## T-just gov

#### Interpretation: the affirmative must defend that only just governments ought to recognize the right to strike

#### Settler colonialism is unjust

Whyte 18, K. (2018). Settler Colonialism, Ecology, and Environmental Injustice. Environment and Society, 9(1), 125–144. doi:10.3167/ares.2018.090109

The settlers’ aspirations are to transform Indigenous homelands into settler homelands. Settlers create moralizing narratives about why it is (or was) necessary to destroy other peoples (e.g., military or cultural inferiority), or they take great pains to forget or cover up the inevitable militancy and brutality of settlement. Settlement is deeply harmful and risk-laden for Indigenous peoples because settlers are literally seeking to erase Indigenous economies, cultures, and political organizations for the sake of establishing their own. Settler colonialism, then, is a type of injustice driven by settlers’ desire, conscious and tacit, to erase Indigenous peoples and to erase or legitimate settlers’ causation of such domination.

#### **China is unjust**

Tate A LeFevre , 2015 “Settler Colonialism ” (In Oxford Bibliographies in Anthropology. Ed. John Jackson. New York. Oxford University P., https://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=china+settler+colonialism&hl=en&as\_sdt=0&as\_vis=1&oi=scholart

In recent years, settler colonial theory has increasingly been employed in studies of regions not previously analyzed as settler colonies. For example, a growing and sometimes controversial body of scholarship—including Verancini 2006 and Jabary, et al. 2013—analyzes Israel as a settler colony. Several works, most notably Salaita 2006 and Waziyatawin 2012, draw comparisons between the Palestinian experience of Israeli occupation and settler colonial dispossession and violence against Indigenous peoples in Australia, Canada, and the United States. As works like Geraci 2008 and Etkind 2011 indicate, cultural historians are increasingly looking toward settler colonialism as a frame for examining the expansion of the Russian Empire toward the Pacific. As China continues to send millions of Han Chinese settlers into minority areas like Tibet and Xinjiang, works like Bovingdon 2004 and Hansen 2005 have begun to deal with Chinese settler colonialism. Writing at the intersection between these two bodies of scholarship, Mirsky 2009 compares Tibet to Gaza.

#### Standards:

#### 1] Limits – aff can pick anything from hundreds of X and there’s no universal DA since each X has different parameters

#### – it explodes neg prep and leads to random state of the week affs which makes cutting stable neg links impossible

**– limits key to reciprocal engagement since they create a imbalanced caselist for neg prep**

**– kills small school and new debaters access to debate because prep disparities lock us out of rounds.**

#### 2] Kritikal ed –opens up kritikal education, That’s good –A] K lit forces you to acknowledge usfg set col B] interp forces settlers learn about just govs such as tribal gov.

#### 3] key for accessibility A] justifying settler states as “just” legtitimizes violence against indigenous folx B] accessibility is the i/l to their fairness claims, can’t have fair debates if indigeneous peoples knowledge is devalued through defending set col govs.

#### 4] aff gov stasis arguments are a move to settler education by reframing the usfg as constitutive of what government is.

**And it’s not what they do it’s what they justify, if they win that their aff is good, it justifies any aff that’s consistent with only some words of the resolution turns CI offense.**

**TVA Read the aff defending more then one X**

**TVA: Read the aff defending the whole resolution.**

#### Vote on Education it’s the terminal impact to debate

#### Vote on accessibility it acts as a prior question to having a debate space and thus debate rounds in the first place.

#### Drop the debater because their advocacy is their argument 2. Round already skewed

#### Competing interpretations because reasonability A. encourages judge intervention and B. justifies a race to the bottom. C. reasonability collapses to C/Is since we debate about which interp is most reasonable. D. it’s more educational to have clashing interps. E. There’s no brightline

#### No RVI – A) They’ve obviously frontlined our interp B) Deters us from checking abuse C) Logically incoherent – it’s your burden

#### D) And to avoid epistemological flight from their reps if they go for an rvi you grant me K comes before T so they can’t use it to sever out of their advocacy, they should have to justify their scholarship E) this also justifies 1AR shells aren’t Drop the debater.

#### 1. 1AR theory isn’t drop the debater no RVIS otherwise the interp could be negative debater must concede the round, which kills debate. 2. they shouldn’t get drop the debater shells without nc initating theory because it kills substance debate

## T- aff gov spec bad

#### Interpretation: The aff may not specify a government or a subset of governments that ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike and the negative may not read a pic

#### Vio:

#### “A” is an indefinite article

CCC (“Articles, Determiners, and Quantifiers”, <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/determiners/determiners.htm#articles>, Capital Community College Foundation, a nonprofit 501 c-3 organization that supports scholarships, faculty development, and curriculum innovation) LHSLA JC/SJ

The three articles — a, an, the — are a kind of adjective. The is called the definite article because it usually precedes a specific or previously mentioned noun; a and an are called indefinite articles because they are used to refer to something in a less specific manner (an unspecified count noun). These words are also listed among the noun markers or determiners because they are almost invariably followed by a noun (or something else acting as a noun). caution CAUTION! Even after you learn all the principles behind the use of these articles, you will find an abundance of situations where choosing the correct article or choosing whether to use one or not will prove chancy. Icy highways are dangerous. The icy highways are dangerous. And both are correct. The is used with specific nouns. The is required when the noun it refers to represents something that is one of a kind: The moon circles the earth. The is required when the noun it refers to represents something in the abstract: The United States has encouraged the use of the private automobile as opposed to the use of public transit. The is required when the noun it refers to represents something named earlier in the text. (See below..) If you would like help with the distinction between count and non-count nouns, please refer to Count and Non-Count Nouns. We use a before singular count-nouns that begin with consonants (a cow, a barn, a sheep); we use an before singular count-nouns that begin with vowels or vowel-like sounds (an apple, an urban blight, an open door). Words that begin with an h sound often require an a (as in a horse, a history book, a hotel), but if an h-word begins with an actual vowel sound, use an an (as in an hour, an honor). We would say a useful device and a union matter because the u of those words actually sounds like yoo (as opposed, say, to the u of an ugly incident). The same is true of a European and a Euro (because of that consonantal "Yoo" sound). We would say a once-in-a-lifetime experience or a one-time hero because the words once and one begin with a w sound (as if they were spelled wuntz and won). Merriam-Webster's Dictionary says that we can use an before an h- word that begins with an unstressed syllable. Thus, we might say an hisTORical moment, but we would say a HIStory book. Many writers would call that an affectation and prefer that we say a historical, but apparently, this choice is a matter of personal taste. For help on using articles with abbreviations and acronyms (a or an FBI agent?), see the section on Abbreviations. First and subsequent reference: When we first refer to something in written text, we often use an indefinite article to modify it. A newspaper has an obligation to seek out and tell the truth. In a subsequent reference to this newspaper, however, we will use the definite article: There are situations, however, when the newspaper must determine whether the public's safety is jeopardized by knowing the truth. Another example: "I'd like a glass of orange juice, please," John said. "I put the glass of juice on the counter already," Sheila replied. Exception: When a modifier appears between the article and the noun, the subsequent article will continue to be indefinite: "I'd like a big glass of orange juice, please," John said. "I put a big glass of juice on the counter already," Sheila replied. Generic reference: We can refer to something in a generic way by using any of the three articles. We can do the same thing by omitting the article altogether. *A beagle* makes a great hunting dog and family companion. An airedale is sometimes a rather skittish animal. The golden retriever is a marvelous pet for children. Irish setters are not the highly intelligent animals they used to be. The difference between the generic indefinite pronoun and the normal indefinite pronoun is that the latter refers to any of that class ("I want to buy a beagle, and any old beagle will do.") whereas the former (see beagle sentence) *refers to all members of that class*

#### Standards:

**Vote neg for limits – aff can pick anything from hundreds of gov and there’s no universal DA since each country’s labor laws has different parameters– it explodes neg prep and leads to random state of the week affs which makes cutting stable neg links impossible – limits key to reciprocal engagement since they create a imbalanced caselist for neg prep – kills small school and new debaters access to debate because prep disparities lock us out of rounds.**

**And it’s not what they do it’s what they justify, if they win that their aff is good, it justifies any aff that’s consistent with only some words of the resolution turns CI offense.**

**TVA: Read the aff defending more then one country**

**TVA: Read the aff defending the whole resolution.**

#### Voters:

#### 1. Fairness— People will quit debate

#### 2. Education—Terminal Impact to debate

#### Drop the debater because their advocacy is their argument cx paradigm issues from first shell

## K - Queerpess

#### The liberatory potential of strikes as the destruction of the state is decimated by the aff’s investment into futurity. Strikes are used as extortion to the state – a demand to be met – that secures the future of the economy, the state’s hegemony, the world order – the gears that churn the machine of futurity. This forever pushes queerness into a lifeless cadaver. They make the same mistake as all political organizations - they build the social order in order to solve a lack present inherently within it, unknowingly reproducing the harms they aim to solve. No future exists for the kweer.

#### Baedan 12

(baedan. “Journal of Queer [kweer] Nihilism.” The Anarchist Library, 2012, theanarchistlibrary.org/library/baedan-baedan.)VHS//RBA

One way to contextualize interruption is to think through the strike. This should also be inter- esting in light of recent attempts at rekindling the flame of the revolutionary general strike, in relation to which the discourse around violence has appeared again as a trap on all sides. While the model of the strike is explicitly referenced in the “Critique of Violence,” it is absent— rather conspicuously—from the “Concept of History.” In the former, he writes about the strike which appears in the class struggle as a form of violence. He distinguishes between different aspects. On the one hand is the strike as extortion—violence used by labor as a means toward securing an end, which the state sanctions as a legal right in order to “forestall violent actions [such as the burning of factories] the state is afraid to oppose.” The revolutionary general strike departs from the strike-as-extortion and becomes a crisis to which the state understands it must respond with violent suppression. It has to do this lest the strike find its way to the very heart of the state. Because, in such a strike, “the state fears above all else that function of violence which it is the object of this study to identify as the only secure formulation of its critique.” What then is this secure formulation of the critique of violence? It is the critique of the state itself. Given that any strike is a kind of interruption or stoppage, nevertheless it is generally understood that there will be a return to work once a demand is met. In what Benjamin calls the political general strike, a set of politicians take this method beyond the demands particular to a workplace and apply it to a demand for them (the politicians) to take power, at which point there will be a return to work. All of this bears only the most superficial resemblance to what Benjamin describes as the form of the strike that takes place rooted “in the determination to resume only a wholly transformed work, no longer enforced by the state.” In contrast to the political general strike, this other “form of interruption of work,” the proletarian general strike, is “pure means,”“nonviolent,” and “anarchistic.” The reason that these two forms are “antithetical in their relation to violence” bears some further inquiry. To Benjamin the political general strike is violent because it “causes only an external modification of labor conditions,” which are in themselves violent, and has as its aim the strengthening of state power, which is both violent and the arbiter of violence. The proletarian general strike is nonviolent because it is the abolition of the state—the real critique of violence put into effect. And the “really effective critique” of violence “coincides with the critique of all legal violence.” Figured another way, the task of interruption requires us to locate the clocktower that we could fire upon to stop the day. Homogenous time no longer flows through the monolithic machines in the city centers. Now, a range of technological advancements have diffused and integrated the machinery of time into our very thoughts and rhythms. Everywhere we go, we are surrounded by and permeated with devices which serve to manage the regime of time. Where once a singular apparatus mediated our relationship to time, its dictatorship is now imposed by an innumerable array. A desire for interruption must now reckon with the countless apparatuses that segment our memory and integrate our very being into capitalist time. But rather than waste time lashing out against all these clocks one after another, let us cut through to what underlies them. History’s servants promise us a shining future. Whether by means of technological innovation, hard work and sacrifice, or the Revolution, we are assured of a heaven-on-earth of light and crystal. But all of these glimmering apparatuses can only serve to adorn the monumental pile of wreckage in which we live. All around us, the carnage and corpses of our ancestors form the architecture of our daily existence. Not only the walls and freeways and shopping centers, but the smart phones, pornography, surveillance and entertainment systems—all monuments to the same enemy that has never ceased to be victorious. Capital, Leviathan, civilization, society: so many names for the process which turns life into an assemblage of death, which would integrate us as machines into a grander machinery. **Futurity is the logic that drives this regime of subjection and assimilation**, but is also the science which desecrates our memory of those who also struggled; the treachery which turns their struggles into so many more ideological cadavers. Where living beings once struggled to be free from futurity’s domination of their lives, we are told that they dutifully sacrificed themselves for society’s future. We too are called upon to procreate and raise up children who might one day live better lives than we. But just as we were born into the halls of the dead, so too would our children be the stillborn janitors of these halls, breathing circuits embedded in a massive cybernetic cadaver. Ghosts call out to us: they ask that we tear apart the sutures of this Frankenstein’s monster which they’ve come to constitute. They call on us to cremate their remains and bury the ashes, to end the reign of the dead over the living.

#### The Role of the Judge is to embrace individual resistance to futurism – our bodies have become the playing field upon which reason and ethic is staged in opposition to the desire of our flesh.

baedan 12 (baedan. “Journal of Queer Nihilism.” The Anarchist Library, 2012, theanarchistlibrary.org/library/baedan-baedan.)//LK

The outcome is reminiscent of the medieval skirmishes between angels and devils for the possession of the departing soul. But the conflict is now staged within the person who is reconstructed as a battlefield, where opposite elements clash for domination. On the one side, there are the forces of Reason: parsimony, prudence, sense of responsibility, self-control. On the other, the low instincts of the Body: lewdness, idleness, systematic dissipation of one’s vital energies. The battle is fought on many fronts because Reason must be vigilant against the attacks of the carnal self, and prevent “the wisdom of the flesh” from corrupting the powers of the mind. In the extreme case, the person becomes a terrain for a war of all against all.¶ Others have described this ‘war of all against all’ as the fundamental condition of an omnipresent civil war that is consistently raging, permeating the social order and interrupting the myth of social peace. This narrative is quite similar to a conception of queerness developed by Hocquenghem and later elaborated by Edelman, which understands queerness to be an ever-present violence, a potential which any body is capable of. If we follow Federici here in understanding the conflict between Reason (and its servant: language) and the Passion of the body, we can situate our queerness as a partisan force within this battle. Federici goes on:¶ This conflict between Reason and the Body, described by the philosophers as a riotous confrontation between the better and the lower sorts… the battle which 17th century discourse on the person imagines unfolding in the microcosm of the individual has arguably a foundation in the reality of the time. It is an aspect of that broader process of social reformation, whereby, in the age of reason, the rising bourgeoisie attempted to remold the subordinate classes in conformity with the needs of the developing capitalist economy… That battle against the body that has become its historic mark… The reform of the body is at the core of the bourgeois ethic because capitalism makes acquisition “the ultimate purpose of life,” instead of treating it as a means for the satisfaction of our needs, thus it requires that we forfeit all spontaneous enjoyment of life.¶ Here we are reminded of Hocquenghem’s explanation of jouissance as “blissful enjoyment of the present.” Federici’s historicism temptingly offers a historical-material structure for the whole of our critique. The desperate struggle of bodies against the future and in pursuit of jouissance is the same struggle which opposes capitalist development from the beginning. The conquest of Reason over Passion corresponds to the domination of the bourgeois order over the rebel body, because it is precisely the same struggle, manifest in each and every body.¶ The body, emptied of its occult forces, could be caught in a system of subjection, whereby its behavior could be calculated, organized, technically thought and invested of power relations… The development of the body into a work-machine, [was] one of the main tasks of primitive accumulation…. Like the land, the body had to be cultivated and first of all broken up, so that it could relinquish its hidden treasures. For while the body is the condition of the existence of labor-power, it is also its limit, as the main element of resistance to its expenditure. It was not sufficient then, to decide that in itself the body had no value. The body had to die so that labor-power could live.¶ Federici describes how this disciplinary war was waged so as to separate bodies from their capacity for jouissance, in order to commodify them as labor-power.¶ By transforming labor into a commodity, capitalism causes workers to submit their activity to an external order over which they have no control and with which they cannot identify. Thus, labor process becomes a ground of self-estrangement… This too leads to a sense of dissociation from the body, which becomes reified, reduced to an object with which the person ceases to be immediately identified.¶ It is this fundamental estrangement, located in the process of primitive accumulation which she says forms the basis of our contemporary alienation from our bodies, our terminal enslavement to abstraction and language.¶ Federici explains that this disciplinary violence has always focused on the eradication of non-productive ways of being:¶ The violence of the ruling class aimed at a radical transformation of the person, intended to eradicate in the proletariat any form of behavior not conducive to the imposition of a stricter work-discipline… Nakedness was penalized, as were many other unproductive forms of sexuality and sociality.¶ Here we see the tyranny of the Child traced back through time and embedded in language itself. The assault upon the body by Reason and Language has always been to eliminate all non-productive desires and capacities. Reproductive futurism then becomes the framework through which certain forms of social engagement are militarily enforced while others are eradicated.¶ This militaristic and scientific approach to disciplining the body functions through the body’s capture within language. Federici argues that “in mechanical philosophy we perceive a new bourgeois spirit that calculates, classifies, makes distinctions, and degrades the body only in order to rationalize its faculties, aiming not just at intensifying its subjection but at maximizing its social utility.” Here the linguistic and discursive institutions of Identity and Sexuality function alongside all other racializing and gendering apparatuses encode alienated bodies with particular values and functions—values and functions which serve to reproduce society in every body and every instant. Federici argues that this is necessary for the regime of any capitalist future.¶ From a capitalist viewpoint… here the future can be anticipated only insofar as the regularity and immutability of the system is assumed; that is, only insofar as it is assumed that the future will be like the past, and no major change, no revolution, will upset the coordinates of individual decision-making… The fixation of the body in space and time, that is, the individual’s spatio-temporal identification, is an essential condition for the regularity of the work-process.¶ She continues later:¶ Also from the point of view of the abstraction process that the individual underwent in the transition to capitalism, we can see that the development of the human machine was the main technological leap, the main step in the development of the productive forces that took place in the period of primitive accumulation. We can see, in other words, that the human body and not the steam engine, and not even the clock, was the first machine developed by capitalism.¶ If Federici is correct, if our very bodies have been destroyed and re-made into work-machines, and if these machines are the original machines which constitute the capitalist social order, then we must take our very bodies as machines to be sabotaged; our very corporeality, as Hocquenghem argues, must be the field of combat.¶ The battlefield is within each of us. The war of passion against reason, beyond being an external struggle must also be a struggle we wage against ourselves. We must struggle no less violently within ourselves as individuals than we struggle against the external enemies who seek to enforce the disciplinary regime of society’s future. In the list of managers and police with whom we battle, we must include the managerial and policing apparatuses which operate in our very being.

#### **The alternative is to embrace unintelligibility – any dialogue, concession, or identification with or for the state just reproduces the social order and its violence**

baedan 12 (baedan. “Journal of Queer [kweer] Nihilism.” The Anarchist Library, 2012, theanarchistlibrary.org/library/baedan-baedan.)VHS//RBA bracketed for inclusive language No page numbers its an article

For Edelman, queer [kweer]ness is the ineffable which escapes the ability to be named: “queer [kweer]ness as name may well reinforce the symbolic order of naming, but it names what resists, as signifier, absorption into the Imaginary identity of the name.” And so this critique of the naming and subsequent inclusion of deviant subjects must call into question the structures which produce normative and deviant subjects from the beginning. Our struggle cannot be one for this or that identity, but rather against the representative politics of Identity altogether.¶ Edelman:¶ The agent responsible for effecting their destruction has been given many names:… global extermination of meaning… gravediggers of society… whatever refuses to allow parents to cherish their children… homosexuals… the death drive and the Real of jouissance…. So [queer [kweer]ness] knots together these threats to reproductive futurism. No political catachresis, such as Butler proposes, could forestall the need to constitute, then, such a category of [queer] [kweer]ness. For even though, as Butler suggests, political catachresis may change over time the occupants of that category, the category itself… continues to mark the place of whatever refuses intelligibility.¶ And so the question that is posed concerns the refusal of intelligibility. Contemporary arrangements of power have abolished the silence that once accompanied the dark ineffable desires of queer [kweer]ness and destruction. Rather than an injunction against speech, the power of biopolitical democracy is specifically to make us speak. Cybernetic relationships ensure that each of us as a speaking subject has the ability to name ourselves, aestheticize ourselves, deploy blogs and social networks and avatars to represent ourselves. The contemporary function of power can be understood as one unending move toward intelligibility—one of moving what had been blind spots into new subjects to be marketed; new identities to be surveilled.¶ We are captured by the state every time we make ourselves intelligible. Whether demand, political subject, or formal organization, each intelligible form can be recuperated, represented, or annihilated.¶ Our project then must proceed in the recognition of the paradox that its being made truly intelligible—even by us, even to us—would be its defeat. We must seize the possibility of a life neither constrained by nor produced through the omnipresence of capital and state. It is precisely by the fact that words fail to describe it and programs fail to bring it about that we can know this life. As such, any imperative to put this ineffable project into words must be understood as a compromise of what must be an uncompromising project. There is no language which can make our intentions comprehensible to the social order. Any move toward such comprehensibility would be a betrayal of the specific antagonistic character of our project against that social order.¶ Camatte elaborates on this point:¶ This is a revolution of life itself, a search for another way of living. Dialogue should be concerned only with the plans and ideas for realizing this desire. No dialogue can take place between the social order and those who are to overthrow it. If dialogue is still seen as a possibility, then this would be an indication that the movement is faltering. Underlying all this is a profoundly important phenomenon: all human life from the very beginning of its development within capitalist society, has undergone an impoverishment. More than this, capitalist society is death organized with all the appearances of life. Here it is not a question of death as the extinction of life, but death-in-life, death with all the substance and power of life. The human being is dead and is no more than a ritual of capital … but to those great number of smugly complacent people, who live on empty dramas and fantasies, this demand, this passionate need, just seems irrational, or, at best, a paradise that is by definition inaccessible.¶ And so a queer [kweer]ness which opposes society must embody the death drive of what has become death-in-life, the intrinsic negation of a social order predicated on the use of life for its ends. In this project, we have nothing to gain by speaking the language of, or making demands to, the existent power structures. It is specifically these structures’ ability to comprehend antagonism that makes intelligibility synonymous with recuperation.¶ Edelman returns to Butler:¶ Small wonder then that her subversive act, her re-articulation of the norm, while promising to open what Butler calls a radical new field of the human, returns us, instead, to familiar forms of a durable liberal humanism whose rallying cry has always been, and here remains “the future.”¶ But what if it didn’t? What if … all those doomed to ontological suspension on account of their unrecognizable and, in consequence, unlivable loves, declined intelligibility, declined to bring [themselves], catachrestically, into the gambit of future meaning—or declined, more exactly, to cast off the meaning that clings to those social identities that intelligibility abjects…¶ Such [queer [kweer]s] would insist on the unintelligible’s unintelligibility, on the internal limit to signification and the impossibility of turning Real loss to meaningful profit in the Symbolic without its persistent remainder: the inescapable Real of the death drive. As embodiments of unintelligibility, of course, they must veil what they expose, becoming, as figures for it, the means of its apparent subjection to meaning. But where Butler… conduces to futurism’s logic of intelligibility by seeking no more than to widen the reach of what it allows us to grasp, where she moves, by way of the future, toward the ongoing legitimation of social form through the recognition that is said to afford “ontological certainty and durability” [queer [kweer]ness], though destined, of course, to be claimed for intelligibility, consents to the logic that makes it a figure for what meaning can never grasp. Demeaned, it embraces de-meaning as the endless insistence of the real that the symbolic can never master for meaning now or in the future.¶ Here Edelman invokes the Lacanian concept of the Real, or that which escapes articulation through symbolic structures. The Real is the indescribable and unnameable characteristic of our lived experience. The Real is the irreducible essence of revolt, pleasure, conspiracy and joy which comprises our project and which continually evades representation by politicians or surveillance by police apparatuses. To the contrary, Intelligibility offers two options: legitimization and democratic inclusion, or delegitimization and repression.

### K before case

#### Don’t let them weigh k vs case

#### 1] prior question – the K indicts epistemic logic that the aff relies on to pass plan, weighing case kills discussion about the method of the aff and ows on education and portability

#### 2] flights from epistemology – allowing them to weigh case against K means they can justify harmful rhetoric with no consequences, you wouldn’t let them weigh the benefits of the aff vs them saying a slur so it is logically incoherent to let them weigh case – ows on accessibility

## Hong Kong DA

#### Hong Kong doesn’t allow political strikes

Tang and Pang 20 [Nickolas Tang, writer on Hong Kong’s self-determination for the Nation, and, Jun Pang, writer and researcher of migration and detention for the Nation, 3-12-2020, "‘I Am Willing to Take a Bullet for You. Are You Willing to Go on Strike for Me?’," Nation, https://www.thenation.com/article/world/hong-kong-unions-strike/]/Kankee

After the wave of political mobilization in the 1960s, the British colonial government attempted to defuse activism by strengthening social service provisions, including implementing free basic education, shorter working hours, and increasing the availability of public housing. Academic Agnes Ku notes that the government continually pointed to the example of the 1967 riots as an example of the threat of social upheaval, stressing instead the importance of state-directed efficiency, stability, and prosperity. This continued after the handover, with the government adopting policies prioritizing Hong Kong’s economic development and competitiveness, presenting them as a panacea to all social and distributive issues. Article 27 of Hong Kong’s Basic Law—the territory’s mini-constitution—guarantees residents the right to form and join associations, including trade unions. The right to form a union is reserved for those who ordinarily reside in Hong Kong; that does not necessarily include migrant workers, though some have mobilized through unions and other networks to fight for stronger protections. Notably, there are no provisions for collective bargaining for anyone, which means that negotiations between employers and trade unions are not protected by law. Furthermore, strikes are legally protected only when they pertain solely to labor disputes—which is why, for example, the Hospital Authority recently warned striking medics that they may face repercussions for their politicized strike action. Carol Ng, the chairperson of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, the largest pro-democracy union organization in Hong Kong, believes that many of the city’s unions have failed to reflect their members’ political views. “For example, there are seven unions representing railway workers in Hong Kong, but they are all pro-establishment, and disconnected from their members’ grievances,” she says. “It wasn’t until the formation of Railway Power [a pro-democracy union] last October that rank-and-file workers have a union actively supporting their demands.”

#### Backing down on the Hong Kong strike implodes the CCP and escalates Chinese nationalism – star this card

Hiciano 20 [Lery Hiciano, graduate student at Claremont, 2020, “Nearly Halfway There: The Future of Hong Kong, China, and One Country Two Systems,” Claremont Colleges, https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3513&context=cmc\_theses]/Kankee

Chapter 5: Domestic Legitimacy, The CCP, and Xi Jinping Today, Hong Kong’s democratic movements pose even less risk than before to China’s economic growth. In fact, 2019’s protest shows that an actively rebellious Hong Kong can still meet the requirements for China’s domestic market. With the 2047 date looming ever closer, the Central Government likely feels assured of eventual economic integration. The seriousness with which Beijing treats Hong Kong protest movements, as well as other offenses to China’s territorial integrity, are driven not by economic concerns, but more foundationally by concern about the CCP’s ability to survive into the future. Mainland reactions to the protests of 2003 and 2012 compared to the protests of 2014 and 2019 demonstrate China’s policymakers have become significantly less tolerant of Hong Kong demands for democracy, autonomy, and personal freedoms. The balancing act between Beijing’s credibility, China’s domestic security, and defense of its territorial sovereignty on one hand, and the need for a prosperous, placated Hong Kong on the other, is the central issue in Beijing’s calculations regarding the territory. The CCP betrays its anti-colonial roots when it suppresses local autonomy in the name of unification. China is not the first nation that disregarded its revolutionary origins. Zakaria’s theories are founded in the fact that the U.S underwent a similar process when it went from advocating a European-free hemisphere to seeking its own colonies. Within China, the same fears of Hong Kong secessionism and pro-independence ring even louder as Chinese officials view Hong Kong as merely an arena for Chinese nationalism to compete with local elements. As one expert put it, “Hong Kong’s resilient struggle for autonomy is seen as presenting similar challenges already apparent in China’s peripheries: terror attacks in Xinjiang, self-immolations in Tibet, and political agitation in Taiwan.”180 Xinjiang and Tibet, although different due to the role ethnicity has played in both region’s resistance to Chinese rule and subsequent Chinese tactics of repression, are fundamentally related to the issue of Hong Kong and stages on which the CCP can demonstrate its commitment to territorial integrity no matter the cost. Snyder’s most relevant observation is that states’ adherence to the myth of domino theory – “losses in the empire’s periphery can easily bring a collapse of power at the imperial core” – can lead to strategic blunders and over-expansion.181 He cites this as, additionally, a product of the myth of the “turbulent frontier,” the belief that the best defensive strategy is one that continuously expands into the periphery in order to tame anarchic forces seeking to undermine the state in those same territories. Some of the first moves made by the newly founded PRC were on shoring up periphery, on the national front invading Tibet and forcing the Dalai Lama into exile, reintegrating the nascent second East Turkestan Republic into Xinjiang (literally translated to “new frontier”), and the First Taiwan Crisis. Within China, the concept of untamed, peripheral, frontiers is central to the nation’s creation myth. Zhongguo, or China, most accurately translates to “middle country,” a designation derived from the old imperial system in which the Chinese emperor not only governed China, but in fact, invested legitimacy in other monarchs. Confucian maps from pre-modern China show a world in which the emperor is at the center, with each concentric ring radiating out, signifying not just physical distance, but also cultural distance, or civilizational distance. Cartographers placed Korea in the second ring, since Koreans adopted Confucianism and used Chinese characters. Semi-nomadic, semi-Confucian barbarians in areas under nominal Chinese authority made up the third ring. Beyond them, untamed nomadic settlers made up the fourth. Centralized, Chinese authorities delegating autonomy to frontier, non-Chinese groups is part of a wider web of narratives that nationalist groups promote as an integral part of China’s legacy. The PRC, deriving legitimacy from this historical tradition, no doubt was inspired by dynastic precedent. The original basis for OCTS, even before Deng offered it to Taiwan, has its roots in a 17-point proposal from 1951 to allow Tibet to maintain autonomy. That proposal itself derived from Qing imperial policy that encouraged border areas to maintain local autonomy for a short period of time, before eventual integration within China. As Ho-fung Hung states, “The “one country, two systems” formula for Hong Kong is just a tactical and transitional arrangement. What awaits Hong Kong is what Tibet has seen since 1959: forced assimilation and tight direct control by Beijing.”182 Part of the CCP’s suppression of Hong Kong’s autonomy is the use of very paternal language. Xi himself stated in a 2017 speech, “It has been 20 years since Hong Kong’s return. According to China’s tradition, a man enters adulthood at the age of 20. So today, we are celebrating the coming of age of the Hong Kong Special Administration Region (HKSAR), which has grown with the vigor of a bamboo or pine tree.”183 His language is obviously patronizing, and by specifying that the HKSAR had not yet entered “adulthood,” he reduces the conflicts of the Umbrella Movement to adolescent rebelliousness. Xi’s words speak to a larger trend of thought within the ranks of the CCP. Another official once stated that Hong Kong residents’ different understanding of OCTS necessitated not just “serious attention,” but that “the people of Hong Kong should be re-enlightened about the ‘one country, two systems’ policy.”184 Behind this rhetoric, it is clear that there is growing tension within the PRC to how to resolve the issues within Hong Kong. Ultimately, the CCP finds itself at a critical juncture. Its core interests, and the lengths it goes to in order to protect them from slights, betray an inherent insecurity within the CCP apparatus. It has been abundantly clear for much of the decade that the way forward for the CCP and China looks very different from the path it has taken so far. The same methods of economic growth are no longer possible, the demographics of the nation are different, the global stage is changed, and institutional ossification within the CCP has only further set in. The 2019 Hong Kong protests touched on various sensitive nerves within a party that is increasingly wary of threats, however real or imaginary, to its rule. Simultaneously, the CCP is currently led by Xi Jinping, who is the first leader since Mao to abandon the party’s practices of ruling-bycommittee. The CCP Within a State-Party system such as China, the fundamental goal of the party is to survive. Following Mao, the CCP staked its legitimacy on economic progress, with its nationalist defense of Chinese honor in close second.185 To describe nationalism as natural, or to assume Chinese people are inherently more nationalistic than others, would be a mistake. The CCP has made it an explicit goal to foster nationalism within China through educational means and statecontrolled media. The Taiwan issue became the third rail of Chinese politics because of years of propaganda initiatives. It is such a problem that many within China, from officials to military generals to average citizens, remain convinced that “No regime could survive the loss of Taiwan.”186 There is no way for any observer to know if this is true, but Shirk states, “…the myth linking the political survival of the CCP regime to Taiwan is so pervasive that it creates its own political reality, especially in Communist Party headquarters.”187 If Taiwanese independence, something that has been the de-facto reality for seven decades, is a threat to the CCP’s survival, then Hong Kong’s moving away from China through democracy would assuredly be a setback. Hong Kong’s independence, the first time China would have lost territory following the Century of Shame, would be such a disaster for the party’s ability to rule that it is not mentioned as a potential possibility. The question of regime survival in the aftermath of Taiwanese, or worse, Hong Kong secession, is a question Chinese leadership is keen to avoid, hence the tension around the lack of any law in the territory supporting Article 23. The CCP’s Propaganda Ministry is ultimately responsible for the wellspring of domestic pressure that a Chinese official has termed a “hostage” situation, in which Chinese citizens, taught to care about Taiwan and Hong Kong as integral territories of China cut off by foreign powers, refuse to allow government acquiescence. The Chinese Communist Party depends on its nationalist image: the party fought off Japanese invasion in World War II, won the Civil War despite the KMT receiving significant amounts of foreign aid, and eventually negotiated the peaceful return of Hong Kong and Macau back to Chinese sovereignty. In the 1990s, in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square, the breakup of the Soviet Union, the impending return of Hong Kong, and the Taiwan Strait Crisis, the Propaganda Ministry led the “patriotic education campaign” to improve CCP legitimacy, a strategy that now severely distorts rhetoric with regards to Hong Kong democratic movements or Taiwanese elections. The Chinese professor who said that China can afford to let Taiwan go dared not voice this opinion even in a time of “soft politics” and the current domestic political situation in Mainland China is far from the softer politics that dominated pre-2008 and especially pre-Xi Jinping.188 In describing the CCP’s crisis of nationalism, Snyder states, “it may nonetheless become politically entrapped in its own rhetoric. Insofar as the elite’s power and policies are based on society’s acceptance of imperial myths, its rule would be jeopardized by renouncing the myths

#### The perception of backing down on a “core interest” magnifies the link – the aff is seen as compromising national sovereignty

Hiciano 20 [Lery Hiciano, graduate student at Claremont, 2020, “Nearly Halfway There: The Future of Hong Kong, China, and One Country Two Systems,” Claremont Colleges, https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3513&context=cmc\_theses]/Kankee

Core Interests In Mainland criticisms and observations of Hong Kong’s status, several sources present a focus on the definition of “one country.” In another speech contained within The Governance of China, Xi highlights that for OCTS to function, there must be a “strong sense of one country.” He further adds that sovereignty is not for negotiation, and that it is China’s “red line.”209 The mythmaking around China’s history: the imperial system that placed Han civilization at the center of the world, which was then erased in “The Century of Shame,” in turn defines the CCP’s core interests. The nationalist core of CCP legitimacy and mythmaking is that the party will be the vanguard to lead China out of the ruins of that horrible period. Starting with the First Opium War and continuing until the CCP’s victory over the communists, China was the scene of some of history’s most tragic stories. The First Opium War was followed by the Second Opium War, the Taiping Rebellion, Dungan Rebellion, Boxer Rebellion, the First Sino-Japanese War, the Warlord Period, the First Chinese Civil War, and the Second World War. In one century, China suffered tens of millions of deaths inflicted by combat, disease, famine, and natural disasters. Following the CCP’s victory in 1949, Chinese leaders across different eras have all explicitly made reference to the goal of returning the nation to its previous heights. Despite the party’s missteps in the 20th century, it has succeeded in rapidly moving China up in the global hierarchy. In a country such as China, a framework like OCTS is particularly groundbreaking because it is an agreement between the CCP and the people of Hong Kong. Not only that, it is also an agreement with the people of China, as it forever alters the contract between rulers and subjects by creating distinctions between the rights of different subnational entities. At the same time, it drastically widens the purview of “politics,” as the individual distinctions between subnational entities are negotiated. To do this between the PRC, a nominally communist authoritarian state, and one of the world’s most free-market cities required a significant amount of compromise to ensure a smooth transition. One writer states, “By casting reunification as an uncompromisable issue of national sovereignty, the Chinese government made this a default justification for all political, economic, social, and cultural changes. That is, reunification with Hong Kong demanded the supreme power of sovereignty to act ethically by not abiding by existing (Maoist) socialist norms and laws.” Now that the initial transition is complete, the justifications used to drive reform and originally put forward the concept of OCTS can now be used to harshly respond to the city’s democratic impulses. As the matter of reunification is “uncompromisable” to the extent that socialism is no longer at the core of the CCP, at the very least in one area, then any attempts to damage that relationship strike at the heart of the CCP’s authority. Since 2009, the CCP has given the general policies associated with this goal the name “core interests.”210 Starting with the territorial claims in Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang, they have now expanded to include regime stability, and continued economic development. The CCP is unwilling to negotiate on these issues. However, the full list of core interests as defined by the CCP has never been published or revealed. One army advisor stated, “as China becomes stronger, we can publicize by installments those core interests that our country can effectively safeguard”211 That quote is a clear admission that as China gains strength, the core interests will expand. In other words, there is no effective route of appeasement or clear stopping point for China’s potential expansion. However, the CCP is not only unwilling to negotiate on this vague list of issues, it also has a tendency to force others to acknowledge its position. For external audiences, the punishment for failing to follow the CCP agenda could come in the form of economic sanctions or corporate espionage. H.R McMaster, a former White House national security advisor, stated that the CCP’s tactics were “successful in part because the party is able to induce cooperation, wittingly or unwittingly, from individuals, companies, and political leaders.”212 In 2010, the CCP sanctioned Norway for the decision to award a Nobel Prize to dissident Liu Xiaobo. In another episode, Marriot International Hotels had to apologize for “violating national laws and hurting the feelings of the Chinese people” after perhaps insinuating that Tibet, Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan are independent from China.213 When Daryl Morey, General Manager of the Houston Rockets, tweeted his support for the 2019 Hong Kong Protests, the Houston Rockets had all their games banned from Chinese television, with threats that the same would happen to other NBA franchises. Other international firms consistently face the same pressure to conform to these narratives. Internal audiences, subject to actual enforcement of these policies, have no ability to dissent. The CCP’s track record regarding human rights and civil liberties is well-known to be abysmal. Human rights activists accurately compare it to a 21st century 1984, complete with mass surveillance, censored news & media, advanced facial recognition software, and much more. The personal costs of disagreeing can be extraordinarily high, even for something as apparently innocuous as a social media post. This also obscures whatever the true opinions of Chinese citizens may be. During the 2019 Hong Kong protests, many famous Chinese celebrities posted messages in support of the police or of the CCP.214 However, could any celebrity realistically have posted any message in support of the protestors? In a recent Athenaeum speech at Claremont McKenna College, a Chinese human rights lawyer questioned if the “resistance” had the ability to resist, if the state had made it impossible to do so. Hong Kong residents, through cases such as the disappearances of the booksellers, have already seen what awaits them under the CCP’s human rights regime. The CCP has succeeded in lasting this long by continuously adapting, however it is approaching the longest rule ever by a single party government. Minxin Pei, a foremost China expert, writes about how the CCP has survived by fueling mass consumerism, nationalism, and learning how to “fine tune” its repression tactics.215 However, with slowing economic growth and contentious power politics in the Asia-Pacific, it remains to be seen if increased repression is an effective tool with which to ensure regime survival. In South Korea and Taiwan, the authoritarian, economically focused, developmental states eventually gave way to democratic transitions. China is now nearing the point at which middle class citizens would call for democracy and greater participation in government ($10,000 per capita GDP).216 It remains to be seen whether in the face of growing potential crises, the CCP once again faces internal calls for democracy.

#### Authoritarianism limits the CCP’s ability to make concessions

Sala 19 [Ilaria Maria Sala, journalist based in Hong Kong, 8-7-2019, "Hong Kong Strikes, and Strikes a Nerve in Beijing The Chinese government is acting as though it would come unmoored if it made any concession to the protesters.," NYT, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/07/opinion/hong-kong-protests-strike-china.html]/Kankee

This is not to say that all Hong Kongers are of one mind. Demonstrations in support of the police have taken place regularly, too, if less frequently and with fewer participants. In those rallies, which are never visited by riot police officers, participants stress their support for China, waving Chinese flags and wielding banners that declare their roots in various Chinese cities and provinces. The fault line running through Hong Kong is, more and more, about how much the city should be allowed to maintain its distinct identity or be refashioned as China’s Hong Kong. On Tuesday, Yang Guang, the spokesman for the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office in Beijing, held his office’s second news conference since the beginning of the crisis more than two months ago. Previously, the office had only one in more than two decades, after Britain handed control of Hong Kong to China in 1997. Mr. Yang didn’t address any of the protesters’ grievances or demands, such as the withdrawal of the proposed extradition bill that set off the unrest or an independent inquiry into police brutality. The mainland authorities repeated their support for the city’s chief executive and the police. They strongly condemned the violence — by protesters, that is — calling them “reckless violent groups” who will “pay the price if they play with fire.” They admonished, patronizingly, that all this striking and demonstrating was damaging Hong Kong’s economy. “Do not mistake our restraint as being soft,” Mr. Yang also said. “Do not underestimate the central government’s determination in maintaining stability.” It was a veiled threat, and an admission of weakness, too. One of the most powerful governments in the world is acting as though it would come unmoored if it made any concession to popular demands. China seems as fragile as only a truly authoritarian government can be.

#### Declining credibility causes CCP war over Taiwan to distract attention – it’s a key driver of Chinese political dynamics

Blumenthal 20 [Dan Blumenthal, senior fellow and the director of Asian studies at the American Enterprise Institute9-28-2020, "China's aggressive tactics aim to bolster the Communist Party's legitimacy," American Enterprise Institute - AEI, https://www.aei.org/articles/chinas-aggressive-tactics-aim-to-bolster-the-communist-partys-legitimacy/]/Kankee

Why does China seem to be on the warpath? In the first half of the 2020, Chinese soldiers killed dozens of Indian troops over disputed borders, sank a Vietnamese fishing vessel, and launched a record number of incursions into Taiwanese airspace. Beyond military coercion, China’s belligerence included selling arms to Serbia despite concerns expressed by NATO about military dependence, pressuring the WHO to censor anti-China content, and sentencing a Canadian national to death. and placing crushing tariffs on Australia for criticizing Beijing’s handling of the coronavirus. The prevailing wisdom is that Beijing is more aggressive now because it is ascendant and the United States is distracted and declining. This “Chinese ascendancy school” argues that President Xi Jinping has successfully consolidated domestic power and built China’s military and economic might to enable his vision of an aggressive, revisionist foreign policy. But this account is overly-simplistic: Chinese aggression is not merely a result of China’s strength, but also of its weakness. Xi Jinping’s overwhelming concern with domestic stability, the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) legitimacy and party unity are crucial drivers of China’s bellicosity. China has faced two disasters in 2020—the coronavirus and historic floods—which exposed its fragilities and created internal unrest. Its response to both was the same: escalating aggression against its neighbors. China’s economic and military power made these provocations possible, but its need to suppress internal divisions made them necessary. The question is not why China has disputes with neighbors, but why now. If China’s aggression were only a result of its economic and military strength, then it could have paused its aggressive foreign policy as the political leadership back in Beijing refocused on dealing with the destructive wages of the coronavirus. Typically, governments in chaos have little time for adventurism abroad and must focus on remedies at home. In fact, many experts predicted that China would face inward during 2020, to focus on restarting economic growth and preventing new coronavirus cases. Yet for the CCP, external aggression is a necessary tool to combat internal weakness. The CCP is obsessed with its fragilities, such as the threat of losing popular support and legitimacy and demands for more justice and freedoms. When Chinese people criticize their government, China must act more aggressively abroad. Beijing uses external aggression to fan Chinese nationalism and cast the CCP as the protector of the people and champion of a new era of Chinese glory. Coronavirus was a true moment of weakness for the CCP, as it exposed fissures in China’s overcentralized authoritarian political system to light. A now-infamous example of Chinese paranoia over potentially out-of-control domestic crises was the case of Dr. Li Wenliang. On February 7, Li, a doctor who warned of the coronavirus but was quickly censored by the Wuhan police, died from the virus himself. Li’s death quickly became the top trending topic on Chinese social media with hashtags such as “We want freedom of speech.” The CCP censored all mentions of Li or any coronavirus failings, fearing more organized protests. Simultaneously, the coronavirus battered China’s economic growth, which underpins the CCP’s claim to legitimacy, with an unprecedented 6.8 percent Q1 contraction. Far from the unified front which Beijing seeks to project, the coronavirus revealed the CCP’s dysfunction. For example, Dali, a midsize city, intercepted and distributed a shipment of surgical masks headed to the hard-hit municipality of Chongqing. Similarly, the City of Qingdao instructed customs officials to hold on to a shipment of masks and medical products headed to Shenyang. At the same time, Hong Kong dealt the CCP a major political embarrassment when it halted traffic coming in from the mainland. These reports demonstrate the government’s inability to enforce basic order among competing cities and provinces. In response to the tumult caused by the coronavirus crisis, the CCP mobilized popular support by reigniting conflicts with its neighbors. On April 2, during the peak of the coronavirus, a Chinese maritime security vessel sank a Vietnamese fishing boat near the Parcel islands. Just two weeks later on April 16, China escalated a month’s long standoff with Malaysia by deploying the coast guard to a disputed oil shelf. China also stepped up its military activities targeting Taiwan—who’s coronavirus response was strong and effective—with as many as three incursions in a single week in June. These episodes were widely condemned by the international community, but greeted with nationalist revelry at home. The need to project strength and unity domestically explains the timing of China’s border dispute with India. In May, violent brawls broke out between Chinese and Indian soldiers near Sikkim. On June 15, the Indian government reported that twenty Indian soldiers were killed by Chinese soldiers in the Galwan River Valley, a disputed border region controlled by India but claimed by China. The CCP has made full use of the crisis to rally nationalism. China’s foreign ministry issued statements blaming India for the clashes and state-propaganda popularized the slogan “China is not afraid.” The Global Times, a propaganda outlet, cast the clashes as an Indian invasion, saying “India has illegally constructed defense facilities across the border into Chinese territory in the Galwan Valley region.” Importantly, Chinese state-owned news outlets were also running news about India’s poor coronavirus response at the time, in contrast to its own “successes.” The recent border clashes mirror China’s 2017 standoff with India at Doklam, a strategic point near Bhutan. During the conflict, Foreign Minister Wang Yi made statements that cast the conflict as an Indian attack upon China, and state media circulated images from the 1962 Sino-Indian War, to remind the China populace that Beijing had defeated Delhi before. The India clashes coincided with another threat to CCP legitimacy: a fight to remove pro-democracy advocates from the Hong Kong Legislative Council. China ended up harshly cracking down on the supposedly autonomous city as well. Understanding China’s weaknesses is essential for policymakers attempting to make sense of its aggression. This dynamic is not only a Xi Jinping phenomenon: China’s modern history shows that domestic crises are often followed by belligerence. A study that pre-dated Xi’s rule, with a dataset of over three thousand interactions between the United States and China, found that the CCP was twice as likely to initiate disputes when the Shanghai Stock Exchange (SSE) experienced a substantial drop. The SSE is a barometer of elite sentiment in China because the government pledges to protect elite investments and uses SSE listings to reward party insiders. Insight into the CCP’s domestic political objectives helps determine the magnitude of the conflict and appropriate response. The editor of the Global Times wrote that a belligerent foreign policy was “necessary to satisfy the Chinese people.” Policymakers can use history to deduce what levels of aggression are “necessary” for the CCP’s goals. In India, it is unlikely that clashes will escalate into invasion because the current skirmishes satisfy the CCP’s purpose of bolstering legitimacy. However, Taiwan may be in particular danger from China’s reactionary aggression. This is because the ways in which conflict with Taiwan would bolster the CCP’s legitimacy align more closely with more violent coercion—reunification is a core element of the CCP’s platform and Taiwan’s clear success fighting the coronavirus is a major blow to Beijing’s legitimacy. Because Taiwan’s “threat” to the CCP stems from its mere existence, it is particularly vulnerable to reactionary aggression. Xi is a self-proclaimed follower of Mao. So, the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis is a powerful example; Mao needed to generate support for the great leap forward and deflect criticism from poor economic growth. To stir the nation, Mao seized islands controlled by Taiwan and threatened an invasion of the country until restrained by American nuclear brinksmanship. Over the last three months, China has faced another crisis in the form of historic floods. The Yangtze river basin has been inundated, affecting sixty-three million Chinese and inflicting over twenty-five billion dollars in direct damages. Many Chinese have raised concerns that the government’s massive infrastructure projects have worsened the crisis by draining wetlands and promoting development in flood-prone areas. Poor transparency has stirred more backlash as the CCP has been accused of hiding the extent of damages and censoring criticism. One political commentator in Beijing even predicted that the “Chinese public will question Beijing from this year’s continuous natural and man-made disasters, and even question China’s governance model and its effectiveness.” Instead of hoping that the crisis created by the current floods will give China’s neighbors breathing space, the United States should brace itself for the possibility of renewed aggression. The CCP must prove its worthiness to the tens of millions of displaced people across China, making it prone to lashing out. Taiwan may be an appealing target; it has been spared from flooding and has been visible in assisting neighboring countries like Japan with post-flood reconstruction. Already, China has begun live-fire sea-crossing drills near Taiwan. Recognizing the nature of the problem is the first step to successfully confronting China’s threats. China’s aggression is enabled by its power but motivated by its fragility. The coronavirus crisis makes it clear that the CCP views external aggression as a key tool to shore up its domestic support and legitimacy. Instead of viewing China’s aggressions merely as a “natural” function of its supposedly inevitable ascendency, neighbors, policymakers should start examining China’s weaknesses for signs of looming threats. The United States and its allies can both better prepare for onslaughts of aggression and devise better deterrent policies.

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