea to remobilize and begin their own nuclear weapon programs.[4] A world with more nuclear actors is a formula for chaos, especially if nuclear weapons become mass-produced. Non-state actors will increasingly eye these nuclear sites as was the case near a Belgian nuclear power plant just over a year ago.[5] If any government commits a serious misstep, access to nuclear weapons on the behalf of terrorist and insurgent groups will become a reality, especially if a civil war occurs. States with nuclear weapons require domestic stability and strong security, which is why states such as Israel, North Korea, and Pakistan could be in serious trouble in the event of a domestic uprising or military coup. The disarmament of all states is essential for human survival, and if it is not achieved, then a world full of nuclear weapons and an international system guided by realpolitik could give rise to nuclear warfare. In today’s world, nuclear weapons leave all states virtually defenseless. But, for nuclear deproliferation to become a cornerstone of the global agenda, a pacifying and democratic power must rise to the limelight to advocate the virtues of peace, stability, and human rights.

**Even limited nuclear war causes extinction.**

Starr 15 [Steven Starr “Nuclear War: An Unrecognized Mass Extinction Event Waiting To Happen.” Ratical. March 2015. <https://ratical.org/radiation/NuclearExtinction/StevenStarr022815.html>]/lm

A war fought with 21st century strategic nuclear weapons would be more than just a great catastrophe in human history. If we allow it to happen, such a war would be a mass extinction event that [ends human history](https://ratical.org/radiation/NuclearExtinction/StarrNuclearWinterOct09.pdf). There is a profound difference between extinction and “an unprecedented disaster,” or even “the end of civilization,” because even after such an immense catastrophe, human life would go on. But extinction, by definition, is an event of utter finality, and a nuclear war that could cause human extinction should really be considered as the ultimate criminal act. It certainly would be the crime to end all crimes. The world’s leading climatologists now tell us that nuclear war threatens our continued existence as a species. Their studies predict that a large nuclear war, especially one fought with strategic nuclear weapons, would create a post-war environment in which for many years it would be too cold and dark to even grow food. Their findings make it clear that not only humans, but most large animals and many other forms of complex life would likely vanish forever in a nuclear darkness of our own making. The environmental consequences of nuclear war would attack the ecological support systems of life at every level. Radioactive fallout produced not only by nuclear bombs, but also by the destruction of nuclear power plants and their spent fuel pools, would poison the biosphere. Millions of tons of smoke would act to [destroy Earth’s protective ozone layer](https://www2.ucar.edu/atmosnews/just-published/3995/nuclear-war-and-ultraviolet-radiation) and block most sunlight from reaching Earth’s surface, creating Ice Age weather conditions that would last for decades. Yet the political and military leaders who control nuclear weapons strictly avoid any direct public discussion of the consequences of nuclear war. They do so by arguing that nuclear weapons are not intended to be used, but only to deter. Remarkably, the leaders of the Nuclear Weapon States have chosen to ignore the authoritative, long-standing scientific research done by the climatologists, research that predicts virtually any nuclear war, fought with even a fraction of the operational and deployed nuclear arsenals, will leave the Earth essentially uninhabitable.

#### 2] Democracy is far better than authoritarianism for fighting climate change – multiple warrants and empirics.

Looney 16 [[Robert Looney](https://foreignpolicy.com/author/robert-looney/), JUNE 1, 2016, “Democracy Is the Answer to Climate Change”, [https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/01/democracy-is-the-answer-to-climate-change //](https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/06/01/democracy-is-the-answer-to-climate-change%20//)]

But is it really necessary to choose between democracy and saving the planet? A comprehensive review of various countries’ progress towards environmental sustainability suggests otherwise. In fact, the case against democracy as a vehicle for environmental sustainability may be grossly overstated, based less on the actions of the world’s democracies as a whole than on the failures of a conspicuous few.

Two data sets can help us identify the impact of democracy on climate change: The Economist Intelligence Unit’s (EIU) [Democracy Index 2015](http://www.yabiladi.com/img/content/EIU-Democracy-Index-2015.pdf) and the World Energy Council’s [Energy Trilemma Index](https://www.worldenergy.org/data/trilemma-index/). The Democracy Index divides 167 countries into four main groups: full democracies, flawed democracies, hybrid regimes, and authoritarian regimes. The countries are ranked best (Norway) to worst (North Korea). The Energy Trilemma Index ranks 130 countries in terms of their progress in three key energy performance measures: energy security (the availability of reliable supplies of energy), energy equity (the domestic price of energy) and environmental sustainability (the effect of the country’s energy sources on greenhouse gas emissions). Based on these measures, countries are ranked from best (Switzerland) to worst (South Africa).

In 2015, the twenty countries grouped by the EIU as democracies had an average ranking of 34.2 on the energy sustainability index, while the 27 authoritarian regimes for which climate data existed scored much worse, with an average ranking of 85.6. In the two intermediate regime types, environmental sustainability fell off with democracy, with flawed democracies having an average ranking of 62.9 compared to hybrid countries at 67.5. The bad reputation of democracies in combatting climate change likely reflects the extremely low environmental sustainability scores of several of the more prominent members of this group, namely Canada (71), the United States (95), and Australia (110).

As the name “Energy Trilemma” suggests, countries are forced to make trade-offs between energy security, energy equity, and environmental sustainability when determining their energy policies. For instance, a country that prioritizes energy equity might opt to import cheap fossil fuels at the expense of energy security and environmental sustainability until it can develop low-cost green domestic energy sources. Thus, the Energy Trilemma Index can provide insights not just into a country’s performance, but also into its priorities.

As it turns out, countries that prioritized environmental sustainability ranked considerably higher on democracy than those that didn’t (75.4 vs. 103.5). These countries also had somewhat lower average per capita income ($25,015 vs. $37,095), demonstrating that taking action against climate change is far from a luxury that only the richest nations can afford.

As these patterns clearly show, democracies are much more likely than authoritarian regimes to give environmental sustainability priority over either energy security or affordable energy supplies. This fact appears counter-intuitive, given that an often-cited flaw of democracy is that politicians are forced to make short-run decisions based on the election cycle. However, the effects of climate change, in the form of more severe storms, damaging droughts, falling agricultural yields, and increased flooding of coastal areas, are already being felt. And voters whose lives and livelihoods are increasingly impacted by climate change are beginning to demand immediate action, effectively forcing politicians to take a longer-run view. As a result, democratic governments become more likely to comply with global agreements that set specific targets for carbon reduction.

Nevertheless, as noted above, several of the more prominent democracies — in particular, Canada, the United States, and Australia — have failed to adopt a national strategy for combatting climate change. The governments of these countries have not only come under pressure from their domestic fossil fuel industries, but from other constituencies that oppose changing the status quo, due in particular to the perception that environmentalism comes at the expense of jobs and low energy prices. In the U.S., a long-term campaign of [disinformation](http://www.ucsusa.org/press/2016/new-evidence-reveals-fossil-fuel-industry-funded-cutting-edge-climate-science-research) funded by the fossil fuel sector has given rise to a large group of climate-change naysayers, although their numbers may be [shrinking](http://ncse.com/news/2016/03/latest-climate-poll-from-gallup-0016974).

Even in these countries, however, democracy is at work subtly prodding the government toward greater environmental responsibility. For now, this work is taking place at the provincial, state, and municipal levels. [British Columbia](http://www.economist.com/blogs/americasview/2014/07/british-columbias-carbon-tax) has imposed a carbon tax, [California](http://www.wsj.com/articles/how-cap-and-trade-is-working-in-california-1411937795) has initiated a cap-and-trade carbon plan, and [Melbourne](https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/zero-net-emissions-update-2014.pdf) has set a goal of zero net emissions by 2020. In most cases where local action has taken place, the effects of climate change have already begun to affect people’s lives. Once the consequences of climate change begin to be felt in other parts of these countries, it is reasonable to expect movements of this sort to gain momentum.

Public concerns about the effects of climate change are unlikely to have the same force in authoritarian regimes as in democracies for two basic reasons. Authoritarian regimes almost invariably prioritize energy security and equity over environmental sustainability, since rising fuel prices risk social unrest. This overarching concern with [keeping energy prices low](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240515305_Subsidies_for_fossil_fuels_and_climate_change_A_comparative_perspective) encourages increased usage of fossil fuels and a bias against green technologies. At the same time, authoritarian governments control information through state dominance of the media and access to official data. For example, China recently reported a sizable drop in coal consumption to placate citizens’ concerns about the country’s choking air pollution. According to the New York Times, however, Chinese coal consumption during the period of supposed reduction actually [rose](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/04/world/asia/china-burns-much-more-coal-than-reported-complicating-climate-talks.html) by 600 million tons, an increase equal to 70 percent of annual coal usage in the United States. Even as Chinese greenhouse gas emissions from coal grew, a [Pew Research report](http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/nov/05/climate-change-concerns-chinese-citizens-plummets) noted the number of Chinese who expressed serious concern about global warming fell from 41 percent in 2010 to just 18 percent in 2015. The only explanation for the drop the report’s author could suggest was a relative lack of public discussion of climate change.

#### Climate change leads to extinction.

Strona 18 Giovanni, Flinders University, Bradshaw, Corey J. A., Scientific Reports, Science Daily, “Climate Change risks ‘extinction domino effect,’” https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/11/181129122506.htm

New research reveals the extinction of plant or animal species from extreme environmental change increases the risk of an [leads to] 'extinction domino effect' that could annihilate all life on Earth. This would be the worst-case scenario of what scientists call 'co-extinctions', where an organism dies out because it depends on another doomed species, with the findings published today in the journal Scientific Reports. Think of a plant's flower pollinated by only one species of bee -- if the bee becomes extinct, so too will the plant eventually. "Even the most resilient species will inevitably fall victim to the synergies among extinction drivers as extreme stresses drive ecosystems to collapse." says lead author Dr Giovanni Strona of the European Commission's Joint Research Centre based in Ispra in northern Italy. Researchers from Italy and Australia simulated 2,000 'virtual earths' linking animal and plant species. Using sophisticated modelling, they subjected the virtual earths to catastrophic environmental changes that ultimately annihilated all life. Examples of the kinds of catastrophes they simulated included runaway global warming, scenarios of 'nuclear winter' following the detonation of multiple atomic bombs, and a large asteroid impact. "What we were trying to test is whether the variable tolerances to extreme global heating or cooling by different species are enough to explain overall extinction rates," "But because all species are connected in the web of life, our paper demonstrates that even the most tolerant species ultimately succumb to extinction when the less-tolerant species on which they depend disappear." "Failing to take into account these co-extinctions therefore underestimates the rate and magnitude of the loss of entire species from events like climate change by up to 10 times," says co-author Professor Bradshaw of Flinders University in South Australia Professor Bradshaw and Dr Strona say that their virtual scenarios warn humanity not to underestimate the impact of co-extinctions. "Not taking into account this domino effect gives an unrealistic and exceedingly optimistic perspective about the impact of future climate change," warns Professor Bradshaw. It can be hard to imagine how the demise of a small animal or plant matters so much, but the authors argue that tracking species up to total annihilation demonstrates how the loss of one can amplify the effects of environmental change on the remainder. "Another really important discovery was that in the case of global warming in particular, the combination of intolerance to heat combined with co-extinctions mean that 5-6 degrees of average warming globally is enough to wipe out most life on the planet," says Dr Strona. Professor Bradshaw further warns that their work shows how climate warming creates extinction cascades in the worst possible way, when compared to random extinctions or even from the stresses arising from nuclear winter.

### 1AC – Plan

#### Thus the plan – “A just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike.” I’ll spec and clarify within reason to meet any interps, and I’ll defend the whole res as a general principle as per LD rules –

**NSDA 21** [2021-22 Lincoln-Douglas Ballot, https://www.speechanddebate.org/wp-content/uploads/Sample-Lincoln-Douglas-Debate-Ballot-Blank.pdf]

Each debater has the burden to prove their side of the resolution more valid as a general principle. It is unrealistic to expect a debater to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. The better debater is the one who, on the whole, proves their side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.

#### That means PICs don’t negate since specific instances don’t disprove the resolution in general, and the aff doesn’t have an absolute burden of proof. CX checks all T and Theory, anything else incentives friv theory over substances and creates infinite abuse because of regress of interps and theory being apriori.

#### The plan solves –

#### 1] The right to strike spills-over to broader support for labor movements – every strike encourages more strikes.

Hertel-Fernandez et al. 20 [Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, associate professor of public affairs at Columbia University, where he studies American political economy, with a focus on the politics of business, labor, wealthy donors, and policy, Suresh Naidu, professor of economics and public affairs at Columbia University, where he researches economic effects of political transitions, the economic history of slavery and labor institutions, international migration, and economic applications of naturallanguage processing, and Adam Reich, associate professor of sociology at Columbia University, where he studies economic and cultural sociology, especially how people make sense of their economic activities and economic positions within organizations, 2020, “Schooled by Strikes? The Effects of Large-Scale Labor Unrest on Mass Attitudes toward the Labor Movement,” American Political Science Association, https://sci-hub.se/https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592720001279]

Strikes and Labor Power in an Era of Union Decline We examined the political consequences of large-scale teacher strikes, studying how firsthand exposure changed mass attitudes and public preferences. Across a range of specifications and approaches, we find that increased exposure to the strikes led to greater support for the walkouts, more support for legal rights for teachers and unions, and, especially, greater personal interest in labor action at people’s own jobs, though not necessarily through traditional unions. Returning to the theoretical expectations we outlined earlier, the teacher strikes appear to have changed the ways that parents think about the labor movement, generating greater public support. The results regarding workers’ interest in undertaking labor action in their own jobs also suggests evidence in favor of the public inspiration and imitation hypothesis, underscoring the role that social movements and mobilizations can play in teaching noninvolved members about the movement and tactics. Still, an important caveat to these findings is that strike-exposed parents were not more likely to say that they would vote for a traditional union at their jobs, possibly reflecting the fact that the strikes emphasized individual teachers and not necessarily teacher unions as organizations either in schools or in parents’ own workplaces. Further research might explore this difference, together with the fact that we find somewhat stronger evidence in favor of the imitation hypothesis (i.e., support for labor action at one’s own work) than for the public support hypothesis (i.e., support for the striking teachers). Before we discuss the broader implications of our findings for the understanding of the labor movement, we briefly review and address several caveats to the interpretation of our results. One concern is whether the results we identify from a single survey can speak to enduring changes in public opinion about the strikes and unions. Given the timing of the teacher strikes in the first half of 2018, our respondents were reflecting on events that happened 7–12 months in the past. We therefore think that our results represent more durable changes in opinion as a result of the strikes, in line with other studies of historical mobilizations and long-term changes in attitudes (Mazumder 2018). The AFL-CIO time-series polling data, moreover, further suggest that there were increases in aggregate public support for unions in the strike states after the strikes occurred. Nevertheless, follow-up studies should examine how opinion toward, and interest in, unions evolve in the mass teacher strike states, and it would be especially interesting to understand whether unions have begun capitalizing on the interest in the labor movement that the strikes generated. We also note that, despite the large sample size of our original survey, we still lack sufficient statistical power to fully explore the effects of the strikes on all of our survey outcomes. Future studies ought to consider alternative designs with the power to probe the individual outcomes that were not considered in this study. Another question is how to generalize from our results to other strikes and labor actions. Although it is beyond the scope of this article to develop and test a more general theory of strike action, there are factors that suggest that the teacher strikes we study here represent a hard test for building public support. The affected states had relatively weak public sector labor movements, meaning that few individuals had personal connections to unions; most were also generally conservative and Republican leaning, further potentially reducing the receptivity of the public to the teachers’ demands. And lastly, the type of work we study —teaching—involves close interaction with a very sympathetic constituency: children and their parents. This should make strike disruptions more controversial and increase the likelihood of political backlash (and indeed, we do find that the strikes were less persuasive for parents who may have lacked access to childcare). Nevertheless, additional factors may have strengthened the effects of the strikes; namely, that education spending in the strike and walkout states had dropped so precipitously since the Great Recession, giving teachers the opportunity to connect their demands to broader public goods. Considering these factors together, we feel comfortable arguing that strikes are likely to be successful in other contexts where involved employees can successfully leverage close connections to the clients and customers they serve and connect their grievances to the interests of the broader community. This is likely to be especially true in cases where individuals feel they are not receiving the level of quality service they deserve from businesses or governments. The flip side of our argument is that strikes are less likely to be successful—and may produce backlash—when the mass public views striking workers’ demands as illegitimate or opposed to their own interests or when individuals are especially inconvenienced by labor action and do not have readily available alternatives (such as lacking childcare during school strikes). This suggests that teachers’ unions’ provision of meals and childcare to parents (as happened in a number of the recent strikes) is a particularly important tactic to avoid public backlash. In addition, our results suggest that future strikes on their own are unlikely to change public opinion if all they do is to provide information about workers’ grievances or disrupt work routines. Our exploratory analysis of the mechanisms driving our results suggests that it was not necessarily information about poor school quality or the strikes themselves that changed parents’ minds, but perhaps the fact that the teachers were discussing the public goods they were seeking for the broader community. We anticipate that strikes or walkouts that adopt a similar strategy—similar to the notion of “bargaining for the common good”—would be most likely to register effects like ours in the future (McCartin 2016). Notably, that is exactly the strategy deployed by teachers in Los Angeles, who spent several years building ties to community members and explaining the broader benefits that a stronger union could offer to their community in the run-up to a strike in early 2019 (Caputo-Pearl and McAlevey 2019). In all, our results complement a long line of work arguing for the primacy of the strike as a tactic for labor influence (e.g. Burns 2011; Rosenfeld 2006; Rubin 1986). Although this literature generally has focused on the economic consequences of strikes, we have shown that strikes can also have significant effects on public opinion. Even though private sector strikes have long sought to amass public support, public-facing strikes are even more important for public sector labor unions, given their structure of production and the fact that their“managers”are ultimately elected officials. But how should we view strikes relative to the other strategies that public sector unions might deploy in politics, such as campaign contributions, inside lobbying, or mobilization of their members (cf. DiSalvo 2015; Moe 2011)? Given the large cost of mass strikes in terms of time and grassroots organizing, we expect that public sector unions will be most likely to turn to public-facing strikes (like the 2018 teacher walkouts) when these other lower-cost inside strategies are unsuccessful and when their demands are popular in the mass public. Under these circumstances, government unions have every reason to broaden the scope of conflict to include the mass public (cf. Schattschneider 1960). But when unions can deploy less costly activities (like simply having a lobbyist meet with lawmakers) or when they are pursuing demands that are more controversial with the public, we suspect that unions will opt for less public-facing strategies (on the logic of inside versus outside lobbying more generally, see, for example, Kollman 1998). Indeed, our results complement work by Terry Moe and Sarah Anzia describing how teacher unions work through low-salience and low-visibility strategies, such as capturing school boards, pension boards, or education bureaucracies, when they are pushing policies that tend not to be supported by the public (Anzia 2013; Anzia and Moe 2015; Moe 2011). Our results yield a final implication for thinking about the historical development of the labor smovement: they suggest that the decline of strikes we tracked in Figure 1 may form a vicious cycle for the long-term political power of labor. As we have documented, strikes seem to be an important way that people form opinions about unions and develop interest in labor action. As both strikes and union membership have declined precipitously over the past decades, few members of the public have had opportunities to gain firsthand knowledge and interest in unions. Moreover, strikes appear to foster greater interest in further strikes, feeding on one another. If unions are to regain any economic or political clout in the coming years, our study suggests that the strike must be a central strategy of the labor movement.

#### 2] Recognizing the unconditional right to strike solves – it’s key to fighting authoritarianism and bolstering democracy.

Pope 18 [James Gray Pope, Distinguished Professor of Law Emeritus, Rutgers University, PSC CUNY, “Labor’s Right to Strike is Essential,” September, 2018, [https://www.psc-cuny.org/clarion/september-2018/labor%E2%80%99s-right-strike-essential]/](https://www.psc-cuny.org/clarion/september-2018/labor%E2%80%99s-right-strike-essential%5d/) lm

POLITICAL CLIMATE

What provoked Cuomo and de Blasio to close ranks and *launch a simultaneous attack on workers’ rights*? Gubernatorial candidate Cynthia Nixon had the audacity to include in her platform a plank endorsing public workers’ right to strike. No wonder Cuomo and de Blasio struck back: Like Bernie Sanders, Nixon threatened the grip of Wall Street-backed politicians on what was once the party of working people.

The right to strike should be a no-brainer for any self-respecting candidate who claims to care about working people. It isn’t some transitory policy fix; it’s a fundamental human right, recognized in international law. Without the right to strike, workers have no effective recourse against unhealthy conditions, inadequate wages, or employer tyranny. Before the American labor movement began its long decline, unions made the right to strike a litmus test for supporting candidates. Labor leaders held that anti-strike laws imposed “involuntary servitude” in violation of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. Corporate interests ridiculed this claim, arguing that the Amendment guaranteed only the individual right to quit and go elsewhere. But workers and unions held their ground. “The simple fact is that the right of individual workers to quit their jobs has meaning only when they may quit in concert, so that in their quitting or in their threat to quit they have a real bargaining strength,” Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) General Counsel Lee Pressman explained. “It is thus hypocritical to suggest that a prohibition on the right to strike is not in practical effect a prohibition on the right to quit individually.”

Labor leaders quoted the Supreme Court’s statement that the Amendment was intended “to make labor free, by prohibiting that control by which the personal service of one man is disposed of or coerced for another’s benefit which is the essence of involuntary servitude.” Although they never convinced the Supreme Court that this principle covered the right to strike, Congress did embrace the core of their claim when it protected the right to strike in two historic statutes, the Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932 and the Wagner National Labor Relations Act of 1935. The “individual unorganized worker,” explained Congress, “is helpless to exercise actual liberty of contract and to protect his freedom of labor.”

A DEMOCRATIC NEED

The recent teacher strikes underscore another, equally vital function of the strike: political democracy. It is no accident that strikers often serve as midwives of democracy. Examples include Poland in the 1970s, where shipyard strikers brought down the dictatorship, and South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s, where strikers were central to the defeat of apartheid. Even in relatively democratic countries like the United States, workers often find it necessary to withhold their labor in order to offset the disproportionate power of wealthy interests and racial elites. During the 1930s, for example, it took mass strikes to overcome judicial resistance to progressive economic regulation. Today, workers confront a political system that has been warped by voter suppression, gerrymandering and the judicial protection of corporate political expenditures as “freedom of speech.” With corporate lackeys holding a majority of seats on the Supreme Court, workers may soon need strikes to clear the way for progressive legislation just as they did in the 1930s.

But if the right to strike is a no-brainer, then how did Cuomo and de Blasio justify attacking it? “The premise of the Taylor Law,” said Cuomo, “is you would have chaos if certain services were not provided,” namely police, firefighters and prison guards. If that’s the premise, then why not endorse Nixon’s proposal as to teachers and most public workers, and propose exceptions for truly essential services? That’s the approach of international law, and that’s what Nixon clarified she supports. But Cuomo couldn’t explain why teachers and other non-essential personnel should be denied this basic human right. As for de Blasio, he claimed that the Taylor Law accomplishes “an important public purpose” and that “there are lots of ways for workers’ rights to be acknowledged and their voices to be heard.” What public purpose? Forcing workers to accept inadequate wages and unsafe conditions? What ways to be heard? Groveling to politicians for a raise in exchange for votes?

The ban forces once-proud unions to serve as cogs in the political machines of Wall Street politicians. No sooner did Nixon endorse the right to strike than two prominent union leaders rushed to provide cover for Cuomo. Danny Donohue, president of the Civil Service Employees Association, called her “incredibly naive” and charged that “clearly, she does not have the experience needed to be governor of New York.” Evidently Cuomo, who was elected governor on a program of attacking unions and followed through with cuts to public workers’ pensions and wages, does have the requisite experience. John Samuelsen of the Transport Workers Union, which represents more than 40,000 New York City transit workers, also lashed out, saying, “I believe that she will cut and run when we shut the subway down…. As soon as her hipster Williamsburg supporters can’t take public transit to non-union Wegmans to buy their kale chips, she will call in the National Guard and the Pinkertons.”

Samuelsen’s descent to Cuomo attack dog is inexplicable except as a response to the crushing pressures generated by the Taylor Law. He stands out from most other public-sector labor leaders not for sucking up to establishment politicians, but for minimizing it. Just two years ago, Samuelsen was one of the few major labor leaders who had the guts to endorse Bernie Sanders over Wall Street’s choice, Hillary Clinton. And when he was elected president of the New York local, it was on a promise to be more effective at mobilization and confrontation than Toussaint. Once on the job, however, he and his slate had to confront the devastating results of the strike ban. In addition to jailing Toussaint and penalizing strikers two days’ pay for each day on strike, a court had fined the union millions of dollars and stripped away its right to collect dues through payroll deductions. No wonder Samuelsen quietly redirected the union’s strategy away from striking and toward less confrontational mobilizations and political deal-making.

A WAY FORWARD

Any way you look at it, striking will be absolutely essential if American organized labor, now down to 11 percent of the workforce, is to revive. As AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka once warned, workers must have “their only true weapon – the right to strike,” or “organized labor in America will soon cease to exist.” Red-state teachers have shown the way, exercising their constitutional and human right to strike in defiance of “law.” Will Democrats and labor leaders celebrate their example, or will they follow Cuomo, de Blasio and the Republicans down the path of suppression?

#### 3] Empirics prove – strikes beat back authoritarianism and push democratic reform. Independently, conditions on the right to strike undermine effectiveness.

Puddington 10 [Arch Puddington is currently Senior Scholar Emeritus at Freedom House. He also previously served as the Senior Vice President for Research at Freedom House. "The Global State of Workers’ Rights: Free Labor in a Hostile World." https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/inline\_images/WorkerRightsFULLBooklet-FINAL.pdf]

Some 30 years ago, in August 1980, workers in communist Poland formed the independent Solidarity trade union movement, thereby challenging one of the totalitarian system‘s fundamental principles: control of labor organizations by the party-state. The strike that led to Solidarity‘s establishment was launched at the Lenin shipyards in Gdansk. It quickly spread throughout Poland, and its program escalated from workplace issues to a sweeping demand for freedom to create the institutions that undergird a democratic society. After a decade of tumult and repression, Solidarity emerged triumphant, compelling the country‘s communist authorities to allow competitive elections that resulted in a landmark victory for the democratic opposition. This in turn led to the domino-like collapse of communist rule throughout Central and Eastern Europe and, two years later, the breakup of the Soviet Union. The question some are asking today is whether a phenomenon similar to Solidarity might be possible in what is now the world‘s most powerful authoritarian country, China. In recent years, evidence of worker unrest there has steadily mounted. Strikes and other forms of labor protest occur regularly; just in the last few months, workers have called high-profile strikes at installations operated by some of the world‘s largest multinational corporations. As was the case in Poland, the official labor umbrella group, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), has played an obstructive role by trying to force striking workers back into their enterprises and in some instances acting as strikebreakers. There are also signs that some within the ACFTU, unlike in the official Polish union, see a need for change that seems to be lost on the leadership. The burgeoning workers‘ resistance in China has drawn supporters and participants from many segments of the economy, including cab drivers, teachers, and factory workers. Despite their lack of experience as union activists, they have embraced the tried-and-true tactics of labor protest— sit-down strikes and roadblocks, for example—and have eschewed violence. These youthful workers have also used mobile telephones and the internet to draw attention to their causes. The stories they tell about conditions at the workplace are eerily familiar to anyone who is acquainted with the history of the trade union struggle in Europe and North America: low pay within the context of rapidly expanding inequality, punishing hours, harsh supervisors, and a consuming work routine that discourages family life. The most recent strike wave has taken many observers outside China by surprise. The growth of the Chinese industrial juggernaut gave rise to myths about Chinese workers, who were widely regarded as docile, willing to work remarkably long hours without complaint, uninterested in unions or collective action, inspired by patriotic love for the Communist Party leadership, and unwilling to challenge authority. Among those caught unaware were the owners and managers of multinational corporations whose investments in China have been predicated on the assumption of cheap, compliant Chinese labor. Indeed, the American Chamber of Commerce in China was sharply critical of changes to Chinese labor laws that were adopted in 2008, issuing a thinly veiled warning that enhanced protections for workers would lead multinationals to look elsewhere for new installations. Unlike the state-owned enterprises in communist Poland, the strike targets in modern China are foreign-owned, private firms. Accordingly, the strikers do not confront the state directly, and the strikes are thus not regarded as overtly political. Still, the increasing willingness of Chinese workers to risk arrest and jail to defend workplace rights is a potent signal to the government of the power of independent worker action. The Chinese case is a cogent reminder of the central role played by the struggle for worker rights in the past century‘s broader movement toward democratic freedom. From South Africa to South Korea, Chile to the Czech Republic, the democracy and workers‘ rights movements have been closely linked. This relationship was well understood by fascist, communist, and authoritarian dictators who feared the strength of democratic trade unionists. A number of important qualities distinguish free trade unions from other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that promote democratic reform. First, unlike most NGOs, they have a mass membership. Second, if they are run democratically, they can act as a training ground for democracy activists, who learn how to campaign on issues, muster support, and get themselves elected to union offices. And third, trade unions are one of the few NGOs that operate simultaneously in the social, economic, and political spheres, making them a potential counterweight to the concentrated power of economic and political elites. It is no surprise, then, that a principal goal of totalitarians and dictators of both the right and the left has been to secure absolute control over organized labor and transform unions into pliant instruments of the party-state. Communist movements of the past, which claimed to draw legitimacy from the working classes, were particularly eager to capture and destroy independent labor organizations. Today, repressive regimes are still wary of the power of organized workers. In a number of societies, unions and workers remain in the forefront of movements that seek human rights, fair elections, a free press, and laws to stem rampant corruption. Unions have played a crucial role, for example, in the effort to bring reforms to Zimbabwe in the face of murderous reprisals by the regime of President Robert Mugabe. In South Africa, it was the labor movement that prevented the transshipment of Chinese weapons to Zimbabwe at a time when the government of President Thabo Mbeke went out of its way to befriend Mugabe. In Iran, bus drivers and other workers have been important forces in the struggle for democracy; threatening statements issued in recent months by the country‘s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, have paid special attention to the role of workers in the opposition. In Guinea, unions were a critical force in demonstrations that sought democratic change, and union members were prominent among those massacred by the country‘s military junta in September 2009. And in Venezuela, unions have strongly resisted attempts by President Hugo Chavez to bring the entire labor movement under his personal control. The political leaderships of many authoritarian countries—such as Russia, China, Iran, and Egypt—are acutely aware of the Solidarity example and are determined to forestall a repetition on their territory. However, only the most oppressive regimes—North Korea and Cuba, for example—exert the degree of tight control that marked previous eras, and relatively few countries respond to trade union activism with the sort of thuggery employed by Mugabe. Just as they have developed sophisticated mechanisms to muzzle independent voices in the media, control the activities of civil society organizations, and marginalize opposition political parties, modern authoritarian regimes have devised more nuanced strategies to keep organized labor under control. Thus the Communist Party leadership in China has developed an approach that combines concessions to striking workers with efforts to restrict press attention to labor unrest, prevent labor complaints from reaching higher authorities in the state or party, and above all block the formation of a nationwide workers‘ movement that could become an autonomous source of power like Solidarity. The problems of workers are not restricted to countries with authoritarian political environments. Societies that otherwise observe a wide array of democratic freedoms—those that tolerate robust debate in the media, are sensitive to the rights of minorities, and have adopted a series of policies to achieve gender equality—may still take steps to limit the power of trade unions as agents of collective bargaining and sources of independent political power. The most glaring example of this phenomenon is the United States. While the country has adopted laws that in principle guarantee the rights of workers to form unions, engage in collective bargaining, and conduct [to] strikes and other forms of workplace protest, these rights have been circumscribed in practice over the past three decades through a combination of court decisions, political initiatives, and government policies. The status of workers‘ rights must also be viewed within the context of a global decline in freedom of association. Authoritarian governments have singled out the institutions of civil society for special attention in recent years. Targets include democratic political parties, human rights organizations, women‘s advocates, groups that investigate corruption or monitor abuse by security services, organizations that seek legal reform, and groups that champion minority rights or religious freedom—organizations, in other words, that aim to provide ordinary people with a voice or influence on public policy.

#### 4] Strikes incentivize companies to take climate action seriously.

**Ivanova 19** [Irin. Work, tech, climate and data for [CBSNews](https://twitter.com/CBSNews). Priors: [HuffPost](https://twitter.com/HuffPost), [CrainsNewYork](https://twitter.com/CrainsNewYork), [newmarkjschool](https://twitter.com/newmarkjschool). “These businesses are closing for Friday's climate strike”. 9-20-2019. No Publication. https://www.cbsnews.com/news/global-climate-strike-businesses-close-their-doors-in-time-for-climate-strike-2019/.]

Thousands of people are planning to walk out of work or school on Friday to press global leaders for solutions to rapidly escalating climate change. And while it was students who started the movement, more and more workers—and even companies—are joining them in support. Some businesses are letting workers take the day off to protest, while others plan to close their doors outright. They tend to be small or mid-sized businesses — most of the country's largest corporations have yet to weigh in on the strike, although plenty of people who work at them might yet participate when walkouts are set to start Friday afternoon. Here are the ways workers and companies are supporting the strike. Walkouts Amazon is expected to see more than 1,500 employees walk out, with the largest contingent exiting its Seattle headquarters, as they push the company to cut ties with fossil-fuel companies and stop funding groups that deny climate science. The company on Thursday announced it would make its operations carbon-neutral by 2040 and run entirely on renewable energy within a decade. More than 900 Google workers and unknown numbers of workers from Facebook, Atlassian, Cobot, Ecosia, Microsoft and Twitter are vowing walkouts. The strikers have details at [Tech Workers Coalition.](https://techworkerscoalition.org/climate-strike/) Some smaller companies are giving workers paid time off to participate in the walkouts. These include Atlassian, Sustain Natural, Grove Collaborative and others. Closures Ben & Jerry's corporate offices in South Burlington, Vermont, will be closed during the strike on Friday, while shops worldwide will either be closed or open later than usual. The company is also stopping production at its manufacturing plants in Vermont and the Netherlands, according to [Adweek](https://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/brands-are-closing-their-doors-in-support-of-the-global-climate-strike/). "We recognize that climate change is an existential threat to our planet and all its inhabitants, and therefore we are proud standing with the youth-led movement demanding bold action in response to the climate emergency," a spokesperson said. Patagonia is closing its retail stores for 24 hours on Friday. "For decades, many corporations have single-mindedly pursued profits at the expense of everything else — employees, communities and the air, land and water we all share," CEO Rose Marcario wrote on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/enough-join-climate-strikes-demand-action-rose-marcario/?sf219300827=1). "[C]apitalism needs to evolve if humanity is going to survive." Lush Cosmetics will close its manufacturing facilities and retail outlets on September 20 in the U.S. and on September 27 in Canada. It's also halting online sales on Friday. Badger Balm is closing for the day and giving workers paid time off to demonstrate or volunteer. The company is also donating 5% of online sales from September 16 to 27 to AmazonWatch.org to aid in preserving the shrinking Amazon's ecological systems, it said. Burton, the outdoor retailer, is closing its offices and owned retail stores on September 20th or 27th (depending on their country of location). It also won't make any online sales for 24 hours on Friday. SodaStream, the seltzer maker owned by PepsiCo, is shuttering its headquarters and closing e-commerce on Friday. Digital doings and more The heart of the strike will be in the streets, but that doesn't mean the action stops there. More than 7,000 [companies](https://digital.globalclimatestrike.net/) have pledged to draw attention to the protest by either donating ad space or putting banners on their sites. Participants include Tumblr, WordPress, Imgur, Kickstarter, BitTorrent, Tor, BoingBoing, Greenpeace, Change.org, among many others.

#### 5] Unconditional right to strike is key to effectiveness – strikes are successful, but current law disincentives them.

Reddy 21 [(Diana S., a Doctoral Fellow at the Law, Economics, and Politics Center at UC Berkeley Law, and a PhD candidate in UCB's Jurisprudence and Social Policy Program.) ““There Is No Such Thing as an Illegal Strike”: Reconceptualizing the Strike in Law and Political Economy,” The Yale Law Journal, 1/6/21. <https://www.yalelawjournal.org/forum/there-is-no-such-thing-as-an-illegal-strike-reconceptualizing-the-strike-in-law-and-political-economy>]

The National Labor Relations Board—the institution charged with enforcing the policies of the Act—summarizes these “qualifications and limitations” on the right to strike on its website in the following way: The lawfulness of a strike may depend on the object, or purpose, of the strike, on its timing, or on the conduct of the strikers. The object, or objects, of a strike and whether the objects are lawful are matters that are not always easy to determine. Such issues often have to be decided by the National Labor Relations Board. The consequences can be severe to striking employees and struck employers, involving as they do questions of reinstatement and backpay.93 The “right” to strike, it seems, is filled with uncertainty and peril. Collectively, these rules prohibit many of the strikes which helped build the labor move‐ ment in its current form. Ahmed White accordingly argues that law prohibits effective strikes, strikes which could actually change employer behavior: “Their inherent affronts to property and public order place them well beyond the purview of what could ever constitute a viable legal right in liberal society; and they have been treated accordingly by courts, Congress, and other elite authorities.”94

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

### 1AC – Framing

#### The standard is maximizing expected wellbeing –

#### 1] Util is key to explaining degrees of wrongness; it’s the only reason why breaking a promise to meet a dying person in a hospital is worse than breaking a promise for meeting someone for lunch.

#### 2] Actor spec – Side constraints freeze policy action, and governments don’t have intentions. Additionally, uncertainty means governments must use aggregates and look to consequences.

#### 3] Moral uncertainty means you should prioritize preventing extinction over all else.

Bostrom 13 [Nick. &quot;Existential risk prevention as global priority.&quot; Global Policy 4.1 (2013): 15-31. (Faculty ofPhilosophy and Oxford Martin School University of Oxford.]

These reflections on moral uncertainty suggest an alternative, complementary way of looking at existential risk; they also suggest a new way of thinking about the ideal of sustainability. Let me elaborate. Our present understanding of axiology might well be confused. We may not now know — at least not in concrete detail — what outcomes would count as a big win for humanity; we might not even yet be able to imagine the best ends of our journey. If we are indeed profoundly uncertain about our ultimate aims, then we should recognize that there is a great option value in preserving — and ideally improving — our ability to recognize value and to steer the future accordingly. Ensuring that there will be a future version of humanity with great powers and a propensity to use them wisely is plausibly the best way available to us to increase the probability that the future will contain a lot of value. To do this, we must prevent any existential catastrophe.

### 1AC – Underview

#### Aff gets 1ar theory, otherwise 1n can be infinitely abusive. 1ar theory is DTD and competing interps – fairness is voter b/c debate is a game, and if it’s unfair no one will want to play. No new 2nr RVI, paradigm issues, weighing, or theory – they’d dump 6 mins and outspread my 3 min 2ar win every rnd. Yes RVIs for the aff – NC theory is unreciprical, 7-13 time skew, and 4 min time crunch is too short to beat back theory and win substance, and theory’s apriori so rvi is k2 checking.