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#### Capitalism is a system engendering massive violence and inevitable extinction – the foundational task is to find a way out – the Role of the Ballot is to endorse the best organizational tactics.

Badiou ‘18

[Alain, former chair of philosophy at the Ecole Normale Superiure, professor of philosophy at The European Graduate School. Translated by David Broder. 07/30/2018. “The Neolithic, Capitalism, and Communism,” <https://www.versobooks.com/blogs/3948-the-neolithic-capitalism-and-communism>] pat

Today, it has become commonplace to predict the end of the human race such as we know it. There are various reasons for such forecasts. According to a messianic kind of environmentalism, the excessive predations of a beastly humanity will soon bring about the end of life on Earth. Meanwhile, those who instead point to runaway technological advances prophesy, indiscriminately, the automation of all work by robots, grand developments in computing, automatically-generated art, plastic-coated killers, and the dangers of a super-human intelligence.

Suddenly, we see the emergence of threatening categories like transhumanism and the post-human — or, their mirror image, a return to our animal state — depending on whether one prophesies on the basis of technological innovation or laments all the attacks on Mother Nature.

For me, all such prophesies are just so much ideological noise, intended to obscure the real peril that humanity is today exposed to: that is to say, the impasse that globalised capitalism is leading us into. In fact, it is this form of society — and it alone — which permits the destructive exploitation of natural resources, precisely because it connects this exploitation to the boundless quest for private profit. The fact that so many species are endangered, that climate change cannot be controlled, that water is becoming like some rare treasure, is all a by-product of the merciless competition among billionaire predators. There is no other reason for the fact that scientific innovation is subject to the question of what technologies can sell, in an anarchic selection mechanism.

Environmentalist preaching does sometimes use persuasive descriptions of what is going on — despite the exaggerations typical of the prophet. But most of the time this becomes mere propaganda, useful for those states who want to show their friendly face. Just as it is for the multinationals who would have us believe — to the greater benefit of their balance sheets — in the noble, fraternal, natural purity of the commodities they are trafficking.

The fetishism of technology, and the unbroken series of "revolutions" in this domain — of which the "digital revolution" is the most in vogue — has constantly spread the beliefs both that this will take us to the paradise of a world without work — with robots to serve us, and us left to idle — and then, on the other hand, that digital "thought" will crush the human intellect. Today there is not one magazine that does not inform its astonished readers of the imminent "victory" of artificial over natural intelligence. But in most cases neither "nature" nor the "artificial" are properly or clearly defined.

Since the origins of philosophy, the question of the real scope of the word "nature" has been constantly posed. "Nature" could mean the romantic reverie of evening sunsets, the atomic materialism of Lucretius (De natura rerum), the inner being of things, Spinoza’s Totality (Deus sive Natura), the objective underside of all culture, rural and peasant surroundings as counterposed to the suspicious artificiality of the towns ("the earth does not lie," as Marshal Pétain put it), biology as distinct from physics, cosmology as compared to the tiny location that is our planet, the invariance of centuries as compared to the frenzy of innovation, natural sexuality as compared to perversion… I am afraid that today "nature" most of all refers to the calm of the villa and the garden, the charm wild animals have for tourists, and the beach or the mountains where we can spend a nice summer. Who, then, can imagine man responsible for nature, when thus far he has just been a thinking flea on a secondary planet in an average solar system at the edge of one banal galaxy?

Since its origins philosophy has also devoted a great deal of thought to Technology, or the Arts. The Greeks meditated on the dialectic of Techne and Physis — a dialectic within which they situated the human animal. They laid the ground for this animal to be seen as "a reed, the weakest of nature, but … a thinking reed." For Pascal, this meant that humanity was stronger than Nature and closer to God. A long time ago, they saw that the animal capable of mathematics would do great things to the order of materiality.

Are these "robots" which they keep banging on about anything more than calculation in the form of a machine? Digits in motion? We know that they can count quicker than us, but it was we who invented them, precisely in order to fulfil this task. It would be stupid to look at a crane raising a concrete pillar up to some great height, use this to argue that man is incapable of the same feat, and then conclude by saying that some muscular, superhuman giant has emerged… Lightning-quick counting is not the sign of an insuperable "intelligence" either. Technological transhumanism plays the same old tune — an inexhaustible theme of horror and sci-fi movies — of the creator overwhelmed by his own creation. It does so either thrilled about the advent of the superman — something we have been expecting ever since Nietzsche — or fearing him and taking refuge under the skirt of Gaia, Mother Nature.

Let’s put things in a bit more perspective.

For four or five millennia, humanity has been organised by the triad of private property — which concentrates enormous wealth in the hands of very narrow oligarchies; the family, in which fortunes are transmitted via inheritance; and the state, which protects both property and the family by armed force. This triad defined our species’ Neolithic age, and we are still at this point — we could even say, now more than ever. Capitalism is the contemporary form of the Neolithic. Its enslavement of technology in the interests of competition, profit and concentrating capital only raises to their fullest extension the monstrous inequalities, the social absurdities, the murderous wars, and the damaging ideologies that have always accompanied the deployment of new technology under the reign of class hierarchy throughout history.

We should be clear that technological inventions were the preliminary conditions of the arrival of the Neolithic age, and by no means its result. If we consider our species’ fate, we see that sedentary agriculture, the domestication of cattle and horses, pottery, bronze, metallic weapons, writing, nationalities, monumental architecture, and the monotheist religions are inventions at least as important as the airplane or the smartphone. Throughout history, whatever has been human has always, by definition, been artificial. If that had not existed, there would not have been Neolithic humanity — the humanity we know — but a permanent close proximity with animal life; something which did indeed exist, in the form of small nomadic groups, for around 200,000 years.

A fearful and obscurantist primitivism has its roots in the fallacious concept of "primitive communism." Today we can see this cult of the ancient societies in which babies, men, women and the elderly supposedly lived in fraternity, without anything artificial, and indeed lived in common with the mice, the frogs, and the bears. Ultimately, all this is nothing but ridiculous reactionary propaganda. For everything suggests that the societies in question were extremely violent. After all, even their most basic survival needs were constantly under threat.

To speak fearfully of the victory of the artificial over the nature, of robot over man, is today an untenable regression, something truly absurd. It is easy enough to answer such fears, such prophesies. For judged by this standard, even a simple axe, or a domesticated horse, not to mention a papyrus covered in symbols, is an exemplary case of the post- or trans-human. Even an abacus allows quicker calculation than the fingers of the human hand.

Today we need neither a return to primitivism, or fear of the "ravages" the advent of technology might bring. Nor is there any use in morbid fascination for the science-fiction of all-conquering robots. The urgent task we face is the methodical search for a way out of the Neolithic order. This latter has lasted for millennia, valuing only competition and hierarchy and tolerating the poverty of billions of human beings. It must be surpassed at all cost. Except, that is, the cost of the high-tech wars so well known to the Neolithic age, in the lineage of the wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945, with their tens of millions of dead. And this time it could be a lot more.

The problem is not technology, or nature. The problem is how to organise societies at a global scale. We need to posit that a non-Neolithic way of organising society is possible. This means no private ownership of that which ought to be held in common, namely the production of all the necessities of human life. It means no inherited power or concentration of wealth. No separate state to protect oligarchies. No hierarchical division of labour. No nations, and no closed and hostile identities. A collective organisation of everything that is in the collective interest.

All this has a name, indeed a fine one: communism. Capitalism is but the final phase of the restrictions that the Neolithic form of society has imposed on human life. It is the final stage of the Neolithic. Humanity, that fine animal, must make one last push to break out of a condition in which 5,000 years of inventions served a handful of people. For almost two centuries — since Marx, anyway — we have known that we have to begin the new age. An age of technologies incredible for all of us, of tasks distributed equally among all of us, of the sharing of everything, and education that affirms the genius of all. May this new communism everywhere and on every question stand up against the morbid survival of capitalism. This capitalism, this seeming "modernity," represents a Neolithic world that has in fact been going on for five millennia. And that means that it is old — far too old.

#### History proves an effective right to strike is impossible in liberal capitalist society – courts will water it down and workers will be replaced – but its justification relies on the same tropes of property protection that will be used to delegitimize worker militancy.

White ‘18

[Ahmed, University of Colorado Law School. 2018. “Its Own Dubious Battle: The Impossible Defense of an Effective Right to Strike,” <https://scholar.law.colorado.edu/articles/1261/>] pat

Like every other aspect of Taft-Hartley, the 1947 amendments to the Wagner Act that directly touched on mass picketing and other forms of strike militancy were strongly supported by the business community, including prominent employers and business associations like the National Association of Manufactures, the American Iron and Steel Institute, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Promoted by these groups, witness after witness regaled the Congress with stories of how mass picketing, along with secondary boycotts and other militant tactics, gave unions too much power, eroded the power of owners and their supervisors, and threatened the American way. Time and again, senators and representatives expressed their support for new restrictions on the right to strike as mandates of a common faith, a commitment of the nation itself, to the principles of property and order. “They are a veritable pronouncement of contempt of law and order, private capitalism, and ownership of property, competition, and everything that even smacks of liberty,” said Ohio Representative Frederick Smith, speaking of NLRB positions that seemed to continence an expansive view of the right to strike. “He has been required to employ or reinstate individuals who have assaulted him and his employees and want only to destroy his property,” said New York Representative Ralph Gwinn, in defense of employers supposedly ravaged by such strikes. Under prevailing law, such employers endured “respectable robbery without liability,” Gwinn said.

We in America prize human individual liberty even above the state. We believe that property rights are natural to man. The best protection of those property rights and of that liberty is in the balancing of the rights of our workers and the rights of our businessmen so that the great majority of our citizens will enjoy that private property and that human liberty,

said Representative Charles Kersten of Wisconsin, condemning mass picketing of the sort that had recently featured at the Allis-Chalmers plants in his state. Consider, too, the remarks of Representative John Robsion of Kentucky:

There have been cases in this country where literally thousands of persons have picketed a plant and engaged in violence. In my honest opinion, labor nor management never did help its cause by engaging in lawlessness, violence, and the destruction of the property of others, and under this bill and the law the company cannot mistreat, browbeat and engage in violence and lawlessness against the workers.

Nor was it only conservatives who joined in this, as evidenced by remarks of Utah Senator Elbert Thomas, who had supported the New Deal and the work of the La Follette Committee, on which he had served, and who had joined with Robert La Follette Jr. in 1939 in sponsoring a pro-labor amendment to the Wagner Act. For a worker, he said,

to interpret his right to strike as being an absolute right, entitling him to quit work while the water is turned on in the plant, for leaving in a mine certain equipment in such a way as to result in costly destruction, would obviously be most improper. No person has a right to do such things. No one has a right to act against society. No one has a right to destroy it.

And so it went, the references to the inviolate values of property and order in defense of the legislation much too numerous to exhaustively cite. It is easy to dismiss these contentions, even from moderates like Thomas, as the contrived utterances of people who were singularly committed to advancing their narrow class and political interests. To some extent, they surely were that. But these views were hardly outside the mainstream of American politics, particularly among elites, broad swathes of the middle class, and important elements of the working class. Indeed, they comported very conveniently with commonplace views about the virtues of property and order and resonated with what much of the public believed at the time—this is what made them so resonant. And whether contrived or not, they performed an important function. By invoking the virtues of property and order in this way, these Congressmen and the witnesses before them who favored restricting mass picketing and other forms of coercive protest were conspicuously able to couch this position as something other than a malicious attack on the “legitimate” rights of labor. Instead, theirs was a mission to realign the labor law with fundamental American values, to save it from those who had allowed labor policies and the habits of union to stray beyond this field. In this way they were able to deflect, if not disprove, the all-too-apt contention by the legislation’s opponents, repeated many times in the process, that what Taft-Hartley was really about was elevating property rights over human rights.

Added proof that strike militancy was actually indefensible can be found in the fact that no scholars would justify it, not even mass picketing—at least not beyond the point at which it became coercive, which was of course the very point at which it was employed in an effective way. In the wake of the Memorial Day Massacre, most all the major papers sided with the police, declaring the strikers enemies of public order who brought the violence upon themselves. Initially, this stance was premised on distorted readings of the events of that day that charged the strikers with various acts of provocation. But even when the La Follette Committee publicized a Paramount Pictures newsreel (which the company had suppressed) and unearthed other evidence that proved that most all of the blame for what happened that day rested on the police, most of the papers still adhered to this reading of the events.

This attitude toward mass picketing was a centerpiece of revived interest in the right to strike in the major papers, one that extended from the mid 1930s into the 1940s and exceeded the surge in interest of the late 1910s and early 1920s. In 1941, for instance, the New York Herald Tribune described pending legislative attempts to limit mass picketing as “too thoroughly justified to require argument.” In 1946 the New York Times summoned up the rhetoric used to condemn the sitdown trikes and declared mass picketing a “seizure” that was “by its very nature illegal because it infringes both individual and property rights.” Conservative though he was, newspaperman David Lawrence, founder of U.S. News and World Report, spoke for many when he declared mass picketing an act of “violence” by which unionists were seeking to take the law into their own hands. In fact, Lawrence’s judgement that mass picketing was an affront to civil liberties aligned with that of the American Civil Liberties Union, long a champion of labor rights, which, as the New York Times was keen to note, also condemned the tactic in these terms.

Such views fit with a broader tendency to criticize the right to strike as being too aggressively employed by unionists and too generously construed by the courts and the NLRB. In the decade between the validation of the Wagner and the passage of Taft-Hartley, newspapers gave voice to a criticism of mass picketing and other erstwhile excessive forms of strike behavior, one that typically described the Wagner Act as having gone too far in protecting workers’ prerogatives to protest. A typical example of the content and tenor of these pieces is a 1941 editorial in the Chicago Daily Tribune:

“The right to strike” is now used frequently to mean the right of union leaders to force men who don’t want to strike to do so. It is used to justify the seizure of industries and the blockading of factories by mass picketing to prevent the entrance of workers who are satisfied with their working conditions and the movement of goods in and out of the plants. “The right to strike” in this sense means not only that every strike is right but that every measure which may be adopted to win a strike is right.

In fact, at this crucial moment it was common for elites of all stripes to claim that they supported the right to strike and yet to assert that it was being abused by unionists who insisted on winning every labor dispute and using coercive and disorderly methods to do so. In 1946, Hebert Hoover, who might well have denied just such a thing fifteen years earlier, inveighed that “Nobody denies that there is a ‘right’ to strike”; but that right, he said, had been abused to the detriment of the public interest. Although considerably more liberal than Hoover, Walter Lippmann, the extremely popular political commentator, offered a similar judgement about a railroad strike that same year, concluding “we must henceforth refuse to regard the right to strike as universal and absolute, and as one of the inalienable rights of man.” Also writing in 1946, Henry Ford II, whose father had used a small army of thugs and toughs to enforce the open shop at his plants and bitterly fought unionization until 1941, now purported at once to support the right to strike—and to believe that it should be limited. “There is no longer any question of the right of organized workers to strike, but that right,” he said, “is being misused.”

Like Taft-Hartley’s supporters in Congress, figures like Hoover, Lippmann, and Ford did not trouble themselves to confess that such tactics as they so blithely condemned might actually be necessary to counterbalance the power of employers and give life and meaning to a statute that did not take adequate account of this basic reality, let alone that they were essential in establishing the idea that workers enjoyed any enforceable right to strike. But they did not have to, either; for they honestly did not believe that labor should generally prevail. Liberal or conservative, it did not matter; these were capitalists in a capitalist society, contented, consistent with their values, with a right to strike that went little further than a right to withhold one’s labor. To be sure, these were not the views of ordinary people. But the public’s perspective did not seem to vary all that much from those of elites. Although overall approval of union membership as measured in Gallup surveys slipped noticeably after 1937, it remained quite high—well above fifty percent right through the 1940s. Nevertheless, Gallup surveys taken in June 1937, after the big wave of sit-strikes had waned noticeably, but while mass picketing and overall levels of labor militancy remained high, revealed that fifty-seven percent supported the proposition that the militia should “be called out whenever strike trouble threatens.”

As with the sit-down strikes, too, the status of mass picketing and other forms of strike militancy can also be gauged by the way these tactics were defended. During the hearings on Taft-Hartley, only a few labor leaders stood against the torrent of criticism of these practices by businessmen, conservative unionists, and congressmen and senators, and tried to parry the move to prohibit the strikes. With only a couple of exceptions, most of them consistently qualified their defense of these tactics by downplaying their coercive qualities—again the very thing that made them so effective in the first place—while also describing them as expedients, presumably temporary, that were justified by the unreasonable stances of some employers.

While the political motivations and implications of this campaign against these forms of strike militancy might be as dubious as the attacks on the sit-down strikes, their value in expressing dominant political judgments concerning these tactics is not. Repeatedly, it was taken for granted that workers could not be allowed to excessively coerce their fellow workers, that they should be obliged to adhere to their contractual obligations, that they did not own the streets or the workplace, and that whatever the right to strike was, it was surely, as Brandeis had insisted, not an absolute right. Of course, all of this was controversial for many unionists. But unionists were almost the only ones to really push back against these measures. Even President Harry Truman’s dramatic veto of Taft-Hartley is widely regarded as a political move taken with the expectation that Congress would override the veto anyway. It is also notable that despite dedicating itself to this aim, the labor movement has never come close to repealing the Taft-Hartley Act, or even securing the enactment of favorable amendments to any of its provisions.

And then there is the replacement worker doctrine where, if anything, the change in the law even more clearly reflected the depth and power of liberal norms. For the rule established in Mackay Radio came out of the blue. It was set forth in a case which required no such question to be resolved, in a manner that drew no support from the text of the Wagner Act, and on the basis of legislative history that was ambiguous at best. Worse, as Getman points out, the rule is in direct conflict with the very statutory principle of barring discrimination on the basis of a worker’s assertion of the basic labor rights laid out in § 7 that it was, itself, supposedly derived from.

As an exercise in statutory construction and administration, Mackay Radio makes no sense; but as a defense of property rights it makes all the sense in the world. One way to see this is to consider what would have happened had the Court decided the matter in a fundamentally different way. If employers were barred from replacing economic strikers, it seems likely that strikes would have proliferated to an extraordinary extent, as workers could at least plausibly have expected to be able to strike under a broad array of circumstances and yet be restored to their jobs no matter the outcome. But precisely because such a doctrine would have given workers so much power, Congress would almost certainly have stepped in with its own rule, codifying employers’ right to permanently replace striking workers and bringing this to an end. Ultimately, it is difficult to imagine a much more liberal alternative to the Mackay Radio rule surviving for very long—a point that also draws support from labor’s failure to repeal the rule in Congress in the early 1990s.

A simple exercise in counterfactual speculation bears similar fruit in regard to other, more basic, limitations on the right to strike, including those imposed relative to sit-down strikes, mass picketing, and secondary boycotts. Shrill and self-interested though it was, all the testimony from employers and their allies during the hearings on Taft-Hartley or Landrum-Griffin about the perils posed by these tactics, was fundamentally correct. For were workers able to make unfettered use of sit-down strikes, mass picketing, and general strikes and sympathy walkouts, they could have very much challenged the sovereignty of capitalists in and about the workplace, and with this the bedrock institutions and norms of liberal society. As Jim Pope puts it, Charles Evans Hughes’ opinion in Fansteel established the maxim that “the employer could violate the workers’ statutory rights without sacrificing its property rights, while the workers could not violate the employer’s property rights without sacrificing their statutory rights.” This is unquestionably true. But equally unquestionable is that neither this court nor any other important arbiter of legal rights in this country was ever prepared to endorse the contrary view that property rights might be sufficiently subordinate to labor rights as to justify the kinds of tactics by which workers could routinely defeat powerful employers on the fields of industrial conflict.

Significantly, there is no reason to believe that any of this has changed or is poised to change today. Quite the contrary: In a culture and political system more immersed than ever in the veneration of order and control, mediated by criminal law and police work, by the celebration of property rights, and by a readiness to punish violence, it is all but unthinkable that the courts or the NLRB would deign to give legal sanction to workers to engage in any sustained way in the kinds of tactics that might make going on strike a worthwhile thing to do.

#### Capitalist climate reforms can’t solve warming – it’s way too slow and doesn’t challenge the imperial structure of production that drives ecological devastation.

Escalante ‘19

[Alyson, Marxist-Leninist, masters in philosophy @ University of Oregon. 03/26/2019. “Communism and Climate Change: A Dual Power Approach,” <https://regenerationmag.org/communism-and-climate-change-a-dual-power-approach/>] pat

One of the most pressing of the various crises which humanity faces today is climate change. Capitalist production has devastated the planet, and everyday we discover that the small window of time for avoiding its most disastrous effects is shorter than previously understood. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts that we have twelve years to limit (not even prevent) the more catastrophic effects of climate change. The simple, and horrific, fact that we all must face is that climate change has reached a point where many of its effects are inevitable, and we are now in a post-brink world, where damage control is the primary concern. The question is not whether we can escape a future of climate change, but whether we can survive it. Socialist strategy must adapt accordingly.

In the face of this crisis, the democratic socialists and social democrats in the United States have largely settled on market-based reforms. The Green New Deal, championed by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and the left-wing of the Democratic Party, remains a thoroughly capitalist solution to a capitalist problem. The proposal does nothing to challenge capitalism itself but rather seeks to subsidize market solutions to reorient the US energy infrastructure towards renewable energy production, to develop less energy consuming transportation, and the development of public investment towards these ends.

The plan does nothing to call into question the profit incentives and endless resource consumption of capitalism which led us to this point. Rather, it seeks to reorient the relentless market forces of capitalism towards slightly less destructive technological developments. While the plan would lead to a massive investment in the manufacturing and deployment of solar energy infrastructure, National Geographic reports that “Fabricating [solar] panels requires caustic chemicals such as sodium hydroxide and hydrofluoric acid, and the process uses water as well as electricity, the production of which emits greenhouse gases.” Technology alone cannot sufficiently combat this crisis, as the production of such technology through capitalist manufacturing infrastructure only perpetuates environmental harm. Furthermore, subsidizing and incentivizing renewable energy stops far short of actually combating the fossil fuel industry driving the current climate crisis.

The technocratic market solutions offered in the Green New Deal fail to adequately combat the driving factors of climate change. What is worse, they rely on a violent imperialist global system in order to produce their technological solutions. The development of high-tech energy infrastructure and the development of low or zero emission transportation requires the import of raw material and rare earth minerals which the US can only access because of the imperial division of the Global South. This imperial division of the world requires constant militarism from the imperial core nations, and as Lenin demonstrates in Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism, facilitates constant warfare as imperial states compete for spheres of influence in order to facilitate cheap resource extraction. The US military, one of many imperialist forces, is the single largest user of petroleum, and one of its main functions is to ensure oil access for the US. Without challenging this imperialist division of the world and the role of the US military in upholding it, the Green New Deal fails even further to challenge the underlying causes of climate change.

Even with the failed promises of the Green New Deal itself, it is unlikely that this tepid market proposal will pass at all. Nancy Pelosi and other lead Democrats have largely condemned it and consider it “impractical” and “unfeasible.” This dismissal is crucial because it reveals the total inability of capitalism to resolve this crisis. If the center-left party in the heart of the imperial core sees even milquetoast capitalist reforms as a step too far, we ought to have very little hope that a reformist solution will present itself within the ever-shrinking twelve-year time frame.

#### Vote neg to join the party – dual power organizing is the only path to revolutionary change.

Escalante ‘18

[Alyson, philosophy at U of Oregon. 08/24/2018. “Against Electoralism, For Dual Power!” <https://theforgenews.org/2018/08/24/against-electoralism-for-dual-power/>] pat

I am sure that at this point, the opportunists reading this have already begun to type out their typical objection: the world is different than it was in 1917, and the conditions of the United States in no way echo the conditions which enabled the Bolsheviks to achieve revolutionary success.

To this tried and true objection, there is one simple answer: you are entirely correct, and that is why we need to abandon electoralism and working within the bourgeois state.

What were the conditions which allowed the Bolsheviks to successfully revolt? The conditions were that of Dual Power. Alongside the capitalist state, there existed a whole set of institutions and councils which met the needs of the workers. The soviets, a parallel socialist government made up of individual councils, successfully took over many governmental responsibilities in some parts of Petrograd. In the radical Viborg district, the Bolshevik controlled soviets provided government services like mail, alongside programs that could meet the needs of workers. When a far right coup was attempted against the provisional government, it was troops loyal to the Bolshevik factions within the soviet who repelled the coup plotters, proving concretely to the workers of Petrograd that the socialists could not only provide for their needs, but also for their defense.

In short: the Bolsheviks recognized that instead of integrating into the bourgeois state, they could operate outside of it to build dual power. They could establish programs of elected representatives who would serve the workers. They would not bolster the capitalist state in the name of socialism, they would offer an alternative to it.

And so, when the time came for revolt, the masses were already to loyal to the Bolsheviks. The only party who had never compromised, who had denounced the unpopular imperialist wars, who had rejected the provisional government entirely, was the party who successfully gained the support of the workers.

And so, many of us on the more radical fringes of the socialist movement wonder why it is the the DSA and other socialist opportunists seem to think that we can win by bolstering the capitalist state? We wonder, given this powerful historical precedent, why they devote their energy to getting more Ocasios elected; what good does one more left democrat who will abandon the workers do for us?

The answer we receive in return is always the same: we want to win small changes that will make life for the workers easier; we want to protect food stamps and healthcare.

And do this, we reply: what makes you think reformism is the only way to do this. When the bourgeois state in California was happy to let black children go to school unfed, the Black Panthers didn’t rally around democratic candidates, they became militant and fed the children themselves. In the 40s and 50s, socialists in New York saw people going without healthcare and instead of rallying behind democratic candidates, they built the IWO to provide healthcare directly. Both these groups took up our pressing revolutionary task: building dual power.

Imagine if all those hours the DSA poured into electing Ocasio were instead used to feed the people of New York, to provide them with medical care, to ensure their needs were met. Imagine the masses seeing socialism not as a pipe dream we might achieve through electing more imperialists, but as a concrete movement which is currently meeting their needs?

The fact is, we are not nearly ready for revolution. Socialists in the United States have failed to meet the needs of the people, and as long as their only concrete interaction with the masses is handing them a voter registration form, they will continue to fail the people. Our task now is not to elect representatives to advocate for the people; it is much more gruelingly laborious than that. Our task is to serve the people. Our task is to build dual power.

The movement to do this is underway. Members of the DSA refoundation caucus have begun to move the left of the DSA in this direct, socialist groups like Philly Socialists have begun to build dual power through GED programs and tenants unions, many branches of the Party For Socialism and Liberation have begun to feed the people and provide for their concrete needs, and Red Guard collectives in Los Angeles have built serve the people programs and taken on a stance of militant resistance to gentrification. The movement is growing, its time is coming, and dual power is achievable within our life time.

The opportunists are, in a sense, correct. We are not where we were in 1917, but we can begin to move in that direction and dual power can take us there. In order to achieve dual power we have to recognize that Lenin was right: there will be no socialist gains by working within state institutions designed to crush socialism. Furthermore, we must recognize that the strategies of the electoral opportunists trade off with dual power. Electing candidates drains resources, time, and energy away from actually serving the people.

And so, we should commit to undertake the difficult and dangerous task of building dual power. We must reject opportunism, we must name the democratic party as our enemy, we must rally around power directly in the hands of the socialist movement. We do not have a parallel system of soviets in the United States. We can change that. Someday the cry “all power to the soviets” will be heard again. Lets make it happen.

## Case

### Workers

#### Unions don’t solve inequality – they’re too weak and tons of alt causes

Epstein 20 [Richard A. Epstein Peter and Kirsten Bedford Senior Fellow @ the Hoover Institution. "The Decline Of Unions Is Good News." https://www.hoover.org/research/decline-unions-good-news]

So what then could justify this inefficient provision? One common argument is that unions help reduce the level of income inequality by offering union members a high living wage, as seen in the golden age of the 1950s. But that argument misfires on several fronts. Those high union wages could not survive in the face of foreign competition or new nonunionized firms. The only way a union can provide gains for its members is to extract some fraction of the profits that firms enjoy when they hold monopoly positions.

When tariff barriers are lowered and domestic markets are deregulated, as with the airlines and telecommunications industries, the size of union gains go down. Thus the sharp decline in union membership from 35 percent in both 1945 and 1954 to about 15 percent in 1985 led to no substantial increase in the fraction of wealth earned by the top 10 percent of the economy during that period. However, the income share of the top ten percent rose to about 40 percent over the next 15 years as union membership fell to below 10 percent by 2000.

But don’t be fooled—that 5 percent change in union membership cannot drive widespread inequality for the entire population, which is also affected by a rise in the knowledge economy as well as a general aging of the population. The far more powerful distributive effects are likely to be those from nonunion workers whose job prospects within a given firm have been compromised by higher wages to union workers.

It is even less clear that the proposals of progressives like Sanders, Warren, and Buttigieg to revamp the labor rules would reverse the decline of unions. Not only is the American labor market more competitive, but the work place is no longer dominated by large industrial assembly lines where workers remain in their same position for years. Today, workforces are far more heterogeneous and labor turnover is far higher. It is therefore much more difficult for a union to organize a common front among workers with divergent interests.

Employers, too, have become much more adept at resisting unionization in ways that no set of labor laws can capture. It is no accident that plants are built in states like Tennessee and Mississippi, and that facilities are designed in ways to make it more difficult to picket or shut down. None of these defensive maneuvers would be necessary if, as I have long advocated, firms could post notices announcing that they will not hire union members, as they could do before the passage of the NLRA.

#### Unions are vulnerable to right-wing populism – turns case

Gruenberg 21 [Mark Gruenberg is head of the Washington, D.C., bureau of People's World. He is also the editor of Press Associates Inc. (PAI), a union news service in Washington, D.C. that he has headed since 1999. Previously, he worked as Washington correspondent for the Ottaway News Service, as Port Jervis bureau chief for the Middletown, NY Times Herald Record, and as a researcher and writer for Congressional Quarterly. Mark obtained his BA in public policy from the University of Chicago and worked as the University of Chicago correspondent for the Chicago Daily News. "Worldwide, union leaders grapple with members backing right-wing ‘populists’." https://peoplesworld.org/article/worldwide-union-leaders-grapple-with-members-backing-right-wing-populists/]

WASHINGTON—For years, union leaders on both sides of “The Pond”—also known as the Atlantic Ocean—have faced a problem: Right-wing ideologues’ “populist” rhetoric sways millions of their members to vote against their own interests.

And then once those putative plutocrats achieve public office, they show their true colors, by enacting and enforcing repressive pro-corporate anti-worker laws.

The problem is visible in the U.S., where 40% of union members and their families backed former GOP Oval Office occupant Donald Trump in 2020. But it’s not just Trump.

Over the years, millions supported other right-wing Republicans such as Sens. Mitch McConnell (Ky.), Ted Cruz (Texas), various U.S. representatives, Gov. Greg Abbott (Texas), and former Govs. Bruce Rauner (Ill.) and Scott Walker (Wis.).

All of them, especially Trump and Cruz, spout populist bombast and claim to represent workers—and then enact edicts benefiting the corporate class.

“Trump’s policies favored the rich and the well-connected. But four in ten union voters wanted to give him a second term” last November, said Knut Pankin, moderator of a late-March panel discussion on Right-Wing Populism As An Anti-Worker Agenda. “Why?”

The dilemma exists in other democracies, too. Some unionists heeded anti-immigrant screeds from Germany’s extreme right Alternative for Deutschland, Marine LePen’s French National Rally (formerly the National Front), Norbert Hofer’s Austrian Freedom Party, Hungarian Prime Minister/strongman Viktor Orban of Fidesz, and Poland’s Law and Justice Party, panelists said.

Once those blocs won power in Austria, Poland, and Hungary, or influenced elections in France, mainstream politicians followed their lead, cracking down on workers as well as targeting migrants. The pols feared they would otherwise lose more votes to the right.

The panel, sponsored by Georgetown University’s Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, a foundation set up to foster U.S.- German relations, tried to figure out why workers vote that way—and how to reorient them.

That’s not to say panelists Vonda McDaniel, president of the Nashville, Tenn., Central Labor Council, Prof. Federico Finchelstein, an expert on East European politics at New York’s New School for Social Research, and Prof. Thomas Greven of the Free University of Berlin reached a conclusion. They offered some reasons for the rightward shift and some solutions.

All those parties, including the GOP, “started as bourgeois, middle-class, shopkeeper-oriented” organizations, but have since pivoted to right-wing populism, Greven explained.

“Cruz at the Conservative Political Action Conference was trying to be the inheritor of the white working class who supported Trump,” he contended. The Texan proclaimed the GOP “the party of steelworkers, construction workers, police officers, firefighters, and waitresses.”

Nationalism, protectionism, and racism

“But one common denominator” is the GOP and the other right-wing parties, plus the workers they appeal to, “have a radicalized response” that “is nationalist, protectionist and nativist…to all facets of globalization,” he said. Those facets include corporate export of workers’ jobs to low-wage nations and resentment of refugees and migrants, often people of color whom white nativists in Europe and the U.S. view as a threat.

“’Us versus them’ is much easier to sell to working-class constituents. Union status doesn’t inoculate people versus right-wing populism,” Greven said. While populists’ pro-worker rhetoric is “a charade,” and progressives’ answer, “tax the rich,” is not enough, he added.

### Prisons

#### Prison strikes rarely achieves significant reforms, no matter how big or long the strike is – be doubtful how the aff is any different

Christie Thompson is a staff writer. Her work has been published by outlets including The New York Times, The Washington Post, NPR, ProPublica, and The Atlantic, 9/1/2016 – [“Do Prison Strikes Work?”, https://www.themarshallproject.org/2016/09/21/do-prison-strikes-work]//bread

On Sept. 9, prisoners across the country stopped showing up for their work assignments to protest [what they call](https://iwoc.noblogs.org/post/2016/04/01/announcement-of-nationally-coordinated-prisoner-workstoppage-for-sept-9-2016/) slave-like conditions for incarcerated workers. Inmates make pennies an hour keeping the prison running — such as cleaning and cooking — or providing [cheap manufacturing for private businesses](http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2008/07/what-do-prisoners-make-victorias-secret). Inmates involved in the protest are calling for higher wages, better working conditions and less severe punishment while on the job. The work stoppage was organized by inmates in multiple states and labor activists with the Industrial Workers of the World to coincide with the [45th anniversary of the Attica riot](https://www.themarshallproject.org/2016/09/09/revisiting-the-ghosts-of-attica?ref=hp-3-111#.yAfs2yVfq), which was preceded by a strike in the prison’s metal shop. Prisoners and labor organizers on the outside hoped it would be the largest prison strike in history. It’s hard to quantify exactly how many prisoners in how many states have participated, as prison officials and organizers give conflicting accounts of its scope. Activists claim inmates in [at least 11 states](https://theintercept.com/2016/09/16/the-largest-prison-strike-in-u-s-history-enters-its-second-week/) are taking part. This strike is the latest in a long history of prisoners trying to use what little leverage they have — whether work stoppages or hunger strikes — to demand change from administrators. Some have been more successful than others. Here’s a look at five other prison strikes and what came of them: Post-WWII Labor Strikes University of Michigan professor Heather Ann Thompson’s [history of labor movements in prison](http://labor.dukejournals.org/content/8/3/15) details how a series of work stoppages and sit-down protests took off in prisons across the U.S. in 1947. In little over a decade, hundreds of prisoners in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Wisconsin, Louisiana, Ohio, and Georgia stopped working to protest long hours, trifling pay, and grueling work environments. Prisoners in Georgia and Louisiana went even further and slit their heel tendons so they could not be forced to work. While the work stoppages did not lead to immediate changes, they inspired another era of prison protest in the ‘60’s and ‘70’s, which included the Attica work stoppage and eventual riot. Those movements achieved slight pay raises and improved safety precautions in some states and led to the **creation of prisoner-led unions.** 2010 Georgia Labor Strike In 2010, state prisoners across Georgia launched what many then called the largest prison work strike in U.S. history — though official numbers are difficult to confirm. At the protest’s height, organizers said thousands of inmates participated across at least six state prisons. Georgia inmates were paid nothing for their work, as dictated by state law, and [were asking](https://prisonlaw.wordpress.com/2010/12/13/georgia-prisoners-strike-for-better-conditions/) for better conditions and more access to programming. Not only were Georgia inmates not showing up to their job assignments — they refused to leave their cells at all until their demands were met. The strike lasted six days, and garnered coverage in news outlets like [The New York Times](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/12/12/us/12prison.html?_r=0). It ended when prisoners decided to leave their cells to [go to the law library](http://www.ajc.com/news/news/local/prisoners-protest-over-for-now/nQnxt/) and try to sue for improvements instead. (It’s unclear what became of those efforts). Prisoners in Georgia are still not paid for their labor. 2011-2013 Pelican Bay Hunger Strike [In 2011](http://saq.dukejournals.org/content/113/3/579.abstract), 400 prisoners in California’s supermax prison started refusing their meals. Their numbers grew to 7,000 as they were joined by prisoners all over the state. The inmates had a [list of five demands](https://prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com/education/the-prisoners-demands-2/), including limits on solitary confinement and changes to how the prison determines gang membership. Their fast ended after three weeks when prison officials agreed to reconsider some of their solitary confinement policies. Inmates returned to hunger-striking later in 2011 and again in 2013 saying the changes were too small and too slow. But the protests did have a significant impact. After the initial strike, the chair of the California Assembly’s Public Safety Committee held a hearing on conditions at Pelican Bay. In 2012, the nonprofit Center for Constitutional Rights [filed a class-action lawsuit](https://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/our-cases/ashker-v-brown) against the state over its use of prolonged isolation. Todd Ashker, [one of the strike’s organizers](http://nymag.com/news/features/solitary-secure-housing-units-2014-2/), was the lead plaintiff. The suit was settled in September 2015, addressing many of the strikers’ concerns about how people end up in solitary and how long they remain there. 2013 Guantanamo Hunger Strike Detainees at the U.S. military prison in Cuba [began hunger-striking in March 2013](http://media.miamiherald.com/static/media/projects/gitmo_chart/) to fight against their indefinite detention and alleged mistreatment. At the strike’s peak in July that year, 106 men were refusing to eat and 45 were being force-fed through nasal tubes. The strike — for its duration, size, and the graphic nature of force-feeding — outraged the public and policymakers and [increased pressure](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/01/opinion/president-obama-and-the-hunger-strike-at-guantanamo.html?_r=0) on President Obama to fulfill his promise of closing the controversial prison. Since the strike, Obama has lowered the number of men held at Guantanamo [from over 2,000 to 61](http://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/americas/guantanamo/article97896012.html), but has yet to close the prison entirely. 2015-2016 Immigration Detention Center Hunger Strikes Since 2015, hunger strikes have begun at various immigration detention centers — prison-like facilities where immigrants are held while their deportation case is decided — throughout the U.S. [Roughly 200 detainees](http://www.cbs5az.com/story/29312788/200-detainees-stage-hunger-strike-at-eloy-detention-center) at Eloy Detention Center in Arizona stopped eating in June 2015, in part to pressure an investigation into [recent deaths at the facility](http://www.cbs5az.com/story/29312788/200-detainees-stage-hunger-strike-at-eloy-detention-center). [That fall](http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2015/11/why-are-hundreds-detained-immigrants-going-hunger-strike), immigrants in detention in California, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas also stopped eating to object to their indefinite detention and poor conditions. More recently, 22 mothers being held with their children in a family detention center in Pennsylvania went on a [hunger strike this August](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/mothers-immigrant-detention-hunger-strike_us_57b3698be4b04ff883990132). Their strike accompanied a series of [handwritten letters](http://grassrootsleadership.org/blog/2015/10/breaking-least-27-women-hunger-strike-hutto-detention-center-hutto27) they sent to immigration officials asking to be released from indefinite detention. The strike has continued off-and-on since then, with even their [children threatening to refuse to attend classes](http://www.democracynow.org/2016/9/8/headlines/children_held_at_berks_threaten_school_strike_amid_parents_hunger_strike) in solidarity with their mothers. It’s too soon to tell what the impact of their protests might be.

### Econ

**Collapse by 2050 is inevitable – rebound effects, lack of decoupling, large environmental footprints from renewables, and a lack of viable sequestration technology make growth unsustainable**

Kallis '18 [Giorgos; 5/31/18; ICREA Research Professor at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, environmental scientist working on ecological economics and political ecology, formerly Marie Curie International Fellow at the Energy and Resources Group of the University of California at Berkeley, PhD in Environmental Policy and Planning from the University of the Aegean in Greece, et al.; "Annual Review of Environment and Resources: Research On Degrowth," Annual Review of Environment and Resources, Vol. 43, p. 296-29]//GJ

3. ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS: THE LIMITS OF GREEN GROWTH

Although driven by political, institutional, and discursive processes, growth is also **biophysical**. The economic process converts energy, resources, and matter to goods, services, and **waste** (34). In theory, it seems possible to decouple material throughput from economic output by improving the resource efficiency of production. Ecological economists, however, argue that in practice **absolute decoupling is unlikely**, even though relative decoupling is common (34). **Efficiency should not be confused with scale** (35): The more efficiently we use resources, the lower they cost, and **the more of them we end up using** (36). This is, in essence, growth. Just as increases in labor productivity lead to growth and new jobs, not to less employment, increases in resource productivity increase output and **resource use** (37). Capitalist economies grow by using more resources and more people, more intensively. Accelerating this is unlikely to spare resources.

Growth can become “cleaner” or “greener” by substituting, for example, fossil fuels with solar power, or scarce, environmentally intensive metals with more abundant and less intensive metals. But new substitutes have resource requirements, and life-cycle impacts that cross space and time. Energy is a vital source of useful work (38); growth has been possible because fossil fuels did things human labor alone could not do. Ending the use of fossil fuels is likely to reduce labor productivity and limit output (34). Solar and wind power are constrained only by their rate of flow, but unlike fossil fuels, they are **diffuse**—more like rain than a lake (3). To collect and concentrate a diffuse flow of energy, **more energy is necessary and more land is required**. The EROIs (energy returns on energy investment) of renewable energies are between 10:1 and 20:1, compared to more than 50:1 for earlier deposits of oil and coal (39). An economy powered by a diffuse energy flow is then likely to be an economy of lower net energy and lower output than one powered by concentrated stocks (3). Land use for solar or wind also competes with the use of land for **food production**, and **rare materials** are necessary for infrastructures and batteries that store their intermittent flows, **with significant environmental effects**.

Historical data corroborate ecological economic theory (40). Ayres & Warr (38) find that the use of net energy after conversion losses explains a big portion of the **U**nited **S**tates’ total factor productivity and economic growth. At the global level, GDP and material use have increased approximately 1:1. Carbon emissions have increased somewhat slower than GDP, but still have **increased** (34). **This is unlikely to be a coincidence**. Exceptions may exist, but cross-panel data analysis shows that overall, 1% growth of a national economy is associated with 0.6% to 0.8% increase in its carbon emissions (41) and 0.8% growth in its resource use (42).

Global resource use follows currently the “**collapse by 2050**” scenario foreseen in the “Limits to Growth” 1971 report (43–45). Domestic material use in some developed OECD economies has reached a plateau, but this is because of globalization and trade. If we take into account **imported goods**, then the material requirements of products and services consumed in OECD countries have grown hand in hand with GDP, with **no decoupling** (46). For **water use**, the effects of growth overwhelm any realistic savings from technologies and efficiency (47); water footprints have increased even in regions such as California where water withdrawals were stabilized (40).

Carbon emissions in some EU (European Union) countries have been declining, even after trade is taken into account, suggesting some substitution of fossil fuels by cleaner energies. [Although recession also played a role (34).] These declines are nowhere near the 8–10%, year-after-year reductions in carbon emissions required for developed nations under scenarios compatible with a **50% chance** of limiting warming to 2◦C (48). Further reductions will be harder to sustain once **one-off substitutions** of oil or coal with natural gas are exhausted (34).

Resource use or carbon emissions are a product of the scale of the economy (GDP) times its resource or carbon intensity (kg/GDP or kgCO2/GDP). With 1.5% annual increase in global income per capita, carbon intensity has to decline 4.4% each year for staying within 2◦C; with 0% growth, carbon intensity has to fall 2.9% each year (49). In the period 1970–2013, the average annual reduction rate for carbon intensity was less than 1.5%—and this gets harder to sustain as the share of carbon-intensive economies in global output increases (49). As Jackson (50) showed in his seminal work, **it is practically impossible to envisage viable climate mitigation scenarios that involve growth**. This calls for research on managing, or prospering, **without growth** (50, 51).

Some scenarios deem possible meeting climate targets while sustaining growth, but these generally assume after 2050 some sort of “negative emissions technology,” geo-engineering or otherwise. According to a recent Nature editorial, these technologies remain currently “**magical thinking**” (52). Clean energy investments can stimulate the economy in the short run, but in the **long run** growth may be limited by their **low EROIs**. Studies suggest that economic growth requires a minimum EROI of close to 11:1 (53). Less EROI means less labor productivity, and hence less growth. Indeed, “Limits to Growth” scenarios do not predict growth ending when resources are exhausted but, rather, when the quality of resources declines to such an extent that further extraction diverts more and more investment away from productive industry (44).

Degrowth is defined by ecological economists as an equitable downscaling of throughput, with a concomitant securing of wellbeing. If there is a fundamental coupling of economic activity and resource use, as ecological economics suggests there is, then serious environmental or climate policies will slow down the economy. Vice versa, a slower economy will use less resources and emit less carbon (40). This is not the same as saying that the degrowth goal is to reduce GDP (54); slowing down the economy is not an end but a likely outcome in a transition toward equitable wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

Advancing a position of “a-growth,” van den Bergh (54) proposes ignoring GDP and implementing a global carbon price, indifferent to what its effect on growth turns out to be. Ignoring GDP is a normative position—but at the end, the economy will either grow or not, and if it does not, then there should be plans for managing without growth. Given how entrenched GDP growth is in existing institutional and political structures, a-growth approaches must be advanced as part of broader systemic change (55).

Is it possible to secure a decent standard of living for all while throughput and output degrow? Substantive evidence indicates that **prosperity does not depend on high levels of production** and consumption. Kubiszewski et al. (56) find that the Genuine Progress Indicator, an indicator that includes environmental and social costs alongside output, peaked in 1978, despite subsequent global growth. A similar indicator, the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare, has stayed at the same levels in the United States since 1950, despite a threefold growth of GDP (57).

Wealthier countries on average have higher levels of life expectancy and education than poorer ones, but above a certain level of GDP, income does not make a difference in wellbeing—**equality** does. Satisfactory levels of wellbeing are achieved by countries such as Vietnam or Costa Rica at a fraction (one-third or less) of the output, energy, or resource use of countries such as the **U**nited **S**tates. Even the lower levels of resource use of mid-income countries, however, would not be sustainable if they were to be generalized to the planet as a whole. No country currently satisfies social wellbeing standards while staying within its share of planetary boundaries, suggesting that radical changes in provisioning systems are necessary (58).

Wealthier people within a country are on average happier than others, but in the long run, overall happiness does not increase as a country’s income rises (59). Nuances of this income-happiness paradox depend on the sample of countries included and how one defines and asks about happiness. Within societies, individuals with higher incomes evaluate their lives as better than others, but do not enjoy better emotional wellbeing (60). Income determines social rank, and rank affects individuals’ assessments of their lives. Growth does not change relative rank or relative access to positional goods (those signifying position) but it does inflate expectations and prices of material goods, **increasing frustration** (61). Relative comparisons matter for personal wellbeing in low-income and high-income countries; for both, the more equally income is distributed, the happier people are (62). **Pro-environmental behaviors** and sharing are also strongly associated with personal wellbeing (63). This suggests that an economic contraction may not impact wellbeing negatively if accompanied by redistribution, sharing, and value shifts (34).

**Degrowth is the only way to avoid invisible thresholds that cause extinction**

Ghebremichael '16 [Asghedom; 2016; Research Economist, The Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Natural Resources, Government of Canada; "Frontiers of the Biosphere Inhibit Perpetual Economic Growth: Exploring Pathways to Genuine Sustainable Development," http://www.opensciencepublications.com/wp-content/uploads/ESS-2454-5953-3-125.pdf]//GJ

Nature has its own set of rules, solidly grounded in laws of physics and chemistry, and emergent principles of geology and biology, which are not artificial constructs. The natural rules are real, and they govern human well-being. Earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, droughts, famines, civil conflicts, wildfires, poverty, and disease epidemics demonstrate dramatically that our planet Earth is at risk. Moreover, the outbreak of novel diseases, such as Ebola and AIDS, in socially, economically, and ecologically impoverished regions is a clear signal of the global predicaments of inequality and poverty. These natural and anthropogenic disasters are clear indicators of **ecological overshoot**, meaning anthropogenic disturbances beyond the **carrying capacity of ecosystems** that lead to **ecological crash**, causing an eventual die-off, hence environmental disasters [3]. The frequency, scale, and adverse effects of these challenges must be of great concern to humanity.

“Human alteration of the Earth was substantial and growing, transforming between one-third and **one-half of the global land surface**; CO2 concentration in the atmosphere increased by nearly 30% since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution; more atmospheric nitrogen was fixed by humanity than by all natural terrestrial sources combined; humanity consumed more than half of all accessible surface-**freshwater**; and about one-quarter of the **bird species on Earth** were driven to extinction” [4]. The UN’s Millennium Ecosystem Assessment [5], a global landmark study, which involved more than 1,360 scientists, technical experts, and policy makers from around the globe, summarized its findings as follows (paraphrased): (i) although living standards of “the few” have improved over the past two centuries, human activity is putting such strain on nature, undermining the Earth’s capacity to support current and future generations; (ii) we are living beyond our means: the current gains in enhanced quality of life have come at a considerable cost to health and integrity of ecosystems on which human well-being depends; (iii) **if we act now**, we can avoid **irreversible damage** to ecosystems and to our well-being; and (iv) we can no longer treat Nature’s bounty as free and limitless.

The information summarized in Table 1(Ecological Foundations section below) makes it all clear that human well-being depends on the life sustaining multiple services of ecosystems. Furthermore, a team of renowned scientists from N. America, Europe, Australia and the Scandinavian countries identified the following nine ecological thresholds, which define “the safe operating space for humanity”: (i) climate change, (ii) rate of terrestrial and marine biodiversity loss, (iii) human interference with the natural cycles of nitrogen and phosphorus, (iv) stratospheric ozone depletion, (v) ocean acidification, (vi) global freshwater consumption rate, (vii) land-use-change, (viii) chemical pollution, and (ix) atmospheric aerosol loading. The team concluded that humanity was approaching to the boundaries for freshwater consumption, land-use-change, ocean acidification, and interference with the global phosphorus cycle, while the boundaries for **climate change**, **biodiversity loss**, and interference with the **nitrogen cycle** **have already been transgressed** [6]. An urgent call for an anthropogenic balancing act not to transgress ecological thresholds is in order. Halting short-sighted excessive anthropocentric activities that lead to overexploitation of natural resources is imperative. The naturally imposed limiting frontiers, the ecological thresholds, must be respected and protected.

Rooted in the doctrine of laissez-faire, neoliberalism promotes perpetual economic growth (PEG), which means unfettered expansion of an economy’s productive capacity realized through enabling institutional arrangements. But, PEG is inherently **not compatible with ecological integrity**, environmental quality, and genuine sustainable development (GSD). Drawing on the findings , conclusions, and recommendations of Rockström’s team [6], I define GSD as a dynamic process by which human well-being is improved in an inclusive, a just, and an environmentally safe operating space, achieved through inventions, innovations, diffusion, and adoption of appropriate technologies as well as learning-by-doing.

GSD is in a stark contrast with the highly publicized and politicized concept of sustainable development (SD) of the UN’s Brundtland Commission, which is also known as World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (1987) [7]. The highly generalized and vague definition of SD is: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: (1) the concept of “needs”, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, to which overwhelming priority should be given; and (2) the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs”. Our Common Future, p.143.

Given all its good intentions, the WECD failed to explain the consequences of PEG strongly. Unfortunately, SD’s exact definition continues to be globally politicized and linked always to strategic policy goals and objectives one would like to talk about. SD does not give any specific guidelines pertinent to alleviation of the human predicaments associated with inequality, poverty, perversely globalized markets, destruction of the health and integrity of ecosystems, and climate change.

Research questions, goal, and organization of the paper

What are the theoretical and practical foundations of the PEG doctrine? Are PEG and GSD compatible? Addressing these questions has become a persistent challenge to both social and natural scientists. The overarching goal of this article is to demonstrate the incompatibility of PEG with GSD.

Rooted in neoclassical microeconomic theory, neoliberalism advocates for PEG, which is unfettered expansion of an economy’s productive capacity in the finite, materially closed (except the constant inflow of solar energy), and non-growing biosphere [8]. For this doctrine to be realized, neoliberal economists prescribe globalized perfectly competitive markets, where multinational corporations play the dominant economic games against all policies and strategic practices of GSD.

Let me be clear at the outset. As a trained economist, who went through the grueling processes of acquiring a PhD, I understand the importance of all the fundamentals of microeconomic and macroeconomic theories. My argument is against the misuse and, in some case, abuse of these scientific theories to promote personal ideological perceptions. I am motivated to add my “voice” to those voices of many preeminent scholars, whose extensively published works inspired me to learn more on the adverse effects of neoliberalism on ecological integrity and human well-being [6, 8-12].

The paper is organized into six sections: this introduction, ecological foundations for GSD, the fallacies of the PEG doctrine, anthropogenic effects on ecological integrity, selected pathways to GSD, and concluding remarks and policy recommendations, in that order.

Ecological Foundations of Genuine Sustainable Development

In this section, I summarize the ecological foundations of GSD, using taxonomy of the following key scientific terms: ecological principles of holism, biodiversity loss, sustainability, resilience, ecological integrity, biogeochemical processes, carrying capacity, and overshoot.

Principles of holism

Ecological principles of holism mean that everything is interconnected with everything. This can be summarized by the dictum: “A whole is more than the sum of its parts or members”. The totality of the whole of any living system-biological, social, or economic-is not fully embodied in its individual parts or members. Wholes have properties that are not present in any of their separate parts; they emerge only when the parts are combined together, forming mutually reinforcing synergistic nexus, in a coherent whole; and the specific properties of individual parts disappear when they are part of the whole.

Thus, relationships among the parts of wholes matter; when relationships change, the whole is changed. For example, water, air, and soil are polluted with chemical and biological waste, because we humans fail to appreciate the importance of their holistic relationship with Nature and thereby with our well-being. Respiratory problems, cancer, food poisoning, and general poor health as well as the cost of healthcare are some of the consequences of ignoring the imperatives of holism.

Government policies that influence agriculture, forestry, mining, manufacturing, labor relations, capital investments, employment, economic growth, all have direct and indirect impacts on the natural environment-locally, nationally, and globally. We have **no way of knowing** how large or small our individual or collective adverse effects may be, but understanding the ecological principles of holism is necessary condition to preserve ecological integrity and foster human well-being.

Consequences of biodiversity loss

Biodiversity (i.e., biological diversity) is the number, variety and variability of genes, populations, species, communities, ecosystems, and ecological processes. Biodiversity underpins the multiple services of ecosystems that sustain human well-being; is the foundation of resilience of life on Earth; and an integral part of the fabric of all the world‘s cultures. It is a common knowledge of the science of ecology that no feature of Earth is more complex, dynamic, and varied than the layer of organisms that occupy its surfaces and its seas; and no feature is experiencing more dramatic changes at the hands of humans than this extraordinary, singularly unique and beautiful feature of the Earth, biodiversity. **Critical ecological processes** (i.e., ecosystem functions) that depend on prevailing scale of biodiversity at the ecosystem level influence plant productivity, soil fertility, water quality, atmospheric chemistry, and many other local and global environmental conditions that ultimately affect human welfare.

Substantial changes have already occurred, especially local and global losses of biodiversity. The primary cause has been widespread human transformation of once highly diverse natural ecosystems into relatively species-poor managed ecosystems. Recent studies suggest that such reductions in biodiversity can alter both the magnitude and the stability of ecosystem processes, especially when biodiversity is reduced to the low levels typical of many managed natural systems. We humans ought to remind ourselves that barren deserts are capable of supporting very little life (if any), because they lack biological diversity. Ecosystems that completely lack diversity have **no high quality, low entropy, energy left to support life**.

Diversity enables living systems to adapt and evolve to accommodate their ever-changing natural environment. Even if we do not understand fully the specific nature of a threat, it should be clear that loss of biodiversity represents a growing threat to the future of human life on Earth. There is **no way of knowing** how many more species can be lost before the **ecological balance is tipped toward extinction of all species**.

**Growth makes war inevitable – doesn’t solve it**

Manuchehr **Irandoust 17**, Department of Economics and Finance, School of Business Studies, Kristianstad University, “Militarism and globalization: Is there an empirical link?” *Quality and quantity*, June 16, 2017, Springer Open Access

[GLOB = globalization index, MIS = militarized spending]

The results of the bootstrap panel Granger causality test are shown in Table 2. The findings show that **GLOB and MIS are causally related** in most of the countries under review. There is a bi-directional causality in UK, US, Saudi Arabia, and Russia. The causality is unidirectional running from GLOB to MIS in Australia, Brazil, India, and China, and running from MIS to GLOB in Turkey. The degree of significance level varies from country to country. There is no any causal relationship between military spending and globalization in France, Italy, South Korea, Germany, and Japan. Overall, this evidence shows a **relatively robust association** between changes in globalization and changes in military expenditure. In other words, countries experiencing greater globalization have relatively **large increases in militarization** over the past 20 years.

However, it has been shown that globalization may not lead to more peaceful relations or demilitarization. As we discussed in Sect. 2, bilateral trade increases the opportunity cost of bilateral war and may hinder bilateral war. Globalization (equivalent to multilateral economic openness) **reduces this opportunity cost with any given country** and devitalize the incentive to make concessions during negotiations, and, therefore, **increases the probability of war** between any given pair of country. Thus, an increase in trade or openness between two countries may restore peace between those but may increase the probability of conflict with third countries.

6 Conclusion

While previous studies mostly focused on the causal nexus between military expenditure and economic growth, those studies have not considered the role of globalization. This study uses data from the top 15 military expenditure spenders over the period 1990–2012 to examine the relationship between militarism and globalization. The bootstrap panel Granger causality that accounts for both cross-sectional dependence and heterogeneity across countries is utilized to detect the direction of causality. The results show that military expenditures and globalization are causally related in most of the countries under review. Despite the increasing role of globalization, the results show that **military expenditures are growing** and pointing to a strengthening in nationalist sentiments and militarism. This paper suggests that changes in domestic political and economic conditions might hinder the process of globalization. The results are consistent with those of Acemoglu and Yared (2010) who conclude that high military spending endangers globalization. This study also supports the results of Martin et al. (2008) who find that an increase in multilateral trade raises the chance of conflict between states. The policy implication of the findings is that greater military spending by a country increases the likelihood of military conflict in the future, the anticipation of which discourages globalization.

### Warming

#### No right to strike key warrant – their ev says climate strikes happen now which solve – but they probably don’t because there’s no card that says workers caring about climate actually causes changes in energy – proven by Green New Deal getting shit on.

#### Impacts inevitable – consensus among reports.

Hood ‘19

[Marlowe, covers climate for the Israel Times. 11/28/2019. “Scientists say it is too late to stop climate change,” <https://www.timesofisrael.com/scientists-say-it-is-too-late-to-stop-climate-change/>] pat

Four blockbuster reports from the United Nations over the last year have made it inescapably clear that the window of opportunity for avoiding serious consequences from our meddling with Earth’s climate system has slammed shut.

The impacts, in other words, are already upon us, and will get worse — perhaps far, far worse — before they get better.

With one degree Celsius of warming above pre-industrial levels, the world has already seen a crescendo of tropical storms swollen with more moisture, and made more deadly by rising seas.

A larger expanse of ocean warm enough to incubate these cyclones has spawned devastation in regions — Mozambique was hit twice this year — rarely affected in the past.

Erratic monsoons in south Asia shedding too much or too little rainfall at the wrong time; deadly heat waves over the last 18 months in East Asia, Europe and North America; warming at the poles twice the global average wreaking havoc on infrastructure and fueling wildfires — all are a foretaste of things to come, scientists warn.

On current trends, our greenhouse gas emissions will heat the planet’s surface another three or four degrees by 2100.

Even if all nations — gathering Monday in Madrid for another round of UN climate talks — honor their carbon-cutting pledges under the 2015 Paris Agreement, we’ll add at least two degrees.

Sixth mass extinction

The first of the 1,000-page “special reports,” delivered by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in October last year, reset the threshold for a climate-safe world from 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit).

Across a wide range of impacts, an extra-half degree of warming was found to make a huge difference, even the difference between life and death: 70 percent of the tropical corals upon which half-a-billion people and a quarter of marine species depend are projected to disappear in a 1.5 degree Celsius world. Half the corals in the Great Barrier Reef are already gone.

In a 2 degree Celsius world, however, they will all but disappear.

The report concluded humanity must fundamentally change the way we produce, distribute and consume almost everything, starting with energy.

Next, in May, was a UN report revealing that a million species — one in eight — face extinction.esh

Five times in the last half-billion years abrupt natural calamities have tipped the planet into a “mass extinction event” with at least two-thirds of all life forms unable to adapt.

Today, it is human activity that has triggered a mass die-off, with species vanishing at 10-to-100 times the normal “background rate” or more.

In August, the IPCC released an assessment of how we use and abuse land, pointing to deforestation, unsustainable agriculture and destruction of ecosystems.

The global food system – responsible for a quarter of carbon pollution – must be overhauled from top to bottom, both to ensure that 10 billion people can eat their fill in 2050, and to tame global warming, the UN body warned.

The final tome in the quartet looked at oceans and Earth’s frozen spaces, known as the cryosphere.

Hothouse Earth

The world’s two ice sheets — atop Greenland and Antarctica — have shed more than 430 billion tons of mass every year since 2005, and are now the main drivers of rising seas, on track to surge a meter (3.2 feet) higher by 2100, the report concluded.