### 1

#### Populism is on the decline worldwide – set to collapse

**Cambridge University 22** [Cambridge University. “Support for Populist Politics 'Collapsed' during the Pandemic: Global Report.” Phys.org, Phys.org, 18 Jan. 2022, phys.org/news/2022-01-populist-politics-collapsed-pandemic-global.html.] // VS

Support for populist parties and politicians, and agreement with populist sentiment, has diminished during the pandemic, according to a "mega-dataset" taking in attitudes of over half a million people across 109 countries since 2020. A University of Cambridge team say there are clear signs of a turning tide for the "populist wave", as the mishandling of coronavirus by populist leaders—along with a desire for stability and a decline in "polarizing" attitudes resulting from the pandemic—starts to move public opinion. The authors of the new report, from Cambridge's Center for the Future of Democracy (CFD), describe the study as the first global overview of how the COVID-19 crisis has affected political beliefs. They say that threats posed by the pandemic saw a "technocratic" shift in political authority worldwide, with increased trust in government, and in experts such as scientists and civil servants. Yet faith in the democratic process continued to falter. "The story of politics in recent years has been the emergence of anti-establishment politicians who thrive on the growing distrust of experts," said Dr. Roberto Foa, Co-Director of the CFD and the report's lead author. "From Erdogan and Bolsonaro to the 'strong men' of Eastern Europe, the planet has experienced a wave of political populism. COVID-19 may have caused that wave to crest." "Electoral support for populist parties has collapsed around the world in a way we don't see for more mainstream politicians. There is strong evidence that the pandemic has severely blunted the rise of populism," said Foa. The findings are published by Cambridge's Bennett Institute for Public Policy. The first months of the pandemic saw many political leaders get a boost in ratings—a classic "rally round the flag" effect in troubled times, say researchers. However, the approval ratings of populist leaders the world over began declining almost as soon as coronavirus hit, and have continued to sink ever since. On average, populist leaders have seen a 10 percentage point drop between the spring of 2020 and the last quarter of 2021, while ratings for non-populists—on average—returned to around pre-pandemic levels. Electoral support also plunged for their parties—seen most clearly in Europe, where the proportion of people intending to vote for a populist party\* has fallen by an average of 11 percentage points to 27%. Overall, across Europe, early lockdowns saw voting intention for incumbent parties increase. Yet all the continent's governing populists—from Italy's Five Star to Hungary's Fidezs—bucked the trend with the largest declines in support. Support for Europe's opposition populist parties also fell over the pandemic—by 5 pp on average to 11% – while it rose for "mainstream" opposition. Researchers suggest several factors for populism's fading appeal. One is simply the botch job made of the pandemic by populist governments: from Bolsonaro's mask veto to Trump's "bleach injection" suggestion. The report's polling shows the public considered populist leaders to be less trustworthy sources of virus-related information than centrist counterparts. In June 2020, approval of government handling of the crisis was 11 percentage points lower on average in countries with populist leaders than in those with more centrist governance. By the end of 2020, this gap had widened to 16 points. Researchers also found that political "tribalism"—fertile ground for populists—has declined in most countries. The percentage of party supporters expressing a "strong dislike" of those who vote for opposing politicians fell in most nations (although not the US) during the crisis. "The pandemic fostered a sense of shared purpose that may have reduced the political polarization we've seen over the last decade," said CFD researcher and report co-author Dr. Xavier Romero-Vidal. "This could help explain why populist leaders are struggling to mobilise support." Some of the (support for) ideas propagated by populists are losing ground. Levels of agreement with statements such as "corrupt elites" divide our nation or the "will of the people" should be obeyed fell in almost every nation surveyed. For example, agreement with four such statements fell on average by 9 percentage points in Italy to 66%, 10 points in France to 61%, and 8 points in the UK to 64%, between 2019 and 2021. Commitment to these ideas has also waned. Even among supporters, in almost every nation a smaller number now "strongly agree" than did in 2019. In developed democracies, this shift is predominantly among those aged over 55. Moreover, areas with the sharpest drops in populist attitudes are some of the poorer "left behind" regions—from Eastern Poland to Southern Italy and Northern Hungary—that have been a focus for populist rhetoric and support. "This may be down to some rebalancing of wealth as people escaped cities overrun with the virus," said Foa. "In addition, COVID-19 border closures stopped migration and globalized trade more effectively than any populist government." However, some "illiberal" policies gained traction while populations were in the teeth of the pandemic. Majorities in all major nations surveyed in 2020 were content with banning handshakes, and much of the public—including majorities in Japan and Germany—supported restricting online discussions of the virus. The consequence of populist decline has not been renewed faith in liberal democracy, say researchers. Perhaps tainted by the record of populists in office, support for democracy has also waned. Instead, citizens increasingly favor technocratic sources of authority, such as having "non-political" experts take decisions. By the start of summer 2020, belief that experts should be allowed to make decisions "according to what they think best for the country" had risen 14 points to 62% in Europe and 8 points to 57% in the US. While trust in government has steadily climbed since the pandemic hit, increasing by 3.4 percentage points on average right across the world's democratic nations, faith in democracy as a political system barely changed. "Satisfaction with democracy has recovered only slightly since the post-war nadir of 2019, and is still well below the long-term average," said Foa. "Some of the biggest declines in democratic support during the pandemic were seen in Germany, Spain and Japan—nations with large elderly populations particularly vulnerable to the virus." In the US, the percentage of people who consider democracy a "bad" way to run the country more than doubled from 10.5% in late 2019 to 25.8% in late 2021. Added Foa: "The pandemic has brought good and bad news for liberal democracy. On the upside, we see a decline in populism and a restoration of trust in government. On the downside, some illiberal attitudes have are increasing, and satisfaction with democracy remains very low."

#### Objectivity increases fake news

Napoli 21 [Philip M. Napoli, educator at the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University, 03-02-2021, “Back from the dead (again): The specter of the Fairness Doctrine and its lesson for social media regulation,” Wiley Online Library, [https://sci-hub.se/https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/poi3.253]/Kankee //](https://sci-hub.se/https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/poi3.253%5d/Kankee%20//) recut by VS

Fairness, balance, and false equivalency Finally, it essential to address the problematic broader principle that underlies any governmental or voluntary efforts to impose fairness or balance requirements on media gatekeepers. The biggest problem with the Fairness Doctrine is what it does to our conception of journalism and to the notion of how responsible gatekeeping works. Over the past few years, there has been a substantial amount of criticism heaped upon the news media for engaging in “false equivalence”—that is, giving equal attention to competing claims on different sides of the political spectrum, regardless of the objective validity of the competing claims (see, e.g., Spayd, 2016). This sort of uncritical, nonevaluative approach to journalism—and to gatekeeping more broadly—simply is not the right path to cultivating an informed citizenry in this environment of nearly unprecedented political polarization and disinformation. Institutionalizing such a model allows falsity to be legitimized by being presented alongside truth. It creates a system where demands of fairness and balance neuter journalists' and other gatekeepers' ability (and responsibility) to differentiate fact from fiction, truth from conspiracy theories and hoaxes. Consider, for instance, recent research focusing on the content curation practices of Google News (Kawakami et al., 2020). This study found that “Because there are fewer right‐ leaning publications than center or left‐leaning ones, to maintain this ‘fair’ balance, hyper‐ partisan far‐right news sources of low trust receive more visibility than some news sources that are more familiar to and trusted by the public” (Kawakami et al., 2020, p. 59). Such findings help to empirically demonstrate the dangers of the application of Fairness Doctrine‐ like principles in the governance of digital platforms, as such approaches typically lead to the disproportionate and unwarranted (from an informed citizenry standpoint) prominence of sources that are more likely to disseminate disinformation. This critical gatekeeping function is more valuable than ever in today's vast and complex information ecosystem, where distinguishing legitimate from illegitimate sources of news and information is more challenging for the end user than it has ever been; and where efforts by bad actors to manipulate social media platforms have become commonplace and increasingly sophisticated. The Trump White House's (2020) executive order contended that social media platforms should operate as “passive bulletin boards.” They have virtually never operated in this way; nor should they. Even those platforms that have marketed themselves as completely unfiltered forums for public discourse (e.g., Parler) operate under a number of explicit content curation and moderation guidelines, and, ironically, have been found to be engaging in editorial decision‐making geared toward filtering out particular political viewpoints (Lerman, 2020). Any efforts at content‐based regulation of social media platforms need to move beyond the notion of fairness—or, at the very least decouple the notion of fairness from the notion of balance. Fairness and balance are not the same thing. There is a degree of passivity, of a lack of judgment, in the notion of balance that is not present to the same degree in the notion of fairness. A news story can be fair without necessarily being balanced if, in the fair and objective judgment of the journalist, giving greater prominence to a discredited or extreme viewpoint would misinform the public. Similarly, if a digital platform is systematically and objectively applying criteria to individual posts or accounts that result in one political perspective's posts being taken down or fact‐checked more than another's, this can be seen as the platform behaving fairly. The unbalanced outcome is not a reflection of unfairness on the part of the platform. It is a reflection of the behavior of the speakers. Frustratingly, this is a position that the representatives of the various digital platforms have refrained from expressing in any of the many instances in which they have been called before Congress and grilled about their bias against conservative viewpoints. As one recent reconsideration of the Fairness Doctrine noted, contemporary concerns should focus on “greater accuracy and completeness, but… not… balance” (Vandenbergh, 2020, p. 815). As one of the growing number of critics of the notion of balance in journalism has noted, “Although appealing on the surface, balance can easily be manipulated to create a false sense of equivalency” (Vandenbergh, 2020, p. 815). Along these lines, some critics of the Fairness Doctrine noted that it led to an emphasis on the presentation of “extremes of controversy” (Bolton, 1987, pp. 818–819). Neither policy nor professional practice should, in the pursuit of “fairness” or “balance,” prioritize opposing viewpoints independently of any concerns about accuracy or truthfulness. Unfortunately, many of today's advocates for “fairness” in the content curation and moderation practices of social media platforms appear concerned first and foremost with the availability of extreme viewpoints independent of whether they have any grounding in verifiable fact. This strategic conflation of diversity and falsity needs to be resisted. Passivity does not equal fairness; and so in this regard, what Republican policymakers are calling for is a far cry from the principles of the Fairness Doctrine which specifically extended protections to “all responsible positions on matters of sufficient importance to be afforded radio time” and to “the various positions taken by the responsible groups” (Federal Communications Commission, 1949, pp. 1250–1251, emphasis added). The term responsible seems particularly relevant to the current environment, in light of contemporary challenges related to hate speech and disinformation. The Fairness Doctrine's approach to gatekeeping did not—at least in theory—involve broadcasters serving as passive conduits; and so any current efforts to impose more “fairness” upon social media platforms that are ultimately about converting these platforms to passive or uncritically balanced conduits misrepresent what fairness should mean in regulatory approaches to media gatekeeping, as well as in the voluntary gatekeeping practices of news organizations and digital platforms. CONCLUSION

#### Fake news revives populism worldwide – provides the catalyst needed

**ECPS 20** [“Fake News.” ECPS, 27 Dec. 2020, [www.populismstudies.org/Vocabulary/fake-news/](http://www.populismstudies.org/Vocabulary/fake-news/).] // VS

Fake news (also known as junk news, pseudo-news, or hoax news) is a form of news consisting of deliberate disinformation or hoaxes spread via traditional news media or online social media. Digital news has brought back and increased the usage of fake news, or yellow journalism. The news is then often reverberated as misinformation in social media but occasionally finds its way to the mainstream media as well. Fake news is written and published usually with the intent to mislead in order to damage an agency, entity, or person, and/or gain financially or politically, often using sensationalist, dishonest, or outright fabricated headlines to increase readership. Similarly, clickbait stories and headlines earn advertising revenue from this activity. The relevance of fake news has increased in post-truth politics. For media outlets, the ability to attract viewers to their websites is necessary to generate online advertising revenue. Easy access to online advertisement revenue, increased political polarization and the popularity of social media, primarily the Facebook News Feed, have all been implicated in the spread of fake news, which competes with legitimate news stories. Hostile government actors have also been implicated in generating and propagating fake news, particularly during elections. Fake news undermines serious media coverage and makes it more difficult for journalists to cover significant news stories. An analysis by BuzzFeed found that the top 20 fake news stories about the 2016 US presidential election received more engagement on Facebook than the top 20 election stories from 19 major media outlets. The term “lying press” is at times used to cast doubt upon legitimate news from an opposing political standpoint. During and after his presidential campaign and election, Donald Trump popularized the term “fake news” in this sense, regardless of the truthfulness of the news, when he used it to describe the negative press coverage of himself. In part, as a result of Trump’s misuse, the term has come under increasing criticism, and in October 2018 the British government decided that it will no longer use the term because it is “a poorly-defined and misleading term that conflates a variety of false information, from genuine error through to foreign interference in democratic processes.” According to Greg Nielsen, fake news and populist movements that appear to hold the fate of democracy hostage are urgent concerns around the world. “The flight from liberal democracy toward oligarchy has spread out from the unexpected results of the 2016 American presidential elections bringing in a wave of reactionary populism and the beginning of a left populist counter movement. The phenomenon of fake news is often explained in terms of opposition public relations strategies and geopolitics that shift audiences toward a regime of post-truth where emotion is said to triumphs over reason, computational propaganda over common sense, or sheer power over knowledge,” wrote Nielsen. Like Nielsen, numbers of pundits assessed that ‘fake news’ has undeniably been biased in favor of populist or anti-establishment parties. As politically charged misinformation has been proliferating online, it is no wonder that many have been questioning whether the spread of fake news has affected the results of recent elections, contributing to the growth of populist party platforms. According to an article by Michele Cantarella and Nicolò Fraccaroli, in the US, Trump voters were more likely to be exposed and believe to misinformation. In the Ital(y)ian context, these findings (show) have been replicated in a recent report from the financial newspaper Il Sole 24 Ore,1 where the likelihood of believing and sharing so-called fake news was found to be higher for voters of the populist MoVimento 5 Stelle and Lega than for voters of other parties. In Italy, not only does the consumption of fake news appear to be linked with populism, but the content of the overwhelming majority of pieces of misinformation also displays an obvious anti-establishment bias. On the other hand, the Reuters Digital News Report in 2018 showed that Turkey ranks first on the list of countries (with) where people complain about completely made-up stories. The study researched how fake news is helping facilitate the rise of populism in Turkey. “Populist politicians generally consider fake news as a valuable propaganda tool for their political interests,” wrote Harun Güney Akgül in an article and added that “There is plenty of fake news aired by pro-government media. Therefore, the Turkish government is emerging as a suspect behind the fake news cycle. The fact is that most of the fake news is published for the benefit of the government. Research shows that, paradoxically, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is regarded as one of the most important populist politicians in the world. These two different indicators can be valuable data in revealing the relationship between fake news and populist politicians.” To Akgül, today “pool media” has become a term that symbolizes media that publishes broadcast pro-government stories. Pool media is crucial for making fake news because it is produced by the government. After that, this news is served to the pool media and most of the time and all newspaper use the same headline and text. Bots use this fake news for the next step. Bots are the accounts that are controlled en masse from a central point. According to Kerem Sözeri, this generally works with this way in Turkey; so instead of equal participation in the social media, “they amplify their owner’s agenda.” “According to various sources, the AKP has established troll troops, nearly six thousand. Finally, the fake news spreads to a broad mass of society as if they are reliable news. Fake news is used in a lot of different ways by the Turkish government. The government sometimes organizes protests to oppose social movements by producing misinformation. Turkish government is creating fake stories or misinformation with the help of social media accounts. It was discovered that lots of pro-Erdogan websites were producing fabricated news. Bosphorus Global is just an important one of such pro-Erdogan websites,” wrote Akgül. To Akgül’s article, with the new populist wave in Europe and America, people have started talking about fake news and populism as one entity. For example, “Le Monde, one of the leading French newspapers, identified and corrected 19 lies made by Marine Le Pen, the extreme-right candidate who reached the runoff of the 2017 French presidential election, during her televised debate against Emmanuel Macron”. Akgül underlined the fact that fake news is produced without ethical elements, although there was a code of ethics in media. “Principles of journalism are to ensure that citizens have access to the right information and are protected against fake news. There are hundreds of codes of conduct, charters, and statements made by media and professional groups outlining the principles, values, and obligations of the craft of journalism,” he wrote. Akgül wrote populist leaders caused polarization by playing with social values. Otherwise, polarization is very important for using fake news… They tend to create an autocratic structure with false accusations against democracy. The decline of democratic values

following victories (for) of the populist leaders, e.g. Brexit campaigners, Trump’s controversial election victory and the rise of Jair Bolsonaro is a crucial power behind the populist movement… “Since the inception of social media, many populist governments have learned how to control the new public sphere and its digital ecology. Perhaps, misinformation is one of the best tools for them within social media. Brexit and Trump’s controversial election victory were a significant triumph for populist politicians… Trump and his election victory is an important example of fake news and populism. Following the 2016 election, according to a database, 115 pro-Trump fake stories were shared on Facebook a total of 30 million times and 41 pro-Clinton fake-stories have been shared a total of 7.6 million times,” said Akgül. On the other hand, right-wing populists, according to an article by Michael Hameleers, are not only attributing blame to the political elites, but increasingly vent anti-media sentiments in which the mainstream press is scapegoated for not representing the people. To his article, in an era of post-truth relativism, ‘fake news’ is increasingly politicized and used as a label to delegitimize political opponents or the press. To better understand the affinity between disinformation and populism, Hameleers conceptualizes two relationships between these concepts: i) blame attributions to the dishonest media as part of the corrupt elites that mislead the people; and ii) the expression of populist boundaries in a people-centric, anti-expert, and evidence-free way. The results of a comparative qualitative content analysis conducted by Hameleers in the US and Netherlands indicate that the political leaders Donald Trump and Geert Wilders blame legacy media in populist ways by regarding them as part of the corrupt and lying establishment. He said that “Compared to left-wing populist and mainstream politicians, these politicians are the most central players in the discursive construction of populist disinformation. Both politicians bypassed empirical evidence and expert knowledge whilst prioritizing the people’s truth and common sense at the center stage of honesty and reality. These expressions resonated with public opinion on Facebook, although citizens were more likely to frame mis- and disinformation in terms of ideological cleavages. These findings have important implications for our understanding of the role of populist discourse in a post-factual era.”

#### 1] Populist leaders kill global climate action – denialism, oversimplification, and cooperation failures

Calland 20 [(Richard, Associate Professor in Public Law, University of Cape Town) “Countering climate denialism requires taking on right-wing populism. Here’s how” The Conversation, February 12, 2020] MCM

In a complex world facing complex problems, it is seductive for politicians to identify a single culprit (like immigrants) or an evil force (like universal healthcare) to blame for the erosion of society, the economy, and the welfare of the masses. This is hardly ever true, but it is compelling. Take the bewilderingly complicated set of relationships between food, energy, urban infrastructure, and exponential demographic growth and change (at least in the developing world). Climate change and its effects are perhaps the epitome of a complex issue of interlinked social, political, and physical forces. That makes it an easy target for this sort of denialism. So, populism ends up denying not just the science of climate change but also the complexity of the entire issue – which is critical for both diagnosing the problem and determining the prognosis and the prescription. Populism strips issues of nuance, and thereby obstructs progress. A 2019 study mapping the climate agendas of right-wing populist parties in Europe contains some revealing evidence: two thirds of right-wing populist members of the European Parliament “regularly vote against climate and energy policy measures”. Half of all votes against resolutions on climate and energy in the European Parliament come from right-wing populist party members. Of the 21 right-wing populist parties analysed, seven were found to deny climate change, its anthropogenic causes, and negative consequences. According to estimates based on the World Resources Institute’s global greenhouse-gas emissions data, about 30% of global emissions come from countries with populist leaders. At the very moment when global cooperation is essential if climate action is to be effective, many of the leaders of these right-wing populist forces are trying to dismantle or weaken multilateral organisations such as the United Nations or the European Union. These political groups threaten to derail progress on the global response to climate change, and on new thinking about how to rewire the economy in pursuit of a more sustainable world. More hopefully, as grassroots organisations emerge as a potentially strong, countervailing force, the trick will be to effectively connect these movements to matters of global social justice. They should also be given enough coherence to be effective. Thus, again, shifting the lens for the climate crisis away from an environmental preoccupation towards human development and social justice. For example, how can Thunberg and the student strike movement in the global north connect with the 1.6 million children that are displaced in Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique from cyclones? Such connections need to be made to turn these nascent movements into powerful advocates for climate justice. Tipping the scale Regardless of whether the political will needed take transformational action to drastically reduce carbon emission and adapt economies and societies, especially in the global South, will be summoned by 2030, it is clear that by the end of this century life on earth will be very different to how it is now. It will certainly be more difficult and dangerous. This applies to everyone, but especially the poorest and most vulnerable members of a human society that is set to peak at around 9,8 billion by 2050 (up from the current 7,8bn). This is the human development challenge for sub-Saharan Africa. It’s not all doom and gloom. There are huge opportunities amid the grave threats. A first step to responding appropriately – individually and collectively – is understanding that the challenge is multi-dimensional. Only then can a multi-dimensional strategy be executed, across sectors and across national boundaries. But it is likely that the greatest impediment to taking action will not be technological know-how or even raising the money required. Instead it will be the lack of enough political will, given the obstructionism of right-wing populists in power around the globe. Hence, a political struggle will need to be won. And the fight for climate justice in the face of right-wing populist climate denialism is a titanic one. Trump-like trajectories into the “post-truth” world of climate change denial, charged by the amplifying impact of social media, distract from and obstruct the necessary action. Yet despite its flaws, the digital age presents a huge opportunity to impose a counter-narrative, and for recruiting new activists.

#### Warming causes extinction – positive feedback loops means adaptation is impossible

Ng ’19 [Yew-Kwang; May 2019; Professor of Economics at Nanyang Technology University, Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia and Member of the Advisory Board at the Global Priorities Institute at Oxford University, Ph.D. in Economics from Sydney University; Global Policy, “Keynote: Global Extinction and Animal Welfare: Two Priorities for Effective Altruism,” vol. 10, no. 2, p. 258-266; RP]

Catastrophic climate change Though by no means certain, CCC causing global extinction is possible due to interrelated factors of non‐linearity, cascading effects, positive feedbacks, multiplicative factors, critical thresholds and tipping points (e.g. Barnosky and Hadly, 2016; Belaia et al., 2017; Buldyrev et al., 2010; Grainger, 2017; Hansen and Sato, 2012; IPCC 2014; Kareiva and Carranza, 2018; Osmond and Klausmeier, 2017; Rothman, 2017; Schuur et al., 2015; Sims and Finnoff, 2016; Van Aalst, 2006).7 A possibly imminent tipping point could be in the form of ‘an abrupt ice sheet collapse [that] could cause a rapid sea level rise’ (Baum et al., 2011, p. 399). There are many avenues for positive feedback in global warming, including: the replacement of an ice sea by a liquid ocean surface from melting reduces the reflection and increases the absorption of sunlight, leading to faster warming; the drying of forests from warming increases forest fires and the release of more carbon; and higher ocean temperatures may lead to the release of methane trapped under the ocean floor, producing runaway global warming. Though there are also avenues for negative feedback, the scientific consensus is for an overall net positive feedback (Roe and Baker, 2007). Thus, the Global Challenges Foundation (2017, p. 25) concludes, ‘The world is currently completely unprepared to envisage, and even less deal with, the consequences of CCC’. The threat of sea‐level rising from global warming is well known, but there are also other likely and more imminent threats to the survivability of mankind and other living things. For example, Sherwood and Huber (2010) emphasize the adaptability limit to climate change due to heat stress from high environmental wet‐bulb temperature. They show that ‘even modest global warming could … expose large fractions of the [world] population to unprecedented heat stress’ p. 9552 and that with substantial global warming, ‘the area of land rendered uninhabitable by heat stress would dwarf that affected by rising sea level’ p. 9555, making extinction much more likely and the relatively moderate damages estimated by most integrated assessment models unreliably low. While imminent extinction is very unlikely and may not come for a long time even under business as usual, the main point is that we cannot rule it out. Annan and Hargreaves (2011, pp. 434–435) may be right that there is ‘an upper 95 per cent probability limit for S [temperature increase] … to lie close to 4°C, and certainly well below 6°C’. However, probabilities of 5 per cent, 0.5 per cent, 0.05 per cent or even 0.005 per cent of excessive warming and the resulting extinction probabilities cannot be ruled out and are unacceptable. Even if there is only a 1 per cent probability that there is a time bomb in the airplane, you probably want to change your flight. Extinction of the whole world is more important to avoid by literally a trillion times.

#### 2] Populism threatens democracy and global security

Bergmann 18 Max Bergmann (senior fellow at the Center for American Progress), Carolyn Kenney, and Trevor Sutton, 11/2/2018, The Rise of Far-Right Populism Threatens Global Democracy and Security, Center for American Progress.

We’ve seen this before. Bolsonaro’s rise to power is only the latest chapter in a global resurgence of right-wing, illiberal populism. Far-right populist parties across Europe have seen a [surge](https://www.axios.com/european-union-right-wing-populist-immigration-52850b78-41c4-427a-88ff-4991f64c0a70.html) in public approval, making parliamentary gains in 15 of the 27 EU member countries over the past two election cycles. Far-right parties made the most significant gains in Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Estonia, winning 5 percent more in vote shares. Additionally, the right-wing Fidesz party cemented its control over Hungarian politics with 49.3 percent of the vote shares in their April 2018 election, even though their vote share only increased by 4.4 percent from 2014 to 2018. Simultaneously, public support for democracy in many countries has [declined](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/07/05/yes-support-for-democracy-is-declining-worldwide-but-not-in-the-u-s-or-other-western-democracies/?utm_term=.d7680e68995a)—with the exception of Western democracies, where support has rebounded in recent years. Far-right parties and authoritarian demagogues that have succeeded in gaining power at the national level—such as in Hungary, Poland, Turkey, the Philippines, the United States, and, now, Brazil—have wasted no time in undermining democratic institutions and norms. Unsurprisingly, according to V-Dem Institute’s 2018 [liberal democracy index](https://www.v-dem.net/media/filer_public/3f/19/3f19efc9-e25f-4356-b159-b5c0ec894115/v-dem_democracy_report_2018.pdf), these countries are among those that have seen the greatest democratic backsliding in the past few years. It is entirely possible—and even expected—that right-wing populists will seek to roll back democratic norms and institutions once in power in order to entrench their authority and quash political opposition. Turkish President [Recep Tayyip Erdogan](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/04/world/europe/turkey-erdogan-internet-law-restrictions.html), Hungarian Prime Minister [Viktor Orbán](https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/04/12/viktor-orban-is-just-getting-started-hungary/), Poland’s [Law and Justice party](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/democracys-slow-fade-in-central-europe/2018/07/07/d155d1e4-8099-11e8-b0ef-fffcabeff946_story.html?utm_term=.c8308b08c424), and even U.S. President [Donald Trump](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/04/assault-on-democracy/557912/) have already demonstrated this. Once this degradation of democracy has been set in motion, it is a steep and slippery slope from illiberal democracy to outright authoritarianism. President Erdogan’s wholesale purge of the civil service and judiciary and his extended rule by decree under state of emergency [illustrate](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/reports/2018/02/11/446164/turkeys-new-nationalism-amid-shifting-politics/) how this is already occurring in Turkey. The rise of openly illiberal candidates and parties in democracies and the decline in support for democracy—particularly in younger democracies—represents a major global crisis that requires sustained U.S. commitment and international cooperation to reverse. This is particularly notable when combined with the fact that there has been a disturbing increase in democratic backsliding around the world, including in the United States. This should be a huge wake-up call for liberal democratic leaders. Global and U.S. security is at risk This democratic backsliding is a threat to [global security](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/reports/2018/09/05/457451/securing-democratic-world/). Nondemocracies are more prone to violence and war; more likely to stoke crises and confrontation; and, in many cases, more fiercely opposed to collective global responses to shared concerns such as climate change and migration. This is especially the case for far-right, illiberal regimes, which typically thrive on xenophobic paranoia, bellicosity, and a disavowal of any form of global cooperation in favor of a blunt, country-first approach to international affairs.

### 2

#### The EARN IT Act attaches to must-pass legislation and collapses digital privacy.

Estes 2-16 [Forrest; reporter for The Little Hawk; 2-16-2022; "The EARN IT Act and What it Means for Your Internet Privacy"; The Little Hawk; https://www.thelittlehawk.com/58498/opinion/the-earn-it-act-and-what-it-means-for-your-internet-privacy/; accessed 2-16-2022; NK]

Senators Richard Blumenthal (Connecticut) and Lindsey Graham (South Carolina) have reintroduced the massively unpopular EARN IT act, originally proposed in 2020, back onto the Senate docket. As of February 10th, the Senate Judiciary Committee has voted to advance the bill to the Senate floor. From here, the bill will be voted on by the full senate. The EARN IT act was pitched as a tool to hold tech companies accountable for the spread of content exploiting children. The bill removes a lot of protections tech companies currently hold under Section 230, opening them up to the possibility of lawsuits over content shared on their platforms and devices. Despite its seemingly noble ideals, the bill in its current form will help nobody. All it will do is help the government institute the surveillance state they want so desperately. The goal of the bill is to get states to pass regulations that would allow private companies under hire by the government to punish tech companies for utilizing encryption to hide user data. The bill also aims to create a 19-person commission that would determine the “best practices” to end the problem of child abuse on the internet. This will inevitably lead to online service providers being compelled to scan and filter user data using government-approved software like PhotoDNA. This practice has received criticism from civil rights advocates, industry groups, and LGBTQ rights organizations who are concerned that the regulations will lead service providers to remove legal speech to avoid persecution by the commission. The most popular form of encryption currently is end-to-end encryption, where data is encrypted as it leaves a sender and is only decrypted as it reaches the recipient. There is a large concern that companies could be taken to court over claims of illegal behavior by users, and the simple fact that they utilize end-to-end encryption at all could be used as evidence to convict them. More than 60 human rights organizations came together and sent a group letter to the committee urging them to abandon the bill amid concerns about online privacy and free speech. Critics of the bill have been quick to point out the fact that Section 230 already does not protect online service providers from prosecutions related to CSAM (child sexual abuse material). Internet service providers are already required to report CSAM when it is detected. These companies make thousands of reports a day, but this number does not necessarily directly correlate to the amount of CSAM found on the internet. Many platforms, such as Facebook, have instituted blanket scanning techniques that have led to an inflated report count as bots flag non-CSAM material as harmful. Law enforcement has used this inaccurate number to suggest that the amount of CSAM on major platforms has skyrocketed in recent years. These same groups are the ones calling for the removal of encryption through the EARN IT act. Many critics have pointed out that the bill provides a lot of surveillance but not a lot of protection. Several independent child protection experts have made it clear that the removal of blanket encryption and scanning of private messages will not help the situation; it could even worsen it. The main concern is that if the government can see all activity on the internet, it won’t be long until predators tap into that service. These independent experts have implored senators that children, especially those who are already in an abusive situation, need privacy online to be truly safe. No one on the internet, particularly the most vulnerable members of our society, can have the safety and security they deserve without the strong encryption that the EARN IT act seeks to remove. Supporters of this bill want you to believe that it’s all for the children, that tech companies are immoral behemoths with complete legal immunity, and that the EARN IT act will finally bring them to justice. What the bill actually presents is a future where privatized companies working for the government scan through the data of every individual, treating everyone as a presumed criminal who deserves to have all of their private information scanned and cataloged in government databases. And this is assuming that the committee for best internet practices will stay apolitical. In all likelihood, the government will not pass up the opportunity to identify people who disagree with them or do not fit into the government’s idea of an ideal citizen. This bill will give the government the power to silence you based on your political leanings, your stance on big issues, your sexuality, gender identity, race, or anything else. If you are deemed to be breaking “best practices”, then they will have the legal right to remove your 1st amendment rights. This bill cannot pass if we hope to keep our rights to privacy and security on the internet. The senators pushing this are crafty and know about the bill’s unpopularity with the public. Therefore, if they can, they will try to smuggle the bill into law inside a “Must Pass” legislative package like a Trojan Horse. You can take action by contacting your senator and telling them to vote against the Earn It Act. The Electronic Frontier Foundation has set up a website to help you locate and contact your local representative, located at: https://act.eff.org/action/stop-the-earn-it-act-to-save-our-privacy

#### Victories build political capital

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Evan, 4/6. “Does Political Capital Matter?” https://politicstheorypractice.com/2016/04/06/does-political-capital-matter/

In political science, a president’s “political capital” refers to how much influence he/she can exert on lawmakers to produce desired legislative outcomes in Congress. Political capital can be understood more or less as an invisible “currency” that presidents can expend on lawmakers or the public to get them on board with particular items on their agendas. Presidents gain political capital with legislative or electoral victories and high favorability ratings with the public, and, inversely, lose it through poor showings by their parties in midterm elections, legislative (and other) gaffes, and low favorability ratings.

#### Fiat makes the plan “must pass” legislation – the outcome is pre-ordained, creating opportunity.

Copeland ‘8 [Curtis W.; Specialist in American National Government, Government and Finance Division; “Congressional Influence on Rulemaking and Regulation Through Appropriations Restrictions”; 8/5/8; Congressional Research Service; https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL34354.pdf]

Although the substantive reasons leading to the adoption of these regulatory restrictions are numerous (e.g., economic interests, or to support or oppose end-ofadministration rules), their inclusion in appropriations legislation as a matter of legislative strategy appears to be prompted by two factors: (1) Congress’ ability via its “power of the purse” to control agency action, and (2) the fact that appropriations bills are considered “must pass” legislation. As one observer put it, “Because everyone knows that Congress must pass such legislation, it is tempting to try and attach incidental provisions that otherwise might lack the political momentum (or even majority support) necessary for passage.”119 In that regard, several of the regulatory restrictions discussed in this report were also in separate legislation that had not moved since they were introduced. The use of regulatory restrictions in appropriations bills is also likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The examples provided in this report indicate that they are a formidable “tool” in the “toolbox” of congressional oversight and control of executive agencies.

#### EARN IT ends encryption and data security.

Tuccille 2-16 [JD; contributing editor for Reason; 2-16-2022; "EARN IT Act Abuses Privacy in the Guise of Protecting Kids"; UPI; https://reason.com/2022/02/16/earn-it-bill-abuses-privacy-in-the-guise-of-protecting-kids/; accessed 2-18-2022; NK]

Governments have never liked it when their subjects keep secrets from them and they really don't like encryption technology, which makes it easier for people to conceal their messages from prying eyes. But the public hasn't been buying the eavesdropping that politicians are selling. So, the powers-that-be moved on to claiming that they're concerned about protecting the children and just incidentally restricting the use of techniques for protecting privacy. The EARN IT Act is the latest effort to invade our communications, and its advocates occasionally let the mask slip. The Eliminating Abusive and Rampant Neglect of Interactive Technologies (EARN IT) Act of 2022 is ostensibly about protecting kids from child porn. "The bill amends Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act to remove blanket immunity from Federal civil, State criminal, and State civil child sexual abuse material laws entirely," asserted Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) in a press release when he introduced the bill last week. But Reason's Elizabeth Nolan Brown has covered the EARN IT Act and its predecessors through the various incarnations of the legislation, and points out that the bill is based on some false claims: The main thrust of the EARN IT Act is to add another exception to Section 230 (the law that shields digital entities from some liability for user and customer communications) related to child pornography. What supporters of the law like to obscure is that digital entities are not shielded from federal prosecution if they break child porn laws. The EARN IT Act isn't needed to criminally punish them for this. So, if the law already holds accountable people who post child pornography, what's going on here? Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), a co-sponsor of the bill, showed his hand when asked by The Washington Post about the bill making encrypted services evidence of wrongdoing. "He said lawmakers wouldn't offer a blanket exemption to using encryption as evidence, arguing companies might use it as a 'get-out-of-jail-free card,'" reporter Cat Zakrzewski noted. As a result, the Electronic Frontier Foundation warns that "if enacted, EARN IT will put massive legal pressure on internet companies both large and small to stop using encryption and instead scan all user messages, photos, and files." This isn't an isolated example, either. The British government is waging an extended campaign against encryption in the name of saving children from exploitation. It even launched an advertising campaign against the use of privacy-protecting technology. "We have engaged M&C Saatchi to bring together the many organisations who share our concerns about the impact end-to-end encryption would have on our ability to keep children safe," the UK Home Office told Rolling Stone last month. The motivating factor here isn't an epidemic of kiddie porn. It's more of an organized effort among multiple governments to turn the public against anything that shields communications from prying eyes. "We, the undersigned, support strong encryption, which plays a crucial role in protecting personal data, privacy, intellectual property, trade secrets and cyber security," the governments of Australia, Canada, India, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States insisted in a joint October 2020 statement. "Particular implementations of encryption technology, however, pose significant challenges to public safety, including to highly vulnerable members of our societies like sexually exploited children. We urge industry to address our serious concerns where encryption is applied in a way that wholly precludes any legal access to content." So, multiple governments are coordinating efforts to suppress encryption by linking it to child abuse, and the EARN IT Act is an American manifestation of that scheme. But even officials of some of those governments find this all a bit preposterous, including Britain's Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), which acts as a data watchdog. "The discussion on end-to-end encryption use is too unbalanced to make a wise and informed choice. There is too much focus on the costs without also weighing up the significant benefits," Stephen Bonner, ICO's Executive Director for Innovation and Technology, objected in January. "E2EE [end-to-end encryption] serves an important role both in safeguarding our privacy and online safety. It strengthens children's online safety by not allowing criminals and abusers to send them harmful content or access their pictures or location." Some American lawmakers also raise worries about the bill's impact. "I've got some concerns with the encryption component of the bill," Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) objected during a February 10 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing considering the EARN IT Act. "I'm a little concerned that the current language inadvertently mandates interactive computer services to do for the government what the government itself is prohibited from doing, which is engaging in sort of open-ended policing, the accessing and then reporting of private and protected data without the protections of the law." He also pointed out that compliance with the proposed law's liability standards would be far easier for large, established services than for smaller operations. "I remain concerned about some of the provisions around encryption and how it may impact domestic violence victims in this country, human rights advocates and journalists overseas," agreed Sen. Christopher Coons (D-Del.). Nevertheless, the committee members approved the bill without any changes. "The newest version of the bill…makes things worse," warns the Center for Democracy and Technology in a letter objecting to the measure before Congress. "By dramatically expanding the risk of lawsuits intermediaries will face over user-generated content and their use of end-to-end encryption, the bill will cause intermediaries to over-remove even lawful content and disincentivize them from offering encrypted services, to the detriment of all internet users." It's a fair bet that disincentivizing the use of encryption is exactly what is intended by the sponsors of this and related measures in the United States and abroad. For all of the talk of saving children from abuse, the true hope of lawmakers and government officials is to abuse our privacy by stripping us of the ability to keep secrets from the state.

#### IP theft undermines China deterrence---causes nuclear war

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In contrast to the military competition of the Cold War, which was a truly global struggle, the dangers for Washington and Beijing are likely to be confined to the Indo-Pacific. Even so, the region features at least four potential hot spots: the South China Sea, the East China Sea, the Taiwan Strait, and the Korean Peninsula. Neither side wishes for conflict, but tensions are rising as both invest in offensivecapabilities, boost their military presence in the region, and operate in ever-closer proximity. Washington fears that China is trying to push U.S. forces out of the western Pacific, and Beijing fears that the United States is trying to hem it in. Given China’s harassment of U.S. aircraft and naval vessels, minor incidents risk escalating into majormilitaryconfrontations; Admiral Wu Shengli, the former naval commander of the People’s Liberation Army, has warned that any such incident “could sparkwar.”

But coexistence in the Indo-Pacific by both militaries should not be dismissed as impossible. The United States must accept that military primacy will be difficult to restore, given the reach of China’s weapons, and instead focus on deterringChina from interfering with its freedom of maneuver and from physically coercing U.S. allies and partners. Beijing will have to accept that the United States will remain a resident power in the region, with a major military presence, naval operations in its major waterways, and a network of alliances and partnerships.

Taiwan and the South China Sea are likely to present the most significant challenges to this overall approach. A military provocation or misunderstanding in either case could easily trigger a largerconflagration, with devastating consequences, and this risk must increasingly animate the thinking of senior leaders in both Washington and Beijing.

On Taiwan, a tacit commitment not to unilaterally alter the status quo is perhaps the best that can be hoped for given the historical complexities involved. Yet Taiwan is not only a potential ash point; it is also the greatest unclaimed success in the history of U.S.-Chinese relations. The island has grown, prospered, and democratized in the ambiguous space between the United States and China as a result of the flexible and nuanced approach generally adopted by both sides. In this way, the diplomacy surrounding Taiwan could serve as a model for the increasingly challenging diplomacy between Washington and Beijing on a variety of other issues, which are similarly likely to include intense engagement, mutual vigilance and a degree of distrust, and a measure of patience and necessary restraint. Meanwhile, in the South China Sea, Beijing’s understanding that threats to freedom of navigation could have devastating consequences for China’s own economy might help—when combined with U.S. deterrence—modulate its more nationalist sentiments.

To achieve such coexistence, Washington will need to enhance both U.S.-Chinese crisis management and its own capacity for deterrence. Even as Cold War adversaries, the United States and the Soviet Union worked concertedly to reduce the risk that an accidental collision would escalate to nuclear war; they set up military hot lines, established codes of conduct, and signed arms control agreements. The United States and China lack similar instruments to manage crises at a time when new domains of potential conflict, such as space and cyberspace, have increased the risk of escalation.

In every military domain, the two countries need agreements that are at least as formal and detailed as the U.S.-Soviet Incidents at Sea Agreement, a 1972 deal that established a set of specific rules aimed at avoiding maritime misunderstandings. The United States and China also need more communication channels and mechanisms to avoid conflict—especially in the South China Sea—to allow each side to quickly clarify the other’s intentions during an incident. The bilateral military relationship should no longer be held hostage to political disagreements, and senior military offcials on both sides should engage in more frequent and substantive discussions to build personal ties as well as understandings of each side’s operations. Historically, progress on some of these exports, especially crisis communication, has proved difficult: Chinese leaders fear that crisis communication could embolden the United States to act with impunity and would require devolving too much authority to senior military officers in the field. But these worries may be easing, given China’s growing power.

Effective U.S. strategy in this domain requires not just reducing the risk of unintentional conflict but also deterring intentional conflict. Beijing cannot be allowed to use the threat of force to pursue a fait accompli in territorial disputes. Yet managing this risk does not require U.S. military primacy within the region. As the former Trump administration defense official Elbridge Colby has argued, “deterrence without dominance—even against a very great and fearsome opponent—is possible.”

To ensure deterrence in the Indo-Pacific, Washington should reorient its investments away from expensive and vulnerable platforms, such as aircraft carriers, and toward cheaper asymmetric capabilities designed to discourage Chinese adventurism without spending vast sums. This calls for taking a page from Beijing’s own playbook. Just as China has relied on relatively cheap anti-ship cruise and ballistic missiles, the United States should embrace long-range unmanned carrier-based strike aircraft, unmanned underwater vehicles, guided missile submarines, and high-speed strike weapons. All these weapons could protect U.S. and allied interests, even as they dent China’s confidence that its offensive operations will succeed and reduce the risk of collision and miscalculation. The United States should also diversify some of its military presence toward Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean, making use of access agreements rather than permanent basing when necessary. This would place some U.S. forces beyond China’s precision-strike complex, preserving their ability to promptly address crises. It would also preposition them to address a wide range of contingencies beyond conflicts involving China, including humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and antipiracy missions.

ESTABLISHING RECIPROCITY

Unlike the Soviet Union, which focused its resources on military power, China views geoeconomics as the primary arena of competition. With an eye toward the future, it has invested heavily in emergingindustries and technologies, including artificial intelligence, robotics, advanced manufacturing, and biotechnology. China seeks dominance in these fields in part by denying Western companies reciprocal treatment. The United States granted China permanent normal trade relations, supported its entry into the World Trade Organization, and has generally maintained one of the world’s most open markets. But through a combination of industrial policy, protectionism, and outright theft, China has put in place a range of formal and informal barriers to its markets and has exploited American openness.

This structural imbalance has eroded support for stable U.S.- Chinese economic ties, and the relationship faces a heightened risk of rupture even if Xi and U.S. President Donald Trump are able to reach a near-term trade truce. Many in the American business community are no longer willing to tolerate China’s unfair practices, which include employing state hackers to stealintellectual property, forcing foreign companies to localize their operations and engage in joint ventures, subsidizing state champions, and otherwise discriminating against foreign companies.

Alleviating these growing frictions while protecting American workers and innovation will require making China’s full access to major markets around the world contingent on its willingness to adopt economic reforms at home. Washington, for its part, will have to invest in the core sources of American economic strength, build a united front of like-minded partners to help establish reciprocity, and safeguard its technological leadership while avoiding self-inflicted wounds. The most decisive factor in the economic competition with China is U.S. domestic policy. The notion of a new “Sputnik moment”—one that galvanizes public research as powerfully as seeing the Soviet Union launch the world’s first satellite did—may be overstating the point, but government does have a role to play in advancing American economic and technological leadership. Yet the United States has turned away from precisely the kinds of ambitious public investments it made during that period— such as the Interstate Highway System championed by President Dwight Eisenhower and the basic research initiatives pushed by the scientist Vannevar Bush—even as it faces a more challenging economic competitor. Washington must dramatically increase funds for basic science research and invest in clean energy, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, and computing power. At the same time, the federal government should scale up its investments in education at all levels and in infrastructure, and it should adopt immigration policies that continue to enhance the United States’ demographic and skills advantage. Calling for a tougher line on China while starving public investments is self-defeating; describing these investments as “socialist,” given the competition, is especially ironic. Indeed, such strange ideological bedfellows as Senator Elizabeth Warren, Democrat of Massachusetts, and Senator Marco Rubio, Republican of Florida, are making a convincing case for a new U.S. industrial policy.

On top of this domestic foundation, Washington should work with like-minded nations to de?ne a new set of standards on issues that the World Trade Organization does not currently address, from stateowned enterprises to indigenous innovation policies to digital trade. Ideally, these standards would connect Asia and Europe. To this end, the United States should consider starting a rules-setting initiative of market democracies layered over the WTO system, which would ?ll these gaps. The logic is straightforward. If China hopes to enjoy equal access to this new economic community, its own economic and regulatory frameworks must meet the same standards. The combined gravitational pull of this community would present China with a choice: either curb its free-riding and start complying with trade rules, or accept less favorable terms from more than half of the global economy. If Beijing chooses to hold to the line that the necessary reforms amount to economic regime change, it can certainly do so, but the world would be well within its rights to oer China reciprocal treatment. In some cases, Washington may still need to impose reciprocal measures on China unilaterally, by treating its exports and investments the same way Beijing handles U.S. exports and investments. These eorts will be challenging and costly, which is precisely why the Trump administration’s decision to pick trade ?ghts with U.S. allies rather than rally them to a common position vis-à-vis China is such a waste of American leverage.

The **U**nited **S**tates will also have to safeguard its tec**h**nological advantages in the face of China’s **i**ntellectual property theft, targeted industrial policies, and commingling of its economic and security sectors. Doing so will require some enhanced restrictions on the ow of technology investment and trade in both directions, but these eorts should be pursued selectively rather than wholesale, imposing curbs on technologies that are critical to national security and human rights and allowing regular trade and investment to continue for those that are not. Even these targeted restrictions must be undertaken in consultation with industry and other governments; failing to do so could Balkanize the global technology ecosystem by impeding ows of knowledge and talent. Such a development would neutralize a key U.S. competitive advantage relative to China: an open economy that can source the best global talent and synthesize the biggest breakthroughs from around the world. Meanwhile, overreach on technology restrictions could drive other countries toward China, especially since China is already the largest trading partner for most.