# Cards---Round 2---DRR

## Case

### Impact---1AC

#### Slow growth ignites hotspots through resource scrambles and fuelling radicalism.

Michael Weidokal 24. President and founder at International Strategic Analysis, M.B.A. in international strategy and economics from the University of South Carolina. "Implications for the Future. " *The Coming Decline: A World Without Economic Growth*, ch. 15.

As we look ahead, one cannot help but wonder if this threat of long-term economic stagnation and decline will not be the catalyst for major conflicts in the future. For one, such economic troubles could fuel political radicalism, as it did in the 1920s and 1930s. At the same time, rising levels of protectionism and nationalism could lead to far worse trade disputes than we have seen in recent years, something that could also turn an economic dispute into a military conflict. Finally, the battle for control of strategic resources such as oil, water, land or rare-earth elements could intensify as economic growth slows, resulting in conflicts over the control of these resources.

There are many examples of potential conflicts between large economic powers that could erupt in the years and decades ahead, particularly if economic growth continues to slow over the longer-term. For example, tensions between the world’s two superpowers, the United States and China, have risen steadily in recent years, due in part to US concerns about China’s rising economic and military power. As there are a large number of flashpoints that could bring these two giant powers into conflict (Taiwan, North Korea, South China Sea, etc.), the likelihood of a superpower conflict is now greater than it has been at any time since the early 1980s.

This is not the only potential great power conflict that the world faces today. For example, tensions between the United States and Russia have also been rising as the latter seeks to regain some of the geopolitical importance and influence that it lost in the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The growing rivalry between China and India is another flashpoint that has the potential to erupt into a conflict between two major economic powers, particularly in light of the numerous border disputes between those two Asian giants. In fact, there are a number of potential conflicts involving two or more major economies that could erupt in the near-future, any of which would not only be influenced by economic factors, but would also have a major impact on the economies of the combatants, as well as on the global economy as a whole.

#### Growth moderates hegemonic transitions, preventing great power war.

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1 Introduction

Although peace and development are central themes of our time, various forms of conflict – between nations, ethnic groups, organizations, and individuals– remain pervasive. High-profile geopolitical tensions, such as the ongoing conflicts between Russia and Ukraine and in the Middle East, serve as stark reminders of the preciousness of peace. The shifting global landscape and power struggles among major nations are particularly concerning. Thucydides’s Trap, a concept popularized by political scientist Graham T. Allison (Allison, 2015, 2017), draws from the ancient Greek historian Thucydides, who noted that the rise of a new power often led to conflict with an established one. The idea has gained significant attention in contemporary international relations, particularly in the context of the perceived rivalry between the United States and China.

Historical accounts underscore the recurring nature of power transitions leading to conflict. For example, the rise and fall of British naval mastery, as discussed by Kennedy (2017), and broader analyses of war and change in world politics by Gilpin (1981) illustrate the Thucydides Trap.1 Allison (2015) refers to 16 historical cases over the past 500 years where a rising power challenged an established power, finding that 12 resulted in war. The two World Wars are also prominent historical cases. These historical perspectives highlight the potential for instability and conflict during significant power shifts.

This deterministic view has been challenged by scholars like Lee (2019) and Chan (2020) who argue that conflict is not inevitable and that other factors, particularly economic conditions, can influence the trajectory. This argument is further supported by analyses of historical power shifts, such as Britain’s response to its relative decline (Friedberg, 2021) and the dynamics of power transitions in Asia (Shambaugh, 2005).2 This opens the door to investigating whether economic conditions can alter the course toward conflict or cooperation in power dynamics.

Economic conditions are undeniably crucial in determining international conflicts. World War II, for example, was significantly influenced by the Great Depression. Economic prospects also influence domestic politics and conflicts. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) suggest that economic conditions largely determine the opportunity for rebellion in civil conflicts, while Blattman and Miguel (2010) and Ray and Esteban (2017) identify lower income levels and weak economic growth as strong predictors of civil wars. Gartzke (2007) and Mitra and Ray (2014) highlight the role of economic development in reducing war and mitigating communal violence. The role of economic factors in power transitions is more complex. Gilpin (1981) and Kennedy (2017) argue that disparities in economic growth can disrupt the balance of power, potentially leading to instability and conflict.

Building on this, we explore how economic prospects affect the likelihood of cooperation and conflict between rising and established powers. We hypothesize that growth prospects encourage cooperative strategies, as both parties stand to benefit from mutual gains. Economic interdependence driven by positive economic prospects can foster stronger trade relations, investment, and collaboration in technology and infrastructure, creating a stabilizing effect where both powers have a vested interest in maintaining peace. Conversely, bleak economic prospects can intensify competition over limited resources. An established power may perceive the rising power’s growth as a threat to its dominance, prompting preemptive actions. Similarly, a rising power facing economic difficulties may adopt aggressive strategies to secure resources and markets, escalating tensions.

Better understanding the interactions between the dynamics of power and economic trajectories provides valuable insights into the potential for cooperation or conflict on the global stage.3 However, numerous confounding factors make it difficult to isolate the causal effect of economic prospects on the natural occurrence of conflicts. It is also impractical to create real conflict scenarios in the real world to test these hypotheses. Therefore, we used a laboratory experiment to simulate interactions between two entities undergoing a power shift under varying economic prospects. While this experiment cannot capture the full complexity of international or commercial relations, it does allow us to study the causal relationship between economic prospects and conflict in a power-dynamic context under controlled conditions.

To achieve this, we designed a dynamic power rivalry game where two players in fixed pairs, A and B, simultaneously decide how to allocate a pie in each period by either choosing to “Maintain Status Quo” or “Challenge”. If both maintain the status quo, the pie is shared equally. If one or both challenge, the pie size shrinks by a social loss coefficient, and the remaining pie is distributed according to the players’ relative strength, which shifts over time. Player A represents the rising power, starting with low relative strength, which increases each period. Player B, the established power, starts with high relative strength, which declines over time. Across the 21 periods of the game, their strengths undergo a symmetrical reversal, with Player A starting at 0.2 and Player B at 0.8, each shifting by 0.03 per period. Players incur a cost when choosing to challenge.

We compared three economic prospect conditions across between-subjects treatments, independent from the players’ actions: in the Constant treatment, the pie size remains constant across periods at 20,000 tokens; in the Decline treatment, the pie size starts at 30,000 tokens and decreases by 1,000 tokens per period; and in the Growth treatment, the pie starts at 10,000 tokens and increases by 1,000 tokens per period.

The Nash equilibrium of the game predicts that Player B will challenge in the first eight periods, while Player A will challenge in the last eight, with both players maintaining the status quo in the remaining periods. Notably, the different economic prospects do not alter this equilibrium. In contrast, our results show that the proportion of challenges from both players, as well as the overall conflict incidence rate, is highest in the Decline treatment and lowest in the Growth treatment. The differences between these treatments are significant across various metrics. Only the Growth treatment reaches a conflict rate significantly lower than the Nash equilibrium. Specifically, Player A (the rising power) challenges significantly more than the equilibrium in both the Decline and Constant treatments but challenges insignificantly less than the equilibrium in the Growth treatment. Player B (the established power) challenges less than the equilibrium in all treatments but only significantly so in the Growth treatment.

Further analyses of the behavior of different types of players with absolute advantage, characterized notably as "money maximizers" who always challenge or "peace lovers" who never challenge, support the robust pattern that growth prospects reduce conflict. We also show that the initial action is crucial in determining subsequent behaviors. Though triggering a conflict is socially inefficient, growth prospects help enhance social welfare. Exploring the mechanisms driving the different impacts of decline and growth prospects, we reject potential explanations in terms of differences in wealth accumulation. A behavioral model with psychological costs for challenging and reciprocity helps rationalize why different economic prospects lead to divergent routes in terms of conflict and cooperation when relative powers shift. This model shows that an established power is less likely to challenge when expecting its rival’s reciprocity. Given its expectations of the rival’s psychological costs, an established power is less likely to initiate a challenge in the Growth treatment than in the other treatments.

To test the real-world relevance of the dynamics observed in our experiment, we conducted a preregistered online survey experiment in the United States with a representative sample of 813 individuals. After presenting each of two scenarios describing long-term global economic prospects –one optimistic and the other pessimistic –, respondents reported their beliefs about the probability that tensions between China and the United States would escalate into conflict over the next decade. In line with our laboratory experiment findings, respondents perceived a significantly higher likelihood of conflict in the slow-down scenario than in the growth scenario. Moreover, most respondents believed that major powers are most likely to engage in conflict when global economic prospects are declining and least likely under global economic prosperity and growth trends.

Our study contributes to the theoretical and experimental literature on conflict in the context of power shifts. Fearon (1995), Powell (1999, 2006, 2012), and Baliga and Sjöström (2020) discuss the strategic aspects of conflict with power asymmetries, emphasizing how shifts in relative power can lead to conflict despite both parties preferring peace. Similarly, Sieberg et al. (2013), Kimbrough et al. (2014), Herbst et al. (2017), and Schaller and Skaperdas (2020) explore how the balance of power influences conflict propensity. To our knowledge, only Tingley (2011), Abbink et al. (2023), and Comola et al. (2024) have conducted experimental studies on dynamic power shifts. Tingley (2011) examine a resource division game with infinitely repeated interactions and changing bargaining strength, while Abbink et al. (2023) provide a framework for understanding how perceived threats and power imbalances can provoke preemptive actions in a two-stage bargaining game with power shifts. Comola et al. (2024) study how power shifts between competitors modify which nodes to target in a network to maximize influence. Our study extends this line of research by explicitly incorporating economic prospects through the mechanism of a growing or shrinking pie within a new game that captures symmetric power shifts in a finitely repeated context.

We also contribute to the empirical literature on the role of economic conditions in conflicts. Studies by Hegre and Sambanis (2006), Blattman and Miguel (2010), and Ray and Esteban (2017) on the causes of civil wars suggest that low-income levels and slow economic growth are robust predictors of civil war onset. Martin et al. (2008) and McGuirk and Burke (2020) illustrate how economic variables can either exacerbate tensions or promote peace, depending on the context.4 The only experiment we are aware of that studied resource scarcity’s effects on inter-group conflict is Safarzynska and Sylwestrzak (2021) but this study does not consider future prospects and power shifts as we do. While much empirical research has explored economic factors in civil conflicts, fewer studies have examined these dynamics in the context of power transitions. By incorporating dynamic economic prospects into our design, we explore how future economic conditions influence the pathways toward conflict or cooperation between rising and established powers.

Finally, our study contributes to the literature on expectations and cooperation. The maintenance of cooperation through history-dependent strategies like tit-for-tat is well-documented (Dal Bó and Fréchette, 2018). The concept of the “shadow of the future”, introduced by Axelrod and Hamilton (1981), emphasizes how anticipated future interactions encourage cooperation. Kreps et al. (1982) suggest forward-looking agents can sustain cooperation even in finitely repeated prisoner’s dilemma games. However, in conflict games, Tingley (2011) demonstrates that a longer shadow of the future can exacerbate commitment problems when bargaining strength shifts. Based on historical case studies, the theory of trade expectations of Copeland (2014) suggests that positive expectations of the future trade environment trigger motives for peace while negative expectations promote motives for conflict. Though these studies did not examine conflict during dynamic power shifts as we do, they provide valuable insights into the importance of expectations on challenging behavior.

### AT: Alt Solves---1AR

#### Transition causes China to grab Taiwan.

Michael McFaul 24. Professor of political science at Stanford University. "Americans Do Not Want or Need a Revolution in our National Security State." McFaul's World. 12/6/2024. michaelmcfaul.substack.com/p/americans-do-not-want-or-need-a-revolution

Third, and most importantly, the United States today cannot afford to wage a civil war against alleged enemies from within. We have real national security threats to address from abroad, including, first and foremost, China, but also Russia, Iran, and North Korea. Launching a four-year revolutionary assault on our national security institutions, such as the Pentagon and the CIA, is exactly what our adversaries want. We will be distracted. We will become weaker. There could not be a greater gift to Beijing or Moscow.

## Alt Fails

### Aff Key to Alt---1AC

#### That cements a culture of solidarity AND generates momentum for ulterior progressive organizing.

Shaun Richman 20. Organizing director at the American Federation of Teachers, Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of East Anglia, M.S. in labor studies from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. "Bringing Back the Strike." *Tell the bosses we're coming: a new action plan for workers in the twenty-first century*, ch. 6.

Cultures of Solidarity

We need to restore cultures of solidarity in working-class communities. Nothing accomplishes that quite like living through an intense period of putting your livelihood, dignity, and self-respect on the line and needing the support and protections of your friends and coworkers, knowing that they need the same of you.

Strikes do that. The Chicago teachers I know still feel a residual sense of accomplishment and pride in that 2012 strike. They have more-than-skin-deep loyalty to their co-workers. They are much more likely to join another union or community group’s rally or picket line.

Union organizing campaigns—well-run ones, at least, with empowered rank-and-file organizing committees—similarly foster a culture of solidarity. The charter school teachers I keep in touch with also still keep in touch with their fellow OC members. Everybody might have switched schools two or three times, but they’ll always remain brothers and sisters, quick to offer supportive words if not money, time, and muscle if an old comrade is in distress.

I’m not a sociologist, but I’ve got a theory about the culture of solidarity that the “Greatest Generation” built up, and how successive generations of union leaders and organizers coasted on an era of good feelings that they did not earn or successfully reproduce. The strike waves of the 1930s and the immediate postwar years meant that millions of workers experienced the kind of intense period of mutual aid and self-defense that fosters solidarity. It helps that most of those strikes were successful in materially raising workers’ wages and standard of living. It’s also worth noting that those strike waves bookended a war that put millions of workers into literal life-and-death situations where they depended on their comrades having their backs.

What developed was a culture of solidarity in which it was generally accepted that you just don’t cross a picket line or buy a scab product. It’s a culture that understands that poverty and want are threats to those of us who have. It’s an environment where people cheer on workers fighting and striking for a new benefit or right, hoping that their example can help everyone win it everywhere. It’s the kind of political culture in which massive new welfare programs like Medicare and Medicaid could be instituted.

The opposite of a culture of solidarity is one where workers can be goaded into slashing the social safety net to lower taxes. Or where minimally decent public employee pensions are vulnerable to scape-goating political attacks like, “You don’t have that; why should they?”

Millions of baby boomers were raised by their parents to not cross a picket line or buy scab products. Of those baby boomers, many wound up in non-union jobs and non-union industries, as union growth was artificially closed by the trap of our system. Though many others did wind up in factory jobs or government employment, a far smaller proportion of them lived through the kind of life-altering organizing campaigns and strikes that their parents did.

Still, many of those baby boomers imparted the “don’t scab” lesson to their kids, either drawing from their own experiences or those of their parents. And so on and so forth, and in this way, the Greatest Generation’s culture of solidarity became faded like a Xerox of a Xerox of a Xerox. People gave it lip service, but if it wasn’t a lived experience, it became a platitude too often dropped at the first sign of adversity.

I can’t recall how many organizers I’ve seen strike out in an organizing conversation, digging for a change that a worker wanted to make at work through a union, only to lean on the intellectually lazy one-two combo of “Do it for your co-workers” (which is charity, not solidarity) and “The union was good for your family, so why not for you?” (which is nostalgia for a thing you didn’t personally experience).

I think some union leaders have come to see this problem, albeit very late in the game. If we’re going to revive a culture of solidarity, we’re going to need more worker-led job actions. The unions, of course, have a role to play. I have more to say on that below. But, first, let’s grapple with what the proper role of the political left is.

First of all, it’s completely amazing and a potential game-changer that we even have a left to speak of. Tens of thousands—and I have no reason to doubt it will soon be hundreds of thousands—of people have embraced some version of the socialist project in the wake of the dispiriting Clinton campaign and the horrific Trump administration.

One of the most urgent needs is some basic trade union education so that new socialists don’t, as Bill Fletcher Jr. says, “treat the labor movement as a panacea or as some sort of hideous creature.”98 This requires studying the history of both labor and the left, as well as the law. Leftists must have a structural critique of the labor relations system in addition to their complaints about union strategy and politics as they weigh their own role as organizers.

I’ve seen some talk online of a rank-and-file strategy, which is certainly well intentioned. I do think it’s a mistake for leftists to seek out careers as union staffers. Although I would also argue that a year or two as a union organizer, if you are young and footloose, can provide a valuable education.

In general, our place is where the workers are. However, as much as I’ve seen proponents advocate for a variety of rank-and-file approaches to organizing, what seems to translate most clearly and embraced most eagerly is the idea of taking a union-represented job and getting involved in the union with an eye toward contesting for power. I think this might be a waste of our opportunity. It’s another example of how many in the labor left have become the new traditionalists, just instinctively following the same formulas that have been tried and failed for the last forty or fifty years. Finally, thinking of Stanley Aronowitz’s personal account of his experience in Death and Life of American Labor, any leftists who did manage to take the reins of leadership would find themselves just as trapped by the system as everyone who has come before.99

I find a bit more promise in the work that some smart activists in the extant Industrial Workers of the World are doing. Within that would-be historical society, there are also some thoughtful comrades who spin off new organizing projects—like Brandworkers, the Burgerville Union, and the Jimmy Johns union—and support the workers in organizing something new while experimenting with protest tactics like quickie strikes and innovative boycotts.

If class-conscious left-wing activists intentionally took jobs in industries and at companies that are politically essential to be organized, but that no union is currently focused on—much as the Trade Union Education League (TUEL) activists of the 1920s “salted” the auto and steel industries—well, we might have the start of something.

With no union treasury to be sued and no clearly identified “leaders” to pin the blame on, cells of activists would have a much freer hand to get creative in their organizing and protest planning. Perhaps the least intimidating way to go about organizing at Amazon or within Google is to think small. Taking on the entire company all at once is too daunting a task, though we obviously have to get there. But what about your immediate co-workers in your department, your unit or team, or your building? What are small protests you can take to win the issue of the day, whatever the issue of the day is, be it bathroom breaks or building a database of faces for law enforcement?100

#### Multi-unionism is the only way to channel worker militancy into broader organizing.

Shaun Richman 20. Organizing director at the American Federation of Teachers, Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of East Anglia, M.S. in labor studies from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. "Conclusion" *Tell the bosses we're coming: a new action plan for workers in the twenty-first century*, ch. 11.

Exclusive representation is one of those areas where we have the power to make change. Exclusive representation is always in management’s interests. Now, it might be in many—if not most—current unions’ interests as well. But think of what it gives management: peace. Now ask yourself: Do most bosses deserve peace?

Exclusive representation forces unions to mediate innumerable workplace disputes in order to curate a smaller, prioritized list of changes that workers would like to see.

Exclusive representation allows an employer to settle the items on the whittled-down list of demands and let them stay settled for years. They remain settled because every worker is bound to the terms of a no-strike clause that is only enforceable through the principle of exclusive representation. And, ultimately, most employers don’t have to deal with any union at all because of the rigged rules of NLRB certification elections—elections that are only necessary if a union is seeking to be the exclusive representative of all the workers in a bargaining unit.

Our movement needs some leftist experimentation with minority unionism, be it in new organizing campaigns or in breakaway rebellions within legacy bargaining units. And, thankfully, we finally have a left that is worth speaking of! That, in and of itself, was the other major impetus I had for writing this book.

I became a teenage socialist in the 1990s, when a couple hundred younger workers joining left organizations was considered a B.F.D. Today, that many join the movement every couple of days. For the first time in forever, we have a socialist left in the United States that is growing, dynamic, and contains the potential to change the world for the better.

The last thing that these new comrades should do is surrender to the “it is what it is” way of thinking about unions and the labor movement. I don’t only mean following the rigged rules of the “official” NLRB-sanctioned labor relations system or succumbing to “business unionism” as usual. I’m also worried about too many of us following old formulas of salting traditionally organized industries, waging opposition caucus fights within the too-few surviving unions, or simply following the best practices (as they are currently known) of comprehensive strategic campaigns driven by union staff. All of that has its role, but none of it adds up to the complete solution to the labor movement’s woes.

The opportunity of the moment calls for activists to take (or remain in) jobs in the unorganized industries and to experiment with new (or abandoned) forms of worker protest, like sabotage and quickie strikes. The opportunity of the moment calls for bolder demands for workers’ rights and workplace governance. The opportunity of the moment demands a program of popular education to get the working-class majority to see that our power is rooted in the work we do and our occasional refusal to do it.

### Aff Key to Alt---2AC

#### Sellout unions derail the transition.

Shannon Jones 25. Journalist. "As the class struggle escalated, US union membership fell once again in 2024." World Socialist Web Site. 1-31-2025. wsws.org/en/articles/2025/01/31/btoc-j31.html

The fact that this upsurge in militancy has not produced any growth in union membership speaks volumes about the reactionary, pro-corporate character of the American trade union bureaucracy. As the World Socialist Web Site has documented, the upsurge of strike struggles has increasingly collided with the direct sabotage of the right wing trade union apparatus, which has sought to either block strikes, or where that is not possible, betray them and shut them down as quickly as possible.

For the US ruling class, the unions are seen as a critical asset as it prepares for global war. The Biden administration called the trade unions his “domestic NATO” and utilized their services in suppressing the class struggle to further the war drive against Russia and China.

Trump’s ascension to power was openly supported by Teamsters President Sean O’Brien, who was a guest at his inauguration, while International Longshore Association President Harold Daggett praised the fascist president as a hero of the working class after he blocked a renewed strike by dockworkers. UAW President Shawn Fain dropped his denunciations of Trump as a “scab” and quickly announced his willingness to work with his government of oligarchs and Nazi admirers. The rabid America First nationalism and anti-foreigner chauvinism long promoted by the union bureaucracies dovetails seamlessly with the Trump administration’s drive to split the working class through mass immigrant deportations.

The complete prostration of the bureaucracy in the face of the anti-immigrant terror was expressed by American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten, who wrote a sniveling letter to Trump, saying, “We agree that our immigration system is broken and badly in need of reform…” and “respectfully” asking him to reinstate protections for schools.

Meanwhile, the number of workers wishing to join unions, in an effort to improve their wages and working conditions, has risen sharply as well. National Labor Relations Board data shows filings for union election petitions increased by 27 percent between fiscal 2023 and 2024. The NLRB reports that filings for new union elections have more than doubled since 2021.

At every point this elemental desire to wage a collective struggle against the employers comes up against the hard fact that the union apparatus is only interested in collecting dues money, not waging any fight to better workers’ lives and certainly not organizing any actions that might impinge on corporate profits.

Take the case of the Amazon Labor Union at the JFK8 warehouse in Staten Island, New York. After winning a union election based on the claim of being an independent union, the ALU fell quickly into the embrace of the Biden administration and the big business Democratic Party and the Teamsters. Although delivery drivers took part in a powerful strike at the end of the year, which coincided with the struggle by Starbucks workers, the Teamsters bureaucracy did nothing to extend the strike into the warehouses, including JFK8.

The much touted unionization drive by the United Auto Workers bureaucracy fizzled out at the first serious management opposition. In May 2024, workers at the Mercedes Benz plant in Vance, Alabama voted by a 56 percent margin against representation by the UAW. The failure exposed the union drive as a top down effort, without serious rank-and-file engagement.

Far from raising any serious demands to improve wages and workplace conditions the UAW sought to tamp down expectations in order not to alienate their “partners” in management. When Mercedes pushed back against unionization, the whole effort by the UAW collapsed ignominiously

That workers voted against the UAW is hardly surprising given the UAW’s record of imposing sellout contracts on workers at the Detroit Three automakers. Despite claims of “union reform,” UAW President Fain and the rest of the union bureaucracy sold out the 2023 contract struggle using a phony “Stand Up” strike to wear down worker resistance. The final contract contained below inflation pay increases and maintained the hated tier structure and the widespread use of temporary workers. Following contact ratification, the auto companies carried out the mass firing of temp workers, who had been falsely promised promotion to full time jobs by the UAW, and thousands of other job cuts.

At the one factory where the UAW did win a union representation election, the Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, Tennessee, it had tacit management support. Since starting negotiations for a first contract on September 19, the UAW has still not reach a deal and no strike deadline has been set. Few details have been released. Reports indicate the UAW is asking for a mere 14 percent pay increase over four years along with profit sharing. This would leave VW workers far behind cost-of-living rises and even behind their UAW counterparts in Detroit.

The collapse of the official trade unions is a global trend, indicating that it is not just reflective of conditions specific to the United States, but of broader tendencies rooted in the structure of world capitalism. Everywhere, the response of the trade union bureaucracies to the globalization of production has been to establish corporatist relations, where the unions are deeply embedded into the structure of corporate management and the state.

**8. The military, police, and 2nd amendment fans zero the alt.**

Eric Levitz 23. Former visiting lecturer at Johns Hopkins University, Associate editor of the Daily Intelligencer, master's degree from Johns Hopkins University. "Blaming 'Capitalism' Is Not an Alternative to Solving Problems." Intelligencer. 4/10/2023. nymag.com/intelligencer/2023/04/blaming-capitalism-is-not-an-alternative-to-solving-problems.html

The United States is not trembling on the precipice of a communist revolution.

Uncle Sam commands the most powerful military in human history, and its rank-and-file exhibit few socialistic sympathies; U.S. precincts with military bases backed Donald Trump in both 2016 and 2020. America’s civilian security forces — which is to say its roughly 665,000 police officers — are even more hostile to the left than the troops. Our nation’s most heavily armed private citizens, meanwhile, would by and large prefer a Hobbesian war of all against all to a Marxist government. Should America’s constitutional order ever give way to an extralegal power struggle, an overwhelming force of arms will be arrayed against the radical left.

If those contras would have superior firepower, they would also (almost certainly) have more popular support. Some 73 percent of U.S. voters identify as moderates or conservatives. There is some ambiguity about what voters mean when they choose such labels. But it seems safe to say that very few self-identified moderates intend to convey their support for a revolution to establish market socialism, but not anarcho-communism.

In fact, the U.S. electorate evinces a strong bias toward the status quo. When federal policy moves left on a given issue, public opinion tends to move right in response, and vice versa. Support for universal health care hit a modern low after the passage of the Affordable Care Act, while support for abortion rights hit an all-time high after the overturning of Roe v. Wade.

### Worker Control Fails---1AC

#### The employment relationship is key. Bosslessness dooms productivity.

Jackson Nickerson 22. Professor of business at Saint Louis University, Ph.D. in business and public policy from the University of California, Berkeley, Haas School of Business. "A comment on why managers matter: the perils of the bossless company." *Journal of Organization Design*, 12(1), 28-29.

The book’s second half explores when, why, and how managers and hierarchy work to create value, even in networked and knowledge-based organizations. Foss and Klein draw on academic titans like Max Weber, Chester Barnard, Ronald Coase, Alfred Chandler, Herbert Simon, and Oliver Williamson to unpack what is really going on here. Collectively, the accumulated science of organization developed by these academics and others illuminate that much of the benefit of hierarchy—and, hence, managers—comes from its ability to facilitate coordination and cooperation.

To explain this benefit, Foss and Klein draw attention to two factors about competition in our modern economy. First, knowledge is a key competitive resource. Second, innovation is a central feature of this competition. Combined, the authors claim that these factors create “strong elements of surprise and firms must be quick to react in the face of major, potentially disruptive changes” (p. 136). Here, I emphasize a third and additional factor, which is more about how value is created in modern organizations than about competition: people, tasks, and processes are often highly interdependent or tightly coupled. This tight coupling implies that adaptation (reactions in response to a surprise) is needed at the person, task, or process level, then many other adaptations throughout the organization also need to be made, generating high demand for coordination and cooperation to facilitate these changes. These three factors are so important to understanding the rest of the book and I introduce an extended example to illustrate them.

Consider an organization comprising two people working together diligently on a project in which all tasks are tightly coupled. Assume that the tasks and process are wellplanned, and each person’s time is fully allocated. These workers are coordinated (they have a plan and process that lists, sequences, and allocates all tasks that each must complete) and collaborative (they have good working relations and are primarily committed to the joint goal of finishing the project on time).

Now assume that one worker discovers that one of their tasks will take longer than planned, and that heretofore unplanned tasks are needed to complete the project. Or consider a customer now wants additional unplanned features in the project, or another urgent project comes along demanding time and attention. Call these unanticipated situations “disturbances” or “mini-shocks” to the worker. Not only must the worker create a new plan of tasks and process but also the other worker will be affected by the new plan and therefore needs to do the same if the project is going to be completed efficiently. With tight coupling of tasks, a disturbance in one job creates ripples that affect other jobs requiring coordination and collaboration from both workers. The ex post (after the disturbance) time, effort, and opportunity costs of replanning of people, tasks, and process can be thought of as governance costs. In my view, managers matter because under many conditions they minimize these governance costs which would be substantially larger without them. Let’s explore these governance costs further.

Suppose these two workers are organized as a flat and bossless organizational structure. In such a case, a disturbance will require them to explore all the unplanned adaptations needed and negotiate and plan a revised set and allocation of tasks and process between them. The workers are likely to adapt effectively to this unplanned work with relatively low governance costs if they have the same goals, display an ability to effectively communicate with each other, and possess sufficient cognitive abilities and training to identify challenges and plan, sequence, and negotiate task and process allocation. This replanning of unplanned work implies substantial governance costs even when the illuminated conditions exist.

If, instead, the workers have different goals, have poor communication skills, use differing terminology, or cognitively view the situation differently, then conflict may obtain greatly increasing the governance costs of adaptation. How can these governance costs be reduced? A manager imbued with decision rights and conflict-resolution, problem-solving, and leadership skills could quickly resolve this conflict or perform all the replanning themselves to improve the effectiveness of adaptation so long as proposed adaptations are accepted by the workers. In essence, employing a manager could reduce governance costs compared to the flat, bossless structure, which could result in the organization to be far more adaptive to disturbances.

To embellish the example, now assume that the disturbance and needed ex post adaptation involves ten tightly coupled workers. A disturbance sparks the need for unplanned work that requires replanning of the allocation of tasks and process for all coupled workers. Anyone who has worked with a large group intimately understands that to develop a new list of tasks and their allocation along with a revised process in a ten-way negotiation is very difficult and costly. In some cases, replanning is practically impossible because of conflict among workers, which causes governance costs to soar in such situations. This conflict over replanning is more likely when (1) the tasks are complex, complicated, and coupled (lots of mutual adjustments among the ten workers are needed to adapt efficiently to a disturbance); (2) workers are boundedly rational and have different ideas on how to respond to the disturbance creating a source of conflict; and (3) at least some workers might be opportunistic in the sense that they could strategically use this replanning to pursue their own goals like getting out of tasks they do not want to do or capturing tasks they do want to do. These three attributes of the work environment make overcoming conflict a substantial challenge. Furthermore, the more frequently unanticipated disturbances arise, the greater can be cumulative governance costs. Therefore, as these attributes of the work increase, so too does the likelihood of maladaptation and excessive costs if the organization is flat and bossless. Management clearly matters and is organizational and economically valuable in such situations.

My extended example provides the foundation for the second half of the book which explores the conditions for which hierarchy is superior to bossless organizational structures for adapting to disturbances. Foss and Klein offer several questions that resonate with my example and respond with penetrating insights about when, why, and how leadership, authority, and hierarchy are useful.

Question: Why organize workers in a firm at all, especially when firms are criticized for accumulating too much power and for being a source of inequality, financial crises, environmental unsustainability, social disintegration, political and international conflict, and workplace disempowerment? Answer: Management, executive authority, and hierarchy facilitate efficacious adaption to the dilemmas and challenges of integrating complex activities and getting people with different motivations and interests to cooperate, especially when disturbances are common. Without these adaptations, the value created through products and services would be far more expensive if available at all.

#### Worker control sucks.

Nicolai Foss & Peter Klein 22. Professor at Copenhagen Business School, Ph.D. in management from Copenhagen Business School. Professor of business at Baylor University, Ph.D. in economics from the University of California, Berkeley. "Greater autonomy and responsibility may aggravate (not cure!) quiet quitting." London School of Economics. 11-10-2022. blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2022/11/10/greater-autonomy-and-responsibility-may-aggravate-not-cure-quiet-quitting-1

We think this advice is misplaced. While autonomy, empowerment, and responsibility sound good in theory, putting them into practice may be difficult. Some jobs require closer supervision and more centralised control. Job rotation and professional development problems are costly, at least in the short run. At a more basic level, this advice makes the wrong assumption about what many workers want. Greater worker autonomy, empowerment, and responsibility as a cure for quiet quitting may be worse than the disease.

The conventional wisdom about quiet quitting has been influenced by a genre of business books promoting the idea that “everyone should be a boss.” For more than a decade we have been told by legions of consultants, professors, and gurus that flattening the hierarchy, getting rid of middle managers (or even all managers!), and empowering workers to make their own decisions or form self-organising teams will unleash creativity and productivity.

If you think this sounds hokey, we agree. But listen to the pundits: “It’s time to start reimagining management,” wrote management guru Tim Kastelle. “Making everyone a chief is a good place to start.” Books like Humanocracy by Gary Hamel and Michele Zanini urge us to replace the traditional managerial hierarchy with leaner, flatter, more organic, and “humanistic” models that place empowered workers, not managers, at the center.

From this perspective, quiet quitting happens because companies aren’t meeting the expectations of millennial and Gen Z professionals concerning autonomy, influence on their jobs, and self-development. But quiet quitting may also be a protest against overinvolvement, a reaction to jobs that consume too much time because they call for constant initiative, engagement, and development—problems aggravated by a lack of attention and guidance from managers.

What do workers want? A recent US poll on employee satisfaction revealed compensation and work-life balance, not empowerment and fulfillment, as the top concerns. Research shows that a boss’s capabilities—particularly her technical competence—is a strong predictor of worker well-being. A large literature on the “psychological contract” between bosses and workers suggests that violations of this contract, as when bosses change the rules and fail to meet obligations, reduces trust and leads to employee turnover. Communicating clear and consistent expectations, and following through, is key to worker satisfaction. Research also finds that empowerment can reduce employee productivity, particularly for workers who carry out routine tasks and when workers don’t trust managers.

A good job provides not only a steady paycheck, but also a secure and reasonably predictable work environment, clear communication, and consistent and reliable leadership. Workers want bosses who are competent and confident and who are effective mentors and role models; they don’t want “less bossing.” Ironically, and at odds with conventional guru wisdom, there’s little evidence that workers want the pressure of constantly demonstrating initiative, engagement, and responsibility. Younger workers, in particular, are more mobile than previous generations and less sentimental about where they work. At the same time, routine tasks are increasingly automated, and jobs are more cognitively demanding, requiring more multitasking and relational work. Cutting back on sound managerial guidance just adds to the burden.

In this sense, the traditional managerial hierarchy plays an important, underappreciated role, in our knowledge-based, networked, high-tech economy. Managers need to exercise authority smartly—not only by setting expectations and evaluating results without micromanaging but also by designing tasks, bundling tasks into jobs, and figuring how tasks and jobs interact. This includes finding the right people for the right job, giving them the discretion they need, and learning how to supervise them without becoming overintrusive—something that flatter structures, ironically, tend to encourage as they eliminate middle managers who serve as an essential buffer between top-level decision-makers and those with day-to-day responsibility.

Management is difficult. Deciding what to do when something out of the routine happens requires insight, experience and the ability to lead. Not everyone can do it. And the need for people to exercise management capability hasn’t diminished—quite the contrary! In the light of the massive disruption the world has suffered over the last few years, management and hierarchy has become more, not less, important. Ideas on flattening hierarchies, bossless companies, and worker empowerment distribute this responsibility across all employees. But not everyone wants it.

Consider Zappos, the online shoe retailer founded by the late Tony Hsieh, the charismatic entrepreneur and champion of “Holacracy,” a system of worker-self management designed to encourage the spontaneous formation of teams and groups operating without central supervision. Holacracy encourages workers to take responsibility, exercise judgment, and design their own work systems and structures Sounds great, doesn’t it?

Zappos introduced Holacracy in 2013 but immediately ran into problems. Many employees got frustrated with the implementation. Hsieh thought that some employees simply didn’t fit with the novel approach and offered cash bonuses for workers to move on. Surprisingly, nearly 20% of employees took the offer, including almost 40% of the tech department. Quietly, Zappos moved back to a more traditional, hierarchical model.

An earlier example that we have studied is the Danish hearing-aid company Oticon, famous for introducing a highly decentralised model known as the “spaghetti organisation,” which was a bottom-up model in which employees could propose, run and implement new projects. Project leaders were tasked with negotiating salaries. The organisation only had two layers, namely projects and a management team. It was supposed to run like a market economy, building on principles of entrepreneurship, ownership, and self-organisation.

However, five years after the introduction of the spaghetti organisation, employees had come to want the good kind of hierarchy back. They wanted stability, predictability, and fair processes, even if these came at the expense of autonomy and spontaneity. So, something more like the traditional layered hierarchy was restored.

All this casts doubt on the talking points of the bossless company narrative and its constant emphasis on empowerment and expectations of worker initiative and engagement beyond the norm. These ideas may work for a few companies such as Gore, Morning Star, Valve, and Haier which have famously flat structures. But they aren’t for everyone. Quiet quitting may be some workers’ way of saying they prefer the safety and comfort of a more “traditional” job within a conventional managerial hierarchy.

## Permutation

### Solves---2AC

#### Either the perm shields or the alt can’t overcome the status quo.

Hamilton Nolan 23. Class warrior. "Having Power vs Spreading Power." How Things Work. 7/6/2023. hamiltonnolan.com/p/having-power-vs-spreading-power

The very epicenter of this view is democratic socialism, which has as its broad goal both economic and political fairness. In America, democratic socialism, in a variety of flavors, is the heart of the left, even though it remains a marginal (but growing) force in electoral politics. Consider, though, the political dynamic that this sets up: On one side is the left saying “We want to spread power,” and on the other side is the gargantuan establishment mass of capital and entrenched hierarchies that I will refer to as “the right” for simplicity’s sake, saying “We want to take power.” In a real world race between these two views, the left starts out with a fairly meaningful disadvantage. This is one reason why the left has, historically, gotten its ass kicked in America more often than not. And the difficulty of clinging to the principled belief of reforming the system of power—rather than just getting and using power—is one reason why the left spends so much time tripping over its own shoes.

I thought about all of this yesterday, when I saw that the Boston chapter of DSA is trying to formally expel Mike Connolly, a DSA-aligned Massachusetts state representative, from the party. Connolly says that a group of purists who were recently elected as leaders of the local chapter are trying to purge him for some minor political differences, which pale in comparison to his years of work on a variety of leftist issues. I am not well-versed on internal Boston DSA politics, and I am not taking a side in this dispute—I would rather drink poison than get involved in local DSA arguments! Do not send me any strident, jargon-filled emails! But regardless of the specifics, many will recognize this as an example of the inward-looking factionalism that has always dogged the left, the very same stuff that my parents experienced as the feel-good movements of the 1960s turned on themselves in the 1970s, and collapsed. The left certainly does not have a monopoly on bitter factionalism, but our struggles on that front tend to be uniquely annoying. Those who pursue naked power for the sake of greed have no qualms about knifing their internal enemies, whereas on the left we have to really sweat to justify it as an ideological necessity.

Every vision for the flowering of democratic socialism runs through mass movements. We want to create, or at least to nurture and participate in and prolong and encourage, mass movements, which have the power to sweep away entrenched establishments that are set up to oppress. Mass movements, however, have two important characteristics that clash with many people’s fantasies about them: 1) They cannot be controlled by you, and 2) They will inevitably be full of many people who disagree with you. Leftists often talk about “building” mass movements, but in reality, the biggest social movements—the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, the Occupy movement, the BLM uprisings—happen with a large degree of spontaneity. They arise at unpredictable times, due to a million unpredictable factors. The best that we can really hope to do is to be well positioned to help them flourish when they pop up, and try to harness and channel their power to give some permanence to their goals, even when the millions of people who filled the streets have gotten tired and gone home. Mass movements allow us, at rare times, to take big steps towards systemic reform, rather than the slow and painful back-and-forth grind of normal political struggle. They are extremely valuable. But they are not under our control.

To the extent that the left wants to encourage and harness mass movements, it will have to deal with many, many people who do not think of themselves as being on the left, and who would never dream of going to a DSA meeting, and who hold all manner of opinions that are not up to our own stringent ideological standards. The best example of a real institutionalized mass movement is not the province of any political faction at all. It’s the labor movement. Yes, the labor movement as it currently exists in America is beaten down and sapped of much of its vitality and broken in many ways, but structurally it is the closest thing to what the left really needs. It is a group of tens of millions of people who are all (very broadly speaking) united in the struggle for economic and political power to be yanked away from the elite few and spread towards the many workers, in a (very broadly speaking) democratic fashion. It is made up of permanent institutions (unions) that will exist and keep working through good times and bad. And, crucially, it is made up of all types of people, who have come together not out of some common ideological purity, but out of a commitment to a common good that will benefit them, as working people. The labor movement, especially if we can get it to organize many more people, has the potential to be a true, permanent mass movement, because it can transform individual self-interest into nationwide democratic socialist reform

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It will always be seductive to imagine that we, who know what is right and wrong, can wield power like enlightened dictators, crushing our opposition in the spirit of the common good until the perfectly fair system can be built, at which time we will gracefully step back and grant power to the people, with a humble smile. This has been tried many times in many places. It rarely seems to progress past the dictatorship stage. I think it perfectly defensible and very human to throw up your hands and say “The system is too fucked up and too hard to change right now. So I’m going to work within the system to try to get power to do things that are good. If systemic change comes, great. Until then, I’m going to do power politics, on behalf of my own side.” This is, in fact, where most highly ideological people end up if they stay in the political arena. But there is a special place in heaven reserved for those who can maintain their commitment to the thankless task of spreading power, rather than just wielding it. To take a group of formerly powerless people and put power in their hands—by giving them a union, or helping them organize an effective political group, or giving them entree into the leadership of an existing democratic institution—that is the work that will truly change the world, in the long run. In the short run, it may really suck. When you give people power, they do the things that they want to do, rather than what you want them to do. Sometimes the things they want to do are dumb, or selfish, or just not as righteous as the things that you want to do, which are, by definition, the correct things. A commitment to widening the circle of power in society means being able to tolerate the sometimes excruciating consequences of giving power to other people. It is the act of letting your pet bird fly free and hoping that it comes back because it loves you. And if it doesn’t, trusting that it will be better off without you.

Unions are, in their day to day operation, a sort of institutionalized argument. They are full of jerks and idiots who disagree with your brilliant positions! Yet, over time and in aggregate, they act democratically to push society in a beneficial direction. This is the substance of real democratic socialism in action. It’s a real pain in the ass. But it works. Just remember, when you start clamoring for Power to The People, that The People are going to have their own ideas about how that power should be used.

### AT: Severance---2AC

#### 2. Permutation: do the counterplan.

Lewis S. Eisen 20. Policy drafting expert at Perfect Policies, L.L.M. from the University of Toronto, B.A. in linguistics from the University of Toronto. "Antiquated Policy Wording: Part 4 -- The Problem with "Should." Arma Magazine. 4/26/2020. magazine.arma.org/2020/04/antiquated-policy-wording-part-4-the-problem-with-should

In traditional policy wording, writers use “should” to indicate a strong recommendation.

Consider the sentence:

Employees should stay home when they are sick.

It could be recast as:

It is strongly recommended that employees stay home when they are sick.

The practical problem with “should” is that it turns the statement into a piece of advice rather than a rule.

We talked in the previous parts about the need for clarity. One of our goals in creating rules is to draw a line in the sand that clearly lets people know when they are on- or off-side. But we can never be off-side with a “should” statement.

I’m sick. If I stay home, I’m complying with the policy. If I come to work, I’m still complying with the policy, since it doesn’t require me to stay home. In other words, no matter what I do, I am complying with the policy.

### Definitions---1AR

#### ‘CBR’ doesn’t require employment.

Alan Bogg 25. Professor of labor law at the University of Bristol. "Platform Work and Freedom of Association: Employment Relationship Is Not a Necessary Threshold for Collective Bargaining Rights in the ILO." Brill. 10-27-2025. brill.com/view/journals/ilrc/11/3/article-p296\_003.xml

Analysis

In an important decision, the CFA found that law and practice on the collective bargaining rights of the self-employed as applied in Deliveroo was not consistent with ILO standards. In so doing, it reaffirmed several fundamental principles.

The first was that an employment relationship is not a necessary threshold for collective bargaining rights under ILO standards. The litigation in Deliveroo had focused on the employment relationship because it has been treated as a threshold for trade union rights under Article 11. The CFA recalled its long-standing position that there is a wider basis for entitlement:

The Committee wishes to recall that it has considered that the existence of an employment relationship should not be a requirement for the right to enjoy freedom of association rights. In this respect, it considered that by virtue of the principles of freedom of association, all workers—with the sole exception of members of the armed forces and the police—should have the right to establish and join organizations of their own choosing.

#### Rights aren’t absolute.

William Conely 12. Judge on the District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin. Wis. Educ. Ass'n Council v. Walker, 824 F. Supp. 2d 856. 2012. Lexis

Defendants criticize plaintiffs' use of the term "rights" as in the phrase "collective bargaining rights," implying that plaintiffs' use is intended to suggest an inalienable, or at least constitutional, right to collectively bargain. (Defs.' Br. in Supp. of Mot. for J. on Pleadings (dkt. #76) 7.) At least in a legal context, however, the term "rights" need not be so fundamental. Thus, courts [\*\*19] often refer to rights derived from other sources. See, e.g., Alabama v. North Carolina, 130 S. Ct. 2295, 2316, 176 L. Ed. 2d 1070 (2010) (describing "statutory and contractual rights"). Since collective bargaining rights for state and local public employees are a creature of state statute, a fact that neither plaintiffs nor defendants dispute, defendants' criticism is, at best, a linguistic red herring.

#### ‘Strengthen[ing] CBR’ includes the creation of new frameworks.

Kota Kitagawa & Arata Uemura 13. M.A. Candidate at Kyoto University. J.D. Candidate at Kyoto University. “General statutory minimum wage debate in Germany: Degrees of political intervention in collective bargaining autonomy.” *The Kyoto Economic Review*, Vol. 82, No. 1/2, pp. 59-91. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24898512

Moreover, outside the focus of this article—namely, the process of con flict and compromise, until the 2013 coalitional agreement—the legislative bill containing general minimum-wage law was considered an act that would "strengthen the collective bargaining autonomy." Concrete definitions of the term "strengthen" mainly connote the creation of a framework of collective bargaining that would set the general minimum wage and abolish the requirement of "50%" of AVE in TVG.15 In this act that would strengthen collective bargaining autonomy, the state should not be seen as a "decision-making entity" that would prejudice autonomy (Yamamoto, 2014, p. 37),36 but rather a "capacitating framework" that would enable employers and employees to revamp a loose-bottomed system of industrial relations. Therefore, we consider the act a revamped legal foundation with respect to autonomy.

#### ‘Rights’ agrees.

John D. Inazu 14. Associate Professor of Law and Political Science, Washington University. “More Is More: Strengthening Free Exercise, Speech, and Association.” https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1622&context=law\_scholarship

Expanding the coverage of the right of association would also make the doctrinal test clearer and less subject to manipulation. The current intimacy and expressiveness determinations introduce countless subjective and ideologically charged judgments—the kinds of inquiries most suspect under the First Amendment.26 Rights expansion might lead to greater public confidence in the right of association. Or, at the very least, there is nothing to suggest that rights expansion is the wrong approach to strengthening that right.

## Sustainability

### Democracy Solves---2AC

#### Unions provide workers experience with democratic structures AND democratizes the “broader political economy” through activism. That’s Vazquez.

<For Reference>

While large labor organizations may be necessary to countervail the enormous concentrations of private capital, the reality is that, notwithstanding significant efforts in recent years to expand their participatory outreach, today’s union remain plagued by democratic deficiencies. Research suggests that national unions, while “firmly democratic,” exhibit tendencies of oligarchies or autocracies. Barely a handful of the largest unions use a direct voting system, and it is not uncommon that top officer elections in many major unions are barely contested or uncontested. In fact, a challenger has not toppled an incumbent president in any of the largest unions in decades. While unions ‘ federated structure means that local affiliates are often more closely engaged with the membership than the national organization, there are indications that the dearth of democratic engagement at the highest levels has given rise to a disconnect between leaders and members — and working people more broadly. In 2016, for instance, while many members supported Bernie Sanders’ populist message, the executive boards of most major unions endorsed Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primary. And in the general election, a significant share of union members in crucial swing states sidestepped leaders’ endorsements and voted for Donald Trump. Labor leaders subsequently conceded they had misapprehended the depth of disillusion and frustration among their membership.

At bottom, the struggle for organized labor is a struggle for working people to control their lives; a struggle, in other words, for democracy. In embracing participatory democracy, unions enhance their capacity to democratize not only the workplace but the broader political economy.

#### Else, extinction.

Hadyn Belfield 23. Research Associate and Academic Project Manager at the University of Cambridge's Centre for the Study of Existential Risk. “Collapse, Recovery, and Existential Risk.” *How Worlds Collapse*, 74-76.

A world dominated by totalitarian states would be more incompetent, more war-prone, less cooperative, and more inhibitive of progress than one dominated by democratic states. Our current world is not particularly competent, peaceful, cooperative, or progressive—a totalitarian-dominated world would be worse. It would increase the risk of another collapse and extinction and could shape the future toward less desirable trajectories (Beckstead, 2013).

Totalitarian states are incompetent. They are bad at forecasting and dealing with disasters (Caplan, 2008).16 This can be seen most clearly in the great famines of Communist China and the USSR, in which millions died (Applebaum, 2017; Becker, 1996; Dikotter, 2010; Snyder, 2010). In comparison, functioning multiparty democracies rarely, if ever, experience famines (Sen, 2010). “Established autocracies” (or “personal”/“sultanist”) are particularly bad, as there are few checks or restraints on arbitrary rule and the whims and ideology of the single individual, even from other elites (Svolik, 2012). From the inside, the “inner circle” around Mao, Stalin, and Hitler seems incredibly chaotic, with elites strongly incentivized to conceal information and encouraged by the autocrat to squabble and feud—so they are divided (Conquest, 1992; Kershaw, 2008; Zhang & Halliday, 2006). If totalitarian states are worse at addressing social, environmental, and technological problems, then a world dominated by them would likely be worse at responding to risks of collapse and extinction.

A world dominated by totalitarian states is more likely to have major wars. States with near-universal adult suffrage rarely (if ever) go to war with one another (Barnhart et al., 2020), so a world dominated by democracies has fewer wars. Miscalculation might be a particular problem for totalitarian states due to personalization and disincentives for accurate information, leading to well-known strategic disasters such as Hitler and Stalin’s blunders in World War II (Bialer, 1970; Noakes & Pridham, 2001), or at a smaller level, Saddam Hussein’s rejection of diplomacy (Atkinson, 1993). War makes collapse and extinction more likely, by raising the chance of weapons of mass destruction being used.

Linked to this, totalitarian states are less cooperative than democratic states. While cooperation is possible (Ginsburg, 2020), their internal norms are characterized by paranoia and treachery, and their lack of transparency limits their ability to credibly commit to agreements. This is bad for all risks that require cooperation such as pandemics or climate change (Tomasik, 2015).

Finally, continued social and scientific progress is likely to reduce risks of collapse and extinction. Social progress could reduce global inequality and other risk factors. Scientific progress could help address natural risks and climate change (Sandberg, 2018), differentially increase defensive rather than offensive power (Garfinkel & Dafoe, 2019), and solve safety challenges in AI or biotechnology (Russell, 2019). However, as we will now discuss totalitarian states would likely inhibit social progress.

A central question from a longtermist perspective is: Which values should shape the future? I would argue that we should prefer it to be shaped by liberal democratic values. This is not to say that the current democracy-dominated world is perfect—far from it. The fate of billions of factory-farmed animals or hundreds of millions of people in extreme poverty makes that abundantly clear. However, democracies have two advantages. First, democracies have space for cosmopolitan values such as human rights, plurality, freedom, and equality. These are better than those that characterize life under totalitarianism: Fear, terror, subjection, and secrecy. Second, they have within themselves the mechanism to allow progress. In the last 100 (or even 50) years, the lives of women, LGBT people, religious minorities, and non-white people have dramatically improved. Our “moral circle” has expanded, and could continue to expand (Singer, 1981). The arc of the moral universe is long, but given the right conditions, it might just bend toward justice (King, 1968). A global society dominated by these values, and with the possibility of improving more, has a better longterm potential. A totalitarian-dominated world, on the other hand, would reduce the space for resistance and progress—distorting the human trajectory.

We should be particularly concerned about “bottlenecks” at which values are particularly important—where there is a risk of “locking-in” some particular set of (possibly far from optimal) values. While they are currently far-off, future technologies such as artificial general intelligence, space settlement, life extension (of autocrats), or much better surveillance could enable lock-in (Caplan, 2008).17

Conditional on them avoiding new catastrophes, world orders dominated by totalitarians could be quite long-lasting (Caplan, 2008). Democracies can undermine authoritarian and totalitarian regimes through the following ways: Control, including conquest; contagion through proximity; and consent, promoting receptivity toward democratization (Whitehead, 2001). Democracies can actively undermine these regimes through war, sanctions, hosting rebellious exiles, or sponsoring internal movements. Passively, through contagion, they offer a demonstration that a better, more prosperous life is possible. For example, in the final years of the USSR, ordinary Soviet citizens were able to see that the West had a higher standard of living—more innovation, more choice, and more consumer goods. The elites were able to read books from the outside, and travel—Gorbachev’s contacts and friendships with European politicians may have made him more favorable to social democracy (Brown, 1996). Democracies can undermine the will and capacity of the coercive apparatus (Bellin, 2004). However, in a world not dominated by democracies, all these pressures would be far less.

A world in which, say, totalitarian regimes emerged as dominant after World War II (for example if the USA was defeated) could be self-reinforcing and long-lasting, like the self-reinforcing relationship of Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia (Orwell, 1949). Orwell’s fictional world is characterized by constant low-grade warfare to justify emergency powers and secure elites, and with shifting alliances of convenience as states bandwagon and balance, thereby preventing any resolution. A totalitarian-dominated world order could be rather robust, perhaps for decades or even centuries.

A long-lasting totalitarian-dominated world would extend the period of time humanity would spend with a heightened risk of collapse or extinction, as well as increased potential for distortion of the human trajectory and the possibility that a “lock-in” event may occur. This example illustrates the possibility of a “negative recovery,” resulting in a trajectory with less or no scientific and social progress and a less favorable geopolitical situation, which would threaten the destruction of humanity’s longterm potential.

### Sustainability---2AC

#### Capitalism solves the environment AND disease, the alt doesn’t, and warming’s not existential.

David Friedman 25. Former professor of law at Santa Clara University, Ph.D. in theoretical physics from the University of Chicago. "Externalities, Population and Climate." Nuno Sempere. Reposted 10/21/2025. forum.nunosempere.com/posts/bzFpPwDnJHCe2BwJf/externalities-population-and-climate

All societies face the coordination problem: In order to do anything complicated you have to somehow get millions of people to coordinate their activities. To make automobiles you need steel. To make steel, you need iron and carbon. To make iron you need iron ore and coal.

There are two solutions and one of them doesn't work. The one that doesn't work is the obvious one, centralized coordination, somebody at the top telling everyone else what to do. That might work for a very small group of people, a football team or a small firm, but it scales badly. As the number of people being coordinated increases it becomes harder and harder for the person at the top to figure out what everyone should do, know what everyone is doing and make them do it, more and more likely that the person at the top, separated by many layers from the people he is supposed to be serving, will base his decisions on his interests rather than theirs. At the scale of a country it works catastrophically badly, as demonstrated by, among other things, the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The solution that works is the decentralized one. Everything belongs to someone. Each person decides what to do with himself and his stuff. People coordinate through the market, with prices signaling whether more or less of something should be produced. If there is not enough iron ore for the steel for the chain saws to cut down the trees to make the pencils and for everything else steel goes into, the price of iron ore goes up, giving miners an incentive to mine more, users an incentive to use less.

In order for this to work, to successfully coordinate people, things have to somehow be set up so that it is in each individual’s interest to make the right decision for his part of the problem, the decision that takes account of its effect on everyone else. That cannot be done perfectly but a market system can do it surprisingly well. In order to produce things I have to pay my workers enough so that working for me is at least as attractive as whatever else they could do with their time, pay for my inputs at least as much as they cost to produce or are worth to other people. Selling what I produce transfers the benefit of producing it back to me, so both costs and benefits go into my calculation of what to do. If benefit is greater than cost it is in my interest to do it and in our interest for it to be done. Individual decisions add up to the right group decision. And the decentralized solution scales — up to the size of a global economy.

**<Condensed>**

That is a very sketchy description of what takes a semester or two of price theory1 to fully explain. The mechanism works for voluntary transactions, since you won’t sell me your labor or your goods unless I pay at least what they are worth to you. It does not work for involuntary transactions. You are running a steel mill. To get iron ore, you have to pay someone enough to cover the cost of mining it. To turn it into steel, you have to pay workers enough so they are willing to work for you. Unfortunately, your mill also produces sulfur dioxide, making people who live downwind of you cough. Since that is a cost for them but not for you it gets left out of your calculation of how much steel to produce, how to produce it, what price to sell it for. You might find making steel profitable even if the total cost, including the cost born by downwind neighbors, was greater than the value of the steel to your customers. For other examples, consider a college student playing loud music when other students in the dorm want to sleep, an airplane rattling the windows of houses below the flight path as it comes in to land, someone with a cold — or Covid — going to a party. A sufficiently wise government might be able to fix the problem, get us back to a system where things are done if and only if they are worth doing, by appropriate regulations, but doing that is hard because it replaces the decentralized market system that scales with a centralized command system that doesn’t. Most of the time, for the minor externalities associated with many ordinary activities, it is not worth doing. For larger externalities it might be. Or might not — knowing what should be done is not always easy. Consider two issues that have gotten a lot of attention in my lifetime. Population Sixty years ago population growth played the same role in popular discourse that climate change does now, the impending catastrophe that, in the view of almost everyone who mattered, required drastic action to prevent. The Population Council, a private organization concerned with population issues, asked me to write a piece on population growth looking at the issue from the standpoint of someone generally in favor of the market system. The issue as I saw it was what externalities were associated with the decision to have a child, so I tried to estimate them. My examples so far have been negative externalities, costs produced by one person’s actions that someone else has to bear, but there are also positive externalities, benefits rather than costs. If a student in the dorm room next to mine plays music I like when I am trying to fall asleep that is a positive externality — I like to fall asleep to music. Basic research in medicine produces a positive externality in the form of knowledge of how to cure diseases. When I repaint my house I produce a positive externality for my neighbors, who get a better view out of their windows. If my action produces a negative externality I may do it even when, considering all costs and benefits, it is not worth doing. If it produces a positive externality I may fail to do it even when it is worth doing. What if the same action produces both positive and negative externalities? Your child may become a criminal and impose costs on my children. He may become a novelist or musician and produce works that my children enjoy. He will probably go to a public school, imposing costs on the taxpayers who pay for it, but after he graduates he will pay taxes for the school he is no longer going to, reducing the cost to other taxpayers. He will produce a wide variety of costs and benefits for other people. The conventional wisdom of the time looked only at the costs and concluded that we would be better off if everyone had fewer children. I tried to look at both costs and benefits, negative and positive externalities, and add them up. If costs were much larger than benefits, as most at the time believed, we would be better off with less population growth than would result from individuals freely choosing how many children to have, if benefits were larger than costs, with more. The first implies that governments should try to hold population growth down, perhaps by subsidizing birth control or giving tax benefits to childless couples or by making it illegal for any couple to have more than one child, as China did. The second implies the opposite. And if costs and benefits were roughly equal, making the net externality close to zero, there would be no reason for governments to interfere in either direction. I tried to list all of the externalities I could think of and make rough estimates of their size. My conclusion was that I could not sign the sum, that the estimates were too uncertain to know whether additional population was, on net, a good or bad thing. I published my paper in 1972 and I still don’t know. What I do know is that the conventional wisdom of the time was wrong, because it claimed not only that the net externality was negative but that it was large. The book The Population Bomb, published by Paul and Anne Ehrlich in 1968, confidently predicted unstoppable mass famine in the 1970’s, hundreds of millions of people starving to death due to overpopulation. It sold millions of copies. Not everyone agreed that things were that bad but almost everyone involved in the controversy agreed that population growth, if not greatly reduced, was going to be a major problem making poor countries poorer.2 Populations of poor countries continued to grow. Ehrlich’s famine did not happen. Calories per capita in poor countries went up, not down. Extreme poverty fell sharply. That does not prove the net externality was positive — perhaps we would have been even better off with less population growth. But the effect could not have been as negative as the expert opinion of the sixties and seventies claimed since what happened was the opposite of their predictions.

**<Breaks Return>**

And Climate

Climate change raises the same question. It too will have both positive and negative externalities. The question is again whether the net effect will be positive or negative and how large.

There are two approaches to answering that question. The first is to ask whether there are general reasons to expect climate change along the predicted lines, a gradual increase in average temperatures due mainly to increased CO2 in the atmosphere, to have net negative effects. The second is to look at specific externalities, make some rough estimate of their size, and add them up.

There is one a priori reason to expect net negative effects from change — that current human activity is optimized against current conditions, making change in either direction presumptively bad. Farmers grow crops suited to the climate where they are growing them; a change in climate will require a change in what they grow and how they grow it. Houses are designed for the climate they are built in and located in places not expected, under current circumstances, to flood. Putting it in economic terms, we have born sunk costs based on the current environment. A change in that environment will eliminate some of the quasi-rents that we expected as the return from those costs.

This would be a serious problem if we were facing rapid change, but we are not. Global warming so far has been a little over one degree C a century. If the IPCC projections are correct it is getting more rapid, perhaps several degrees over the next century — about enough to warm Minnesota to the current temperature of Iowa. Over a century most farmers will change the crop variety they find it most profitable to grow multiple times for other reasons. If average temperatures are trending up, those changes will include a shift towards crops better suited to slightly warmer weather. Over a century, many houses will be torn down and replaced; if sea level is rising, houses currently built on low lying coastal ground will be rebuilt a little farther inland — not much farther if we are talking, as the IPCC estimates suggest we should be, about a rise of only two or three feet. The presumption that change is bad is a weak one for changes as slow as those we have good reason to expect from global warming.

At least that is true for humans, who can adapt to change by growing different crops, adding air conditioning to their houses. Other species can do it by evolution or by changing their range, but that could be a problem for species such as trees that evolve slowly and shift their range slowly. It could be a problem for aquatic species currently adapted to the current pH of the ocean, since increased CO2 absorbed by the ocean lowers its pH.3

There is also one reason to expect the climate change produced by the greenhouse effect to make us better off. More warmth is generally a good thing when you are cold, a bad thing when you are hot. Due to the physics of the greenhouse effect, it warms cold times and places more than hot, raises the temperature of winter more than summer, of the polar regions more than the equator.

It is hard to see any other a priori reason to expect climate change to make us better or worse off. The earth and its climate were not designed for our convenience, so there is no good reason to believe that their current state is optimal for us. We are not designed for the current climate — over our species history, climate has varied by considerably more than the changes being predicted for global warming. Currently, humans live and prosper over a range of climates much larger than the range that we expect the climate at any particular location to change by.

That brings us to the other approach to answering the question, trying to identify the externalities from climate change and estimate their size. The question for population was in what ways my having another child makes other people better or worse off. The question for climate change is in what ways my doing something that affects climate, such as burning fossil fuels, make other people better or worse off.

The popular discussion of this issue mostly takes it for granted that all the important effects are negative and their sum, the net effect, very negative. To see how plausible that is, it is worth sorting effects — negative, positive, ambiguous — and trying to estimate their size.

Effects

There are at least four predictable effects of climate change that appear unambiguously negative: sea level rise, more frequent extreme heat, stronger cyclones, and reduction in ocean pH.4 There are at least four effects that are unambiguously positive: expansion of habitable areas towards the poles, less frequent extreme cold, fewer cyclones, CO2 fertilization. There are at least two effects that are ambiguous, might make us better off, might make us worse off: longer growing seasons and increased rainfall. We do not know enough to put all of these on a single scale, in part because they have different sorts of costs, but we can at least try to compare positive and negative effects that produce costs or benefits of similar sorts.

The first step is to specify the amount of climate change being considered. My estimates are for effects by the end of the century based on IPCC projections, about a 3°C increase in average global temperature and one to three feet of sea level rise, both relative to current values.

Start with sea level rise. That it will continue to happen is a pretty safe assumption. How big is the effect?

On average, the U.S. Atlantic coast shifts in by about a hundred feet for every foot of sea level rise. So a meter of sea level rise, towards the high end of the IPCC estimate for the end of the century, shifts the coastline in by about a hundred meters, inconvenient if your house is located ten meters from the high tide mark but invisibly small on any save a very large-scale map. The effect will be larger in some places, smaller in others, depending on the slope of the coastal land. For a more detailed answer, take a look at the Flood Maps website. It lets you set the amount of sea level rise then see the effect on the map. It is not perfect, for reasons some of which are discussed on the site, but it does let you zoom in on the coastline and get at least a rough idea of how large the effect of any level of sea level rise is likely to be.

Compare the map at 0 meters to the map at 1 meter. Even in Bangladesh, usually offered as a country where sea level rise will be catastrophic, the effect is almost invisibly small. The same is true for Miami. I have not looked over the entire world, but the only place I could find where a meter of sea level rise had a large effect was the Nile delta. Another way of looking at the question is to ask how much land is lost worldwide due to coastlines shifting in. My rough estimate is a little more than twenty thousand square kilometers, about the area of New Jersey.

Compare that to the effect of warming on usable land area. Human land use at present is limited by cold not, with rare exceptions, by heat; the equator is populated, the poles are not. As global temperatures increase, temperature contours in the north shift towards the pole. I estimate the increase in land warm enough for human habitation at more than ten million square kilometers — a little less than the area of the U.S. and about five hundred times my estimate of the loss due to sea level rise. The calculations on which both figures are based are webbed and simple enough that you can check them for yourselves to see if you find my conclusions plausible.

Decreases in extreme cold and increases in extreme heat can be compared in terms of their effect on temperature-related mortality. There are two reasons to believe that the net effect is likely to be a reduction, not an increase. The first is that, at present, cold-related mortality is much larger than heat-related — about fifteen times as large globally according to a study published in Lancet in 2015. The second is that climate change is projected to increase minimal temperatures in cold regions by substantially more than maximal temperatures in hot regions.

Increasing the concentration of CO2 substantially increases the yield of many, but not all, crops — the major exception is maize — and reduces the need of all crops, including maize, for water. That is probably the reason that, according to the latest IPCC report, the globe is greening, the total area of vegetation increasing. Doubling the concentration of CO2, about what the IPCC projects for the end of the century, should increase the yield of most crops by more than twenty percent, more for crops currently constrained by a limited supply of water.

That leaves one definitely negative effect and two possibly negative ones for which I have so far been unable to come up with estimates. Decreasing ocean pH is a predictable result of more CO2 in the atmosphere and can be expected to have negative effects on some aquatic life but I have not seen any plausible estimates of the size of the effect. Making cyclones a little stronger and a little less common will have both positive and negative effects. So will changes in weather patterns, probably an increase in both total rainfall and the frequency of very heavy rainfall. More rainfall means more water to fill reservoirs and feed crops, more heavy rainfall may lead to more frequent floods. In addition to these predictable effects, there are a variety of others, both positive and negative, that might happen but cannot be predicted to happen.

My conclusion, as in the case of population, is that the size of the externalities is too uncertain to sign the sum, to tell whether the net effect of climate change is to make us better or worse off. That is not the current orthodoxy. You will have to decide for yourself whether you agree.

Explaining the Orthodoxy

If I am right, why does almost everyone else believe that climate change is a terrible problem? The first answer is that they don’t. If you look at expert opinions such as the IPCC reports or the work of William Nordhaus, an economist who received a Nobel prize for his work estimating the cost of climate change, you discover that they view climate change as undesirable but not as the catastrophe that much of the public discussion implies. Nordhaus, for example, writes that “the best guess in this book is that the economic damages from climate change with no interventions will be on the order of 2.5 percent of world output per year by the end of the twenty-first century” (A Question of Balance, p. 6). That is in a model in which per capita consumption roughly triples by then. So the difference between the world without climate change and the world with climate change is, by his model, the difference between an increase in per capita income by 2100 of 300% and an increase of 292.5%.

Competent authorities, as in that example, do not view climate change as catastrophic but they do view it as a bad thing. Why?

Part of the answer is that with a question that complicated, where you are summing large positive and large negative terms, any calculation of net effects depends on a lot of judgement calls: how large you think each effect, positive or negative, is, how hard you look for possible effects. Nordhaus, for example, includes estimates of very low probability high cost outcomes, things that probably won’t happen but conceivably could, in his estimate of expected cost. As best I can tell he has made no effort to find and include very low probability high benefit outcomes of climate change, of which the most obvious is holding off the next glaciation.

Sometimes the bias is worse than that. Rennert et. al. 2022, a recent article published in Nature, estimates the net negative effect of an additional ton of Carbon dioxide produced now at $185, more than three times the calculation that the EPA has been using for regulatory decisions; the EPA is looking at it with an eye to raising the value it uses.

The article adds up estimated costs from now to 2300. That raises an obvious problem. Most of the costs depend, among other things, on technology — the effect of heat on mortality, the source of about half the cost, depends among other things on medical technology, the effect of climate change on crop yields depends on biotech, other costs depend on other technologies.

Over the past two centuries, technological change has replaced sailing ships with jet planes for long distance transportation. Over the past century, medicine has progressed from a point where almost no contagious diseases were curable to one where almost all are. Over the past fifty years, computer technology has progressed to the point where the typical member of a developed society carries in his pocket a computer more powerful than any that existed fifty years ago. There is no reason to believe that the process has stopped and no way of predicting its effects on the world beyond the very short term.

### AT: War---2AC

#### Capitalism increases peace.

Tim Krieger & Daniel Meierrieks 24. Wilfried Guth Professor of Constitutional Political Economy and Competition Policy at the University of Freiburg, PhD in economics from the University of Munich. Senior Researcher with the Department for Migration, Integration and Transnationalization at the WZB Berlin Social Science Center, PhD in economics from the University of Paderborn. Handbook of Research on Economic Freedom. *Edward Elgar Publishing*. 360-363.

Economic Freedom and Interstate War

A first set of studies considers the effect of higher levels of economic freedom on the emergence of violent conflict between two or more nation-states. For instance, this type of conflict may take the form of a militarized interstate dispute (i.e., the display of military force short of war by one state explicitly directed towards another state) or a conflict that involves a minimum level of battle deaths to qualify as a full-blown war (Anderton and Carter 2011).

A number of empirical studies provide evidence in favor of a capitalist peace, where sound economic institutions (i.e., high levels of economic freedom) coincide with a reduced likelihood of militarized disputes and warfare between nation-states (e.g., Gartzke et al. 2001, Mousseau et al. 2003; Souva 2004; Mousseau 2005, 2009; Gartzke 2007; McDonald 2010). For example, Gartzke (2007) examines a global sample of countries between 1950 and 1992, finding that high levels of external openness discourage conflict between states.

Consistent with our theoretical discussion above, several empirical contributions highlight the role international trade plays in creating economic interdependencies and wealth that disincentivizes interstate conflict (e.g., Hegre 2000; Gartzke and Li 2003; Gelpi and Grieco 2008). International trade ought to be fueled by high levels of economic freedom, e.g., by means of low tariffs and low trade regulations. Other voices emphasize the role sound economic institutions may play in the development of institutions and values that promote equality, tolerance and respect for the rights of others (e.g., Mousseau 2009).

In sum, many empirical studies suggest that there is a capitalist peace, with countries that are economically free being less likely to engage in conflict with other countries. At the same time, this finding points to one important aspect that is also the subject of academic debate. How does economic liberalism (high levels of economic freedom) interact with political liberalism (high levels of political freedom) and how do both variables affect conflict (e.g., Schneider 2014)? In this contribution, we cannot discuss at length the nuances of the literature on the capitalist peace vis-à-vis the democratic peace. However, our reading of the capitalist peace literature highlights two major points. First, sound economic institutions appear to lead to less interstate conflict independent of the effect of democracy (e.g., Gartzke et al. 2001; Mousseau et al. 2003). Second, it is possible that economic and political freedom reinforce each other, with both also potentially sharing a beneficial relationship with economic development, suggesting that rich, economically and politically liberal countries may see especially low levels of international conflict (e.g., Mousseau 2005).