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Rates DA

#### The Feds are threading the needle to avoid a recession---success of rate cuts hinge on the expectation of stable inflation.

Ryan Herzog 9-17, Associate Professor of Economics, Gonzaga University, “Fed rate cut is attempt to prevent recession without sending prices soaring”, The Conversation, 9-17-25, <https://theconversation.com/fed-rate-cut-is-attempt-to-prevent-recession-without-sending-prices-soaring-265370>

A narrow path to a soft landing

As it resumes cutting rates, the Federal Reserve is trying to thread a narrow needle – easing policy enough to keep the labor market from cracking while not reigniting inflation, which is proving stickier in part because of tariffs.

Markets are betting the Fed will keep cutting. The futures market is betting the Fed will cut rates by another half point by the end of the year. And the one-year Treasury yield has dropped about 150 basis points (1.5%) since June, signaling that investors expect a series of rate cuts through 2025 and into 2026.

At its latest meeting, the Fed signaled two more rate cuts in 2025 and at least one rate cut in 2026.

Such cuts would ultimately bring the federal funds rate closer to 3% and hopefully reduce 30-year mortgage rates to around 5% – from an average of 6.35% as of Sept. 11. If the labor market continues to weaken – with jobless claims climbing, payrolls revised down and more workers stuck in long-term unemployment – that expectation will likely harden into consensus.

But the path is far from certain. Cutting rates too quickly could cause inflation to spike, while going too slow could lead to further deterioration in the labor market. Either outcome would jeopardize the Fed’s credibility – whether by appearing unable to control prices or by allowing unemployment to rise unnecessarily. That would undermine its ability to influence markets and enforce its dual mandate of maximum employment and stable prices.

Another tricky issue is Trump’s public campaign to push the Fed to cut rates – appearing to do his bidding could also undercut Fed credibility. For what it’s worth, the Sept. 17 rate cut appears driven less by politics than by economic data. The Fed itself was projecting a year ago that rates would be much lower today than they actually are, suggesting it’s been following the data.

The economy appears to be slowing but remains resilient, which is why the Fed is likely to move gradually. The risk is that the window for a soft landing is closing. The coming months will determine whether the Fed can ease early enough to avoid recession, or whether it has already waited too long.

#### This is because weak worker bargaining power subdues wage growth.

Sophia Claire 8-26, MBA, fintech content creator, “Fed Chair Powell Signals Rate Cut Amid Labor Market Concerns”, Markets, 8-26-25, https://www.markets.com/analysis/fed-chair-powell-signals-rate-cut-amid-labor-market-concerns-787-en, JA

The Federal Reserve faces a dual mandate to curb inflation and maintain the health of the labor market. The White House's decision to impose tariffs on imported goods complicates achieving these two goals. In theory, Federal Reserve officials had previously stated that in the event of high inflation and economic weakness at the same time, the goal that deviated from its normal course more should be identified. According to this logic, the Federal Reserve should prioritize controlling inflation and maintaining high interest rates. But Powell's speech turned this scenario upside down, as he made it clear that the Federal Reserve believes the labor market needs "urgent help."

Rising Risks in the Labor Market

Powell warned that "downside risks in the labor market are rising. Once these risks materialize, they may rapidly deteriorate in the form of layoffs and increased unemployment rates." Jonathan Millar, Senior US Economist at Barclays, believes that the main reason for Powell's audacity in sending the signal of change is the absence of signs of tightness in the labor market, and the lack of bargaining power among workers to drive up wages.

Absence of Wage-Price Spiral

It is known that one of the biggest risks of inflation comes from the "wage-price spiral," where workers demand higher wages, prompting companies to raise prices. But Millar points out that "there are currently few signs of wage acceleration." Although immigration restrictions may have caused labor shortages in some industries, this effect is limited to a few areas.

The Future of Interest Rates

Millar believes that the pace of interest rate cuts in the remainder of 2025 and 2026 will depend on changes in the unemployment rate in the coming months. Vanden Houten emphasizes that Powell will insist on his position that "cutting interest rates is not to stimulate the economy." She adds that the current interest rate range of 4.25% -4.5% is still higher than the level of the natural economic cycle.

#### The plan’s agreement spills over and forces a rate hike.

Clemens Fuest 22, Professor of Public Economics and Finance, “The Government Should Stay out of Wage Policy — Supply-Side Reforms Make More Sense in the Fight against Inflation”, Ifo Institute, 8-9-22, https://www.ifo.de/DocDL/ifo\_Viewpoint\_2022\_239\_wage\_policy.pdf, JA

At its core, collective bargaining is about how a company’s earnings are divided between employees and company owners. Unions want high wages, but also have an interest in not endangering the jobs of their members. Therefore, they should take care not to overreach regarding their demands.

Collective Wage Agreements Have Far-Reaching Consequences

Employers, on the other hand, want to reduce wage costs in order to increase their profits – but they know that if wages are too low, employee turnover ll increase, and productive workers in particular will quit or not even take the job in the first place. Therefore, when it comes to wage development, it’s in employers’ own interest to ensure that employees feel they are being treated fairly. Given this background, there is much to be said for collective bargaining autonomy and against government attempts to influence collective bargaining.

However, the collective bargaining partners bear a great deal of responsibility: wage agreements have consequences not only for those sitting at the negotiating table, but also for the rest of the economy. In times of weak overall economic demand and low inflation, low wage agreements can weaken purchasing power and exacerbate economic crises. On the other hand, excessively rising wage costs can increase unemployment – and the resulting financing burdens must then be borne by the community of tax and contribution payers. Moreover, when inflation is high, rising wages can force monetary policy to intervene with harsh measures – possibly triggering a stabilization recession.

#### Rate hikes crush global development.

Samir Sarkar & Pradeep K. Jain 8-23, Assistant Professor, Department of Business Administration Gauhati University; Chief Mineral Economist Indian Bureau of Mines Nagpur, “Opinion | Global Debt Crisis: What it Means for India and Why Assam Should Care”, Gplus, 8-23-25, <https://guwahatiplus.com/opinion/opinion/opinion-global-debt-crisis-what-it-means-for-india-and-why-assam-should-care>, JA

The Rising Global Debt Crisis: As of mid-2025, the world is weighed down by a record $324 trillion in debt more than three times the size of the global economy. This mountain of borrowing is the product of decades of overspending by governments, corporations, and households, made worse by three major shocks: the 2008 financial crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the recent global inflation wave followed by steep interest rate hikes. For India, and even for a state like Assam, this is not a distant problem. In today’s interconnected economy, high borrowing in the United States or China can ripple into Guwahati’s markets, influence tea export prices, raise borrowing costs for infrastructure, and even affect the funds available for welfare schemes. India’s economy remains one of the fastest growing in the world and is largely financed domestically, but the tightening grip of global debt is already making credit more expensive and trade more uncertain- challenges that will inevitably be felt in Assam’s industries, agriculture, and public finances.

The Global Debt Crisis: How Did We Get Here?

The seeds of today’s crisis were sown in the early 2000s, when central banks in the U.S., Japan, and the EU unleashed an era of “easy money,” keeping interest rates near zero and encouraging governments to borrow freely.

Then came the 2008 financial crisis. In a bid to rescue collapsing banks and economies, governments poured in massive stimulus funds and embraced “quantitative easing” (injecting money into the economy by buying bonds). Instead of reducing debt, the world doubled down global debt shot from $140 trillion in 2008 to $210 trillion by 2015. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 brought another borrowing binge. In just one-year, global debt swelled by $24 trillion, driven largely by advanced economies most notably the United States, whose federal deficit exploded.

Now, with interest rates rising to fight inflation, the cost of servicing this massive debt has soared. While rich nations have tools to absorb the shock, many developing economies, including India, face higher borrowing costs, slower growth, and the risk of falling into austerity cycles.

How Big Economies Shape Global Debt:

America’s federal debt stands at over $36 trillion, 123% of its GDP. What makes this so destabilising is the role of the U.S. dollar as the global reserve currency. The Federal Reserve’s decisions impact the cost of capital for every other country. When the Fed hikes interest rates, capital flows out of emerging markets like India, depreciating their currencies and increasing inflation.

Moreover, the U.S. Treasury floods the market with bonds, pushing global interest rates up. Developing countries must now compete with the U.S. for capital often at much higher rates. In effect, American debt expansion becomes a global tax on the poor.

China’s debt may not look extreme on paper (public debt around 96% of GDP) but include corporate and local government borrowing and it skyrockets to over 250%. Much of this is off-the-books, via shadow banks and state-owned enterprises. China’s property sector meltdown (Evergrande, Country Garden) has revealed cracks in its economic model. Any sharp deleveraging in China could have global ripple effects on commodities, trade, and capital flows.

China’s opacity and unwillingness to participate transparently in international debt forums such as the G20’s Common Framework also complicate efforts to restructure debt for developing countries.

Japan’s debt is the highest among major economies over 230% of GDP. Yet, its borrowing is largely domestically held and yen-denominated, giving it greater insulation. But as the Bank of Japan starts to unwind ultra-loose policies, global bond markets are already reacting. Rising Japanese yields may reduce Japanese investment abroad impacting India’s infrastructure funding, which has long relied on JICA and other Japanese institutions.

IMF and World Bank: Lifelines or Leashes?

The IMF and World Bank were created to stabilise global finance. But their structural asymmetries are now under fire. The U.S. holds veto power at the IMF. China has grown in influence but has not accepted the transparency norms of the Paris Club. India’s policymakers have also expressed growing unease with the role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. These institutions ostensibly neutral often act as gatekeepers to capital, but their approach has historically mirrored the strategic interests of the West. While the IMF and World Bank offer emergency assistance and structural adjustment programs, their conditional ties frequently impose austerity on vulnerable countries. Many critics argue that these institutions act more like "credit enforcers" for Western lenders than partners in sustainable development.

While these institutions do provide vital support, their loan conditions often impose harsh austerity on already-struggling nations. For example: Sri Lanka faced social unrest as IMF conditions demanded subsidy rollbacks and tax hikes amid economic collapse. Zambia waited years for debt restructuring as China, private lenders, and multilateral institutions squabbled. Pakistan had to slash health and education budgets to meet IMF benchmarks while still repaying old loans to Western creditors. The slow pace of debt restructuring for countries like Zambia, Ghana, and Sri Lanka only highlights the systemic inertia especially when China, the U.S., and private bondholders refuse to coordinate effectively.

India, while not a frequent IMF borrower, is not insulated from these global power dynamics. International interest rate shifts, driven by U.S. Federal Reserve or Chinese policy moves, can raise India’s borrowing costs. This has a trickle-down effect: higher national debt servicing costs can limit funds for infrastructure and welfare schemes something states like Assam depend on for highways, flood-control projects, and rural development programmes.

At the same time, IMF and World Bank involvement is not purely negative. In some cases, their oversight encourages better fiscal discipline, more transparent budgeting, and targeted spending practices that could help Indian states manage resources better. For Assam, which has ambitious infrastructure and industrial expansion plans, ensuring fiscal discipline while protecting developmental spending will be essential if global financing conditions tighten. The challenge for India is to engage with these institutions on its own terms, taking what helps, but avoiding the austerity traps that have hurt so many developing economies.

India’s Debt:

India’s government debt (combined Centre + states) is around 80% of GDP. This is moderate relative to the global average but high for a developing country. The upside? Over 95% of India’s debt is domestic and rupee-denominated. India is not at immediate risk of default. But high deficits, rising interest payments, and subsidy pressures threaten long-term sustainability. Moreover, with a growing youth population and unmet infrastructure needs, India cannot afford fiscal paralysis. It must invest in roads, rail, health, and skills without being weighed down by rising borrowing costs.

Assam’s Debt Burden: Current Status & Local Implications:

Assam’s debt has surged significantly in recent years. As of March 31, 2023, total liabilities stood at ₹1.16 lakh crore, up from ₹82,741 crore in 2021 and this coincided with the debt-to-GSDP ratio rising to approximately 23.5% More recent estimates point to the debt level climbing to ₹1.78 lakh crore by 2025 with per capita debt ballooning to over ₹48,000. Despite these concerns, the state government maintains that borrowing remains within the AFRBM limit of 32% of GSDP and asserts that most loans have been channelled into infrastructure rather than recurrent spending.

The implication? Rising debt could crowd out developmental spending at a time when Assam needs it most for flood control, rural development, tea estate support, health and education. Unless revenue generation improves or borrowing becomes more cost-effective, the growing debt may constrain the state’s ability to respond to natural disasters, invest in livelihood schemes, or upgrade critical infrastructure.

#### Extinction.

Ruth Wong & Eevee Ciara 22, Senior Cloud Systems Engineer, M.A. from Johns Hopkins University, M.Sc. in Bioinformatics from Western Univrsity; Machine learning engineer at PayPal, writer for the Effective Altruism Forum; Substack, “Rethinking longtermism and global development”, Sep. 02, 2022, DOA: 9-2-24, JA, https://sunyshore.substack.com/p/rethinking-longtermism-and-global

We agree that more powerful countries are likely to have more influence on the long-term future than less powerful ones, and that a country’s economic development is a strong indicator of its technological and geopolitical power. However, this does not mean that developed countries matter morally more than developing ones. Rather, it underscores the importance of global development—the process of low- and middle-income countries becoming high-income ones. Similarly, although workers in high-income countries generally have higher labor productivity, a large component of this is the place premium. That is, a worker’s productivity increases—sometimes by a factor of 15 or more—when they move from a poor country to a rich country, simply because they are being paid more for the same work.1 Once again, this speaks to the importance of global development and helping people escape poverty.

This essay describes why it’s important for the long term future for everyone to be in a relatively high-income country, and what it might look like for global development to be a longtermist issue. Global development benefits the long-term future by increasing diversity in global institutions and reducing civilization’s vulnerability to global catastrophic risks like armed conflict and pandemics.

What is global development?

Effective altruists regularly talk about “global health and development” as a category of ways to do good. However, it’s clear now that development drives health much more than health drives development. Global development is the process by which low- and middle-income countries turn into high-income countries. The best modern example of this2 are the Asian countries of South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and China. These have been compared with other Asian countries that were thought to be “tiger cubs” in the ‘90s such as the Philippines and Thailand in the book How Asia Works, by Joe Studwell. In this book, Joe lays out a recipe for development. Here’s the summary from Bill Gates: Create conditions for small farmers to thrive. Use the proceeds from agricultural surpluses to build a manufacturing base that is tooled from the start to produce exports. Nurture both these sectors (small farming and export-oriented manufacturing) with financial institutions closely controlled by the government.

Importantly, in South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and China, these steps were taken by relatively uncorrupted leaders who made it their life’s work to develop their home country. Other countries unable to develop had leadership who were swayed by the neoliberal free-market thinking pervasive at the World Bank and IMF at the time, or who were otherwise too corrupt or incompetent to stay true in delivering their development strategy.

Global development is important for the long-term future

In an EA Forum post, Beckstead defines three types of benefits that an intervention can have: proximate benefits, benefits from speeding up development, and trajectory changes. Global development would have immediate benefits for people alive today: economic development in low-income countries means that fewer people would experience poverty, illness, hunger, and violence. Speeding up development is speeding up the process by which countries become high-income, so it would ensure that people realize these benefits sooner.

But most of the benefits of global development are through trajectory changes that affect the long-term future. We argue that global development creates significant long-term benefits through this route. Global development can also lead to trajectory changes in the global political environment that would not happen if the development timeline were slowed down, since such changes can be locked in over time.

Global development increases diversity in global governance

One of the main ways global development benefits the far future is through its impact on diversity and inclusion in world institutions. As countries get richer, their people get better educated and thus better placed to participate in institutions with great decision-making power over the world, such as multinational corporations, governments, and international organizations. Increasing the diversity of decision makers in global institutions improves the quality of world governance, which enables humanity to better navigate existential risks and other global challenges.

Diversity in global institutions improves their efficacy in two ways. First, socially diverse groups outperform homogeneous groups at decision-making because they deliberate more carefully and pay more attention to facts. They also innovate more because diverse group members bring unique perspectives.3 Second, it improves value alignment between these institutions and humanity as a whole. It has been proposed that humanity should engage in a “long reflection” to decide what is ultimately of value before making potentially irreversible decisions regarding its future. For such decisions to reflect the values and needs of all of humanity, as many people as possible should be able to participate meaningfully in the global institutions making these decisions.

Currently, about 689 million of the 8 billion people worldwide live in extreme poverty, and they cannot participate meaningfully in world governance as long as their basic needs are not met.4 2.9 billion people lack Internet access, which is an important communication channel through which people make their voices heard on global issues and influence global institutions. Internet adoption is uneven across social groups: for example, women, people in rural areas, and people over age 25 are less likely to have Internet access. These disparities are especially pronounced in the 46 UN-designated Least Developed Countries (LDCs).5

Another barrier to diversity in global governance is the structure of institutions such as the United Nations, which is not designed to represent the general will of humanity. UN institutions represent the will of states—especially the five permanent members of the UN Security Council: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China. Although a diverse group of countries have voices in the UN, their citizens do not, especially in the case of authoritarian states.

Global development reduces existential risks

Another important way in which global development improves the long-term future is by reducing existential risks, particularly risks from pandemics and political instability. 80,000 Hours estimates that the risk of a biological existential catastrophe in the next 100 years is about 1 in 1000.6 Poverty makes communities more susceptible to spreading infectious diseases. For example, a study of Monrovia, Liberia, in 2014 found that people living in slums who caught the Ebola virus spread it to an average of 3.5 times more people than people living in rich neighborhoods. This is because these neighborhoods are overcrowded, contaminated, and lacking in sanitation and health care infrastructure.7 Also, malnutrition weakens the immune systems of poor people, thereby making them more vulnerable to disease.8 Raising national income improves population health and enables countries to invest more in public health infrastructure, which makes populations more resilient to potentially catastrophic pandemics.

Global poverty also causes existential risk through its negative effects on international security. Many developing countries, particularly weak states, are caught in a vicious cycle of poverty, corruption, and political instability: “Inept, corrupt, or weak governance fosters poverty; widespread poverty makes effective, equitable governance more difficult to achieve; and when weak governments fail to improve their people’s lives, their legitimacy suffers.” Weak states often engender terrorism and crime because they are unable to maintain law and order in their territories.9

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Politics DA

#### CR will pass, BUT it’s tight---failure ensures shutdown.

Mia McCarthy 9/19, Reporter for POLITICO, “Capitol agenda: CRs hit the floor,” POLITICO, 9/19/25, https://www.politico.com/live-updates/2025/09/19/congress/shutdown-deadline-continuing-resolution-funding-emmer-00572645

IN THE HOUSE — The House will vote this morning on the GOP-led continuing resolution funding the government through Nov. 21. Expect nearly every Democrat to vote against it, though Reps. Jared Golden (D-Maine) and Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D-Wash.) have stayed quiet about their plans. (Golden was the sole House Democrat to break from his party in the March shutdown fight.)

In an extended interview with POLITICO on Thursday, Whip Tom Emmer said he’s confident Republicans can muscle their CR through the House — though he declined to say whether leaders will need to call in President Donald Trump for backup.

“I talk to the White House, I keep them advised as to where we are,” the Minnesota Republican said, when asked if they’re prepared to get Trump on the phone Friday if needed. “We’re going to pass this.”

While the hard-liners appear on board, a few rank-and-file Republicans could cause headaches for GOP leaders. Rep. Warren Davidson (R-Ohio) told POLITICO he’s “disappointed” there is no plan past the CR but declined to say how he’ll vote Friday. Rep. Thomas Massie (R-Ky.) is a likely “no.” Republicans can lose only two of their members with full attendance for party-line passage.

If the funding patch passes, House GOP leaders are considering not coming back into session until after Oct. 1 — jamming Senate Democrats and daring them to vote against the CR right before the deadline.

IN THE SENATE — The Senate will vote Friday on competing CRs, one led by Republicans and one led by Democrats. Both are expected to fail, raising the chances of a shutdown in less than two weeks.

Majority Leader John Thune said Thursday it’s “unlikely” the Senate will come back next week. That means the next vote on the GOP’s stopgap bill would be the evening of Monday, Sept. 29 — less than 48 hours before a potential shutdown.

“I do not believe that Chuck Schumer and the Democrats are actually going to shut the government down,” Emmer told POLITICO. “That would be one of the most foolish things you can do.”

#### Congressional Republicans oppose the plan---they want to rewrite the civil service

Eleanor Holmes Norton 2025, Congresswoman D-DC, “Norton Highlights Federal Employees in Remarks During Oversight Committee Reconciliation Markup”, April 30, https://norton.house.gov/media/press-releases/norton-highlights-federal-employees-remarks-during-oversight-committee, accessed 8-21-25, HMc

The Trump administration and Congress have launched unprecedented attacks on federal employees, federal contract workers, federal agencies, federal programs, the rule of law and the Constitution, among other things. Most recently, the administration stripped federal employees of their collective bargaining rights.

The administration and Republicans in Congress are trying to dismantle much of the federal government, gut the federal workforce and fill federal jobs with political loyalists, in violation of the Constitution, statutes and regulations. Federal employees, who provide invaluable services to the American people, deserve praise—not derision, cruelty, fear, chaos and illegal firings. These actions would – and have – deprived the federal government of expertise and experience. This harms the services the federal government provides to all Americans.

#### Shutdown destroys aviation safety.

Oriana Pawlyk 25, POLITICO's aviation reporter, covering everything from drones to airlines to the uncharted territory of commercial space, “Government shutdown a 'hit' air traffic controllers can’t take, union president warns”, https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2025/03/government-shutdown-a-hit-air-traffic-controllers-cant-take-union-president-warns-00210516, \*language edited

The head of the union for air traffic controllers warned lawmakers Tuesday that a government shutdown would be a [damaging] ~~crippling~~ blow to the controller workforce, which is already strained by persistent staffing shortages and amid the aftermath of a midair disaster in January that killed 67 people.

“The air traffic controllers cannot take another hit right now,” said Nick Daniels, president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association.

Daniels said not only do controllers have to work without pay during a shutdown, the FAA Academy that trains new crops of controllers would close its doors, disrupting classes. Daniels said even a one-day shutdown "puts us months behind."

“That's what a government shutdown is — not only is it impacting modernization, but it will shut down the Oklahoma City Academy that we are relying on, to bring in these new air traffic controllers so we can train them,” Daniels said.

Without a deal, the government is set to shut down on March 14.

And many controllers may simply quit if the government shuts down again, because they don't want to deal with the disruptions anymore, Daniels said.

"Many of them don't come back, because they certainly do not want to work in that type of career field, or go with $0 paychecks — or not even a paycheck,” Daniels said.

The controller workforce is short of roughly 3,600 certified controllers, and it’s impossible to just fast-track that number, especially during a shutdown, he said. The shutdown that began in December 2018 and lasted for just over a month impacted 25 percent of the trainees coming through the system.

Daniels added it takes between two to three years from the time a controller is hired to get into their official role from when they pass initial qualifications.

Last week, DOT Secretary Sean Duffy announced a new plan that would seek to shorten the hiring process, though how that's being streamlined is murky. Lawmakers have also proposed the idea of raising the threshold of the maximum amount of people allowed to be trained at the academy, and the potential of opening a second academy.

Findings from an independent panel of experts released in 2023 said that the shutdown politics injects risk into the system, and found that a spike of near collisions at airports that year were directly linked to congressional dysfunction.

#### Another crash wrecks the aerospace industry broadly.

GTF 25, Global Tourism Forum, an international collaboration platform focused on addressing the challenges for the travel industry that combines the joint efforts of government agencies, industry stakeholders and academia, “Why Airline Crashes Shake Global Economies: Stock, Insurance, and Infrastructure Losses Explained Introduction”, https://live.worldtourismforum.net/opinion/why-airline-crashes-shake-global-economies-stock-insurance-and-infrastructure-losses-explained-introduction

Aviation is one of the world’s most economically sensitive sectors. When a plane crash occurs, the effects are immediate and far-reaching—impacting not only the airline involved but also airports, insurers, stock markets, and even a nation’s economic output. The ripple effects can disrupt supply chains, freeze tourism flows, spike insurance premiums, and dent investor confidence.

This article examines how commercial airline crashes shake global economies—through market reactions, insurance liabilities, and infrastructure losses. Drawing from real-world incidents, it explains why aviation disasters cost billions, not just in lives but also in lost productivity, trade, and trust.

1.⁠ ⁠Stock Market Shockwaves: A Fall in Investor Confidence

Plane crashes often trigger sudden and sharp declines in the stock value of the affected airline and, in some cases, the broader aviation sector.

Examples:  
• Boeing 737 MAX (2018–2019):  
Following two fatal crashes, Boeing’s stock plunged by nearly 25%, wiping out over $60 billion in market capitalization. The MAX program was halted, and hundreds of aircraft were grounded globally, resulting in canceled orders and legal backlash.  
• Lufthansa & Germanwings (2015):  
After a Germanwings co-pilot deliberately crashed Flight 9525, Lufthansa’s stock dropped by approximately 3–4% intraday. Although it recovered quickly, the brand’s credibility took a temporary hit.  
• Malaysia Airlines (2014):  
After MH370 and MH17, Malaysia Airlines’ share price fell 13%, and the airline suffered its largest quarterly losses ever.

Why This Matters:

Investors flee airline stocks after a crash due to fears of operational grounding, compensation payouts, and reputational damage. If the crash involves a manufacturing defect, aircraft makers like Boeing or Airbus may see even greater losses.

2.⁠ ⁠Insurance Payouts and Long-Term Premium Hikes

A commercial airline crash initiates enormous liability for the airline, aircraft manufacturer, and even the country of origin.

Typical Costs Include:  
• Passenger compensation (under the Montreal Convention): ~$175,000 per victim minimum  
• Hull loss (value of the aircraft): often $100–200 million  
• Third-party damages and environmental remediation  
• Legal settlements and fines

Case Study: Boeing’s 737 MAX Liability  
• Boeing paid over $2.5 billion in fines and compensation.  
• Airlines were compensated for lost revenue due to grounded aircraft.  
• Insurance firms faced claims in the billions, triggering reevaluations of risk and policy premiums.

Aftermath:

These payouts contribute to higher aviation insurance premiums globally, especially for carriers in developing countries or those with safety concerns.

#### Aerospace dominance avoids the only scenario for nuclear war.

Dr. Robert Zubrin 19, Masters in Aeronautics and Astronautics and Ph.D. in Nuclear Engineering from the University of Washington, President of Pioneer Energy, Founder and President of the Mars Society, Senior Fellow with the Center for Security Policy, The Case for Space: How the Revolution in Spaceflight Opens Up a Future of Limitless Possibility, p. Google Books

Eastern and Central Europe is now so weakly defended as to virtually invite invasion. The United States is not about to go to nuclear war to defend any foreign country. So deterrence is dead, and, with the German army cut from 12 divisions to three, the British gone from the continent, and American forces down to a 30,000-troop tankless remnant, the only serious and committed ground force that stands between Russia and the Rhine is the Polish army. It’s not enough. Meanwhile, in Asia, the powerful growth of the Chinese economy promises that nation eventual overwhelming numerical force superiority in the region.

How can we restore the balance, creating a sufficiently powerful conventional force to deter aggression? It won’t be by matching potential adversaries tank for tank, division for division, replacement for replacement. Rather, the United States must seek to totally outgun them by obtaining a radical technological advantage. This can be done by achieving space supremacy.

To grasp the importance of space power, some historical perspective is required. Wars are fought for control of territory. Yet for thousands of years, victory on land has frequently been determined by dominance at sea. In the 20th century, victory on both land and sea almost invariably went to the power that controlled the air. In the 21st century, victory on land, sea or in the air will go to the power that controls space.

The critical military importance of space has been obscured by the fact that in the period since the United States has had space assets, all of our wars have been fought against minor powers that we could have defeated without them. Desert Storm has been called the first space war, because the allied forces made extensive use of GPS navigation satellites. However, if they had no such technology at their disposal, the end result would have been just the same. This has given some the impression that space forces are just a frill to real military power — a useful and convenient frill perhaps, but a frill nevertheless.

But consider how history might have changed had the Axis of World War II possessed reconnaissance satellites — merely one of many of today’s space-based assets — without the Allies having a matching capability. In that case, the Battle of the Atlantic would have gone to the U-boats, as they would have had infallible intelligence on the location of every convoy. Cut off from oil and other supplies, Britain would have fallen. On the Eastern front, every Soviet tank concentration would have been spotted in advance and wiped out by German air power, as would any surviving British ships or tanks in the Mediterranean and North Africa. In the Pacific, the battle of Midway would have gone very much the other way, as the Japanese would not have wasted their first deadly airstrike on the unsinkable island, but sunk the American carriers instead. With these gone, the remaining cruisers and destroyers in Adm. Frank Jack Fletcher’s fleet would have lacked air cover, and every one of them would have been hunted down and sunk by unopposed and omniscient Japanese air power. With the same certain fate awaiting any American ships that dared venture forth from the West Coast, Hawaii, Australia and New Zealand would then have fallen, and eventually China and India as well. With a monopoly of just one element of space power, the Axis would have won the war.

But modern space power involves far more than just reconnaissance satellites. The use of space-based GPS can endow munitions with 100 times greater accuracy, while space-based communications provide an unmatched capability of command and control of forces. Knock out the enemy’s reconnaissance satellites and he is effectively blind. Knock out his comsats and he is deaf. Knock out his navsats and he loses his aim. In any serious future conventional conflict, even between opponents as mismatched as Japan was against the United States — or Poland (with 1,000 tanks) is currently against Russia (with 12,000) — it is space power that will prove decisive.

Not only Europe, but the defense of the entire free world hangs upon this matter. For the past 70 years, U.S. Navy carrier task forces have controlled the world’s oceans, first making and then keeping the Pax Americana, which has done so much to secure and advance the human condition over the postwar period. But should there ever be another major conflict, an adversary possessing the ability to locate and target those carriers from space would be able to wipe them out with the push of a button. For this reason, it is imperative that the United States possess space capabilities that are so robust as to not only assure our own ability to operate in and through space, but also be able to comprehensively deny it to others.

*Space superiority* means having better space assets than an opponent. Space supremacy means being able to assert a complete monopoly of such capabilities. The latter is what we must have. If the United States can gain space supremacy, then the capability of any American ally can be multiplied by orders of magnitude, and with the support of the similarly multiplied striking power of our own land- and sea-based air and missile forces be made so formidable as to render any conventional attack unthinkable. On the other hand, should we fail to do so, we will remain so vulnerable as to increasingly invite aggression by ever-more-emboldened revanchist powers.

### 1NC

NASA DA

#### NASA will turn to privatization now---the plans post-union leverage flips that.

AFGE 25, American Federation of Government Employees is an American labor union representing employees of the federal government, District of Columbia, and some private sector employees, AFGE, ““Hands Off Our NASA”: Union Leaders Rally to Defend Space Program from Cuts and Privatization”, 08/04/25, https://www.afge.org/article/hands-off-our-nasa-union-leaders-rally-to-defend-space-program-from-cuts-and-privatization/, Accessed: 09/19/25, mcc

In the shadow of Apollo-era rockets, AFGE National President Everett Kelley joined IFPTE President Matt Biggs, federal employees, and allies this week outside the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum to sound the alarm on what union leaders are calling the most dangerous assault on NASA’s mission and workforce in agency history.

The leafleting event drew attention to the Trump administration’s proposed 25% cut to NASA’s budget and the thousands of layoffs already underway – even before Congress has approved any appropriations. According to Reuters, nearly 20% of NASA’s workforce – roughly 4,000 employees – are being pushed out through early retirements, buyouts, or forced resignations.

“These aren’t just numbers; they are highly skilled engineers, scientists, safety inspectors, secretaries, technicians, program managers – and they are also mothers, fathers, neighbors, and veterans,” said Kelley. “The proposals would rip out the heart of NASA by driving away the talent that makes it great.”

The event was part of a growing **wave of union action in response to the administration’s broader plan to** dismantle the federal workforce and **turn public science into private enterprise**. The **cuts are aligned with the agenda of** Elon Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), which has advocated for **shifting key NASA missions to private contractors** like SpaceX and Blue Origin.

“Extremists in power right now have openly said they **want to** ‘dismantle the administrative state.’ They want to cripple federal agencies, **shrink the workforce**, and shove public functions into private hands,” Kelley continued. “NASA is not exempt from this ideology – in fact, it’s a target. And powerful private interests stand to gain billions from contracting out of our space program.”

More than 40 missions are on the chopping block if the budget is enacted, including Earth-monitoring satellites, space telescopes, and planetary exploration efforts. According to Space.com, even before the budget has passed, layoffs and hiring freezes have been initiated, and programs are being wound down. Nearly 1,000 newer employees were dismissed abruptly in February, many of them early-career professionals.

The scale and speed of the cuts have raised alarms across the scientific community. In the “Voyager Declaration,” nearly 300 current and former NASA employees – including four astronauts – warned that the agency’s “new culture of silence and compliance is undermining the very safety culture that was built after past tragedies,” according to Time Magazine.

Kelley expressed full support for the employees speaking out. “We stand with those brave NASA civil servants. Their fight is our fight. They are exemplifying the best of public service – speaking truth to power to protect the mission.”

The broader goal, Kelley emphasized, is not just to reverse the budget cuts but to preserve a vision of space exploration grounded in the public good. Privatization is no substitute for a robust public NASA. NASA works for the public interest, not profit. NASA shares its discoveries openly with the world, rather than hoarding them as proprietary secrets.

The rally at the museum is one of many steps AFGE and its allies are taking to mobilize support and demand accountability. Unionsare calling on Congress to fully fund NASA, halt further layoffs, and investigate DOGE’s influence on agency operations.

“It’s about whether our government exists to serve the people or to serve the private interests of a handful of oligarchs,” Kelley said. “**We’ve fought and won before** when public services were on the line, and we will do it again.”

#### Privatization is key to US space dominance and global leadership.

Kam Ghaffarian 25, Space and Energy entrepreneur co-founding and serving as executive chairman of multiple companies including X-energy; Axiom Space; Quantum Space; PTX; Intuitive Machines; and IBX, Space News, “The Trump administration should leverage private space stations to counter China”, 01/13/25, https://spacenews.com/the-trump-administration-should-leverage-private-space-stations-to-counter-china/, Accessed: 09/20/15, mcc

We stand on **the brink of a transformative era** in space exploration**: a shift from government**-led **to commercial**-**led** **activities off-planet.** With this shift comes the need to recognize that the United States commercial space industry will play a pivotal role in maintaining the nation’s leadership in low Earth orbit (LEO). And while NASA has long shouldered this responsibility, its commitment to pass the torch, to foster commercial partnerships and support commercial space development, is falling short. The new Trump administration has a unique opportunity to ensure that American leadership is not usurped by our fiercest geopolitical adversary, China. To maintain U.S. leadership, the government must act with urgency to support a smaller number of companies most likely to achieve success in the critical foothold of LEO.

For a quarter of a century, the U.S. has benefited from sustaining a continuous human presence in space on the International Space Station (ISS), a strategy that China is emulating with its Tiangong space station, which has been continuously crewed since 2022. Through the ISS achievement, the U.S. not only advanced scientific understanding but also brought nations together and spurred economic growth through uncontested leadership. However, with the ISS set to retire by the end of this decade, it is imperative to transition from a government-run space station to a robust commercial space framework. This **transition is essential to ensuring U.S. presence, enabling discovery, fueling our space economy and safeguarding** our strategic **priorities** in space**.**

A commercial platform will continue to support the nation’s needs at a much lower cost than the ISS while stimulating a new generation of technologies that will revolutionize our economy and preserve the national asset that is our LEO workforce. Hard-working Americans in this microgravity industry are the lifeblood of what makes America great and will **ensure the Chinese never surpass** us in space technology.

NASA’s current strategy for the Commercial LEO Destinations (CLD) program, while well-intentioned, lacks the urgency necessary to maintain human presence in LEO by the 2030 deadline. It’s particularly lax when it comes to the acquisition of commercial services from private space stations for the post-ISS era, and it dilutes limited resources across too many companies, threatening the viability of the entire industry. This dispersed approach is stifling the growth of the commercial space market, U.S. entrepreneurship and American innovation. It also threatens to create a gap in LEO — a gap that will only benefit China and its ambitions to be the leader in space technology.

China’s advancements in space exploration serve as a stark reminder of the competitive landscape we face. If America accepts a gap in continuous human presence in Earth’s orbit, we would be undermining the decades of work performed to position the U.S. as a leader of nations in space and as a force behind the advancement of civilization and our technological superiority. Countries around the world recognize the criticality of LEO and are looking to unleash its potential; without a strong U.S. presence, governments could migrate toward China to secure their own national interests.

#### Space dominance underpins the future of nuclear deterrence and prevents war with China.

Alex Alfirraz Scheers 25, London-based defence analyst for at Next Generation Nuclear Network (NGNW), MA in National Security Studies from King’s College London, NGNW, “The Battlefield Above: Why the U.S. Must Enhance Deterrence to Prevent a Space War with China”, 05/06/25, https://nuclearnetwork.csis.org/the-battlefield-above-why-the-u-s-must-enhance-deterrence-to-prevent-a-space-war-with-china/, Accessed: 09/20/25, mcc

**Space is** fast **becoming a new battlefield**. In an emerging era of great power competition, China poses a multidomain security threat to the United States. **War in space has become a dangerous and genuine possibility.** Consequently, **the U**nited **S**tates **must respond** to the growing multidomain Chinese threat by enhancing deterrence in space.

The more adept China becomes at being able to credibly target American space capabilities, the more vulnerable the United States becomes to a devastating celestial attack. And the more vulnerable the United States’s celestial assets become, the greater the cost of war in space will be.

In its 14th Five-Year Plan, the People’s Republic of China (PRC) outlined its commitment to strengthening military capabilities in space. Enhancing space-based military capabilities aligns with President Xi Jinping’s vision of China as a dominant space power. President Xi considers superiority in space to be critical to securing vital interests. In September 2021, President Xi stated that ‘space is an important strategic asset for the country that must be well managed and utilised.’ Managed and utilised for hard power purposes.

A 2023 Pentagon report on Chinese military and security developments states that the PRC’s space-based capabilities ‘increase China’s monitoring capabilities—including observation of US aircraft carriers, expeditionary strike groups, and deployed air wings. Space capabilities will enhance People’s Liberation Army (PLA) military operations farther from the Chinese coast.’ Furthermore, Chinese counterspace capabilities are continually evolving, and Beijing’s space strategy extends beyond intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities and encompasses a range of kinetic assets that can be used to target and strike the United States in orbit, on land, air, and sea. Namely, operational space-based direct ascent capabilities are paired with ground-based space capabilities that can be employed for offensive and defensive purposes.

For example, weapons systems such as anti-satellite (ASAT) missiles can destroy low-Earth orbit (LEO) satellites, striking targets at distances between 800 to 30,000 kilometres above Earth. Furthermore, the diversification and expansion program of China’s strategic weapons delivery systems indicates that it seeks to be a major military power in the space domain.

‘In July 2021, the PRC conducted its first fractional orbital launch of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) with a hypersonic glide vehicle from China,’ states the Pentagon’s 2023 report. ‘This demonstrated the greatest distance flown (~40,000 kilometres) and longest flight time (~100+minutes) of any Chinese land attack weapons system to date.’ According to scholars Caitlin Talmadge and Joshua Rovner, the hypersonic glide vehicle tested in July 2021 was also nuclear-capable. However, they observe that there is no indication that a nuclear weapon was mounted atop the fractional orbital bombardment system (FOBS) used. Nevertheless, as Talmadge and Rovner portentously stated: ‘[while] China did not mount a nuclear weapon on the rocket in this test, it could do so in the future.’

Beijing is essentially enhancing its space capabilities to gain a strategic advantage over Washington. Under President Xi Jinping, Beijing has also invested heavily in satellite technology that it claims can render the ocean transparent, thus potentially enabling China to target America’s deep-sea assets. China’s ISR capabilities have been significantly enhanced due to the development of its Death Star satellite. These capabilities can potentially be leveraged in anti-submarine warfare (ASW), putting US operations and assets at sea at risk.

According to experts at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), China’s Death Star satellite is an orbital laser detection system that scans targeted areas at sea and has enhanced visibility capabilities, with penetration depths of up to 500 metres. Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) systems are not without their operational disadvantages. LIDAR lasers incur instant power loss when they hit the ocean’s surface. Various factors can negatively affect the efficacy of space-based laser systems, most notably weather conditions and oceanic currents, indicating that these systems are far from accurate or assured. Nevertheless, while these systems are not perfect, they are constantly subject to technological improvements, and such mechanisms are likely to be harnessed to maximise potential efficacy in the future.

**The United States’s ability to secure its vital interests is contingent on how effectively and credibly it deters China from space.** Especially as space serves a critical role in the United States’s ability to function militarily. According to Greg Austin, Rajeswari Rajagopalan and Timothy Wright at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), the United States relies on space for the following military capabilities: ISR; Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT); early warning of nuclear missile attack; environmental monitoring; and communications for command and control. In all, the United States has 137 military **satellites in space**—each **critical to** enabling the United States to **maintain and fulfil** its **nuclear deterrence** mission**.**

### 1NC

T Subsets

#### Substantially’ refers to all workers.

US Tax Court 65, Dudderar v. Commissioner of Internal Revenue. 44 T.C 632, Vlex. July 23, 1965. https://case-law.vlex.com/vid/dudderar-v-comm-r-890913901

[\*\*13] If the statement were "all" not modified by the word "substantially," it would refer to either 100 percent or such a small variation from 100 percent that such variation might be said to be de minimis. The word "substantially," however, is an elastic word not so easily susceptible of definition. That term as used in a provision of the Internal Revenue Acts of 1918 and 1921 dealing with corporate affiliations has been stated to mean all except a "negligible minority" interest. Ice Service Co. v. Commissioner, 30 F. 2d 230 (C.A. 2, 1929), affirming 9 B.T.A. 385 (1927). In construing these same statutes the Supreme Court in Handy & Harman v. Burnet, 284 U.S. 136 (1931), concluded that 75 percent of the shares of a related corporation "did not constitute substantially all of its stock," citing in a footnote the following cases: Ice Service v. Commissioner, 30 F. (2d) 230, 231; Commissioner v. Adolph Hirsch & Co., 30 F. (2d) 645, 646; American Auto Trimming Co. v. Lucas, 37 F. (2d) 801, 803; [\*\*14] United States v. Cleveland, P.&E. R. Co., 42 F. (2d) 413, 419; Commissioner v. Gong Bell Mfg. Co., 48 F. (2d) 205, 206; Onondaga Co. v. Commissioner, 50 F. (2d) 397, 399. The cases cited in this footnote involve percentage ownership of stock in the related corporations by the individuals specified by statute in amounts ranging from approximately 68 to approximately 85 percent. Similarly in construing the provisions with respect to affiliation contained in the Revenue Acts of 1918 and 1921 we specifically held that the combined holdings of two stockholders which were not in excess of 85.3 percent of the outstanding stock of the company which it was proposed be considered as an affiliate was insufficient to meet the statutory requirement of "substantially all," Gulf Coast Irrigation Co., 24 B.T.A. 958, 967 (1931), and cases there cited. HN5 We do not consider that the words "substantially all" as used in section 264(b)(1) should be defined to be a precise percentage to be used in every case without reference to the surrounding facts. Nevertheless section [\*\*15] 264(b)(1) does deal only with a quantitative amount in that it deals with money payments and therefore the words "substantially all" as used therein [\*638] must be given their ordinary meaning of all but a small negligible amount. 5Link to the text of the note Considering the purpose for which section 264(b)(1) was enacted, its legislative history as well as the factual situation present in the instant case, we conclude that the 73-percent payment in the instant case did not constitute "substantially all" the premiums on the insurance contract here involved. Since some uncontested adjustments were made in the notice of deficiency, Decision will be entered under Rule 50.

#### ‘Workers’ means all workers

ILO 81 – International Labor Organization, 1981, “Report VI (1): Safety and Health and the Working Environment,” International Labor Conference, 67th Session, https://webapps.ilo.org/public/libdoc/ilo/1980/80B09\_513\_engl.pdf

5. For the purpose of the proposed instrument-

(a) the term " branches of economic activity " includes work in the public service ;

(b) the term " workers " means all employed persons, including public employees ;

(c) the term "workplace" should cover all places where workers need to be or to go by reason of their work and which are under the direct or indirect control of the employer ;

(d) the term "regulations" should cover all provisions given force of law by the competent authority or authorities.

#### Vote neg for limits and ground---subsets opens the floodgates to any positive incentive or economic support for unions, and deletes the core negative ground

### 1NC

T Strengthen

#### Increasing rights decreases the strength of rights.

Frederick Schauer 82, James Goold Cutler Professor of Law at William & Mary Law School, M.B.A. from Dartmouth College, J.D. from Harvard Law School, “The strength of the liberty,” in *Free Speech: A Philosophical Enquiry*, pp. 131-153, Cambridge University Press, 1982, DG

It would seem therefore relatively uncontroversial to assert that freedom of speech is not and cannot be an absolute right. This broad statement, however, must be tempered by two highly pertinent qualifications. First, it is important to recognize not only the distinction but also the relationship between the strength of a right and the scope of a right. This terminology is but another way of expressing the distinction between coverage and protection that I discussed earlier, but the terms ‘strength’ and ‘scope’ are particularly illuminating here. The scope of a right is its range, the activities it reaches. Rights may be narrow or broad in scope. Defining the scope of free speech as freedom of self-expression is very broad, defining it as freedom of communication substantially narrower, and defining it as freedom of political communication narrower still. The strength of a right is its ability to overcome opposing interests (or values, or other rights) within its scope. This distinction is nothing new, although it is often ignored in popular dialogue about freedom of speech. The point I wish to make here is that although the scope of a right and the strength of that right are not joined by a strict logical relationship, they most often occur in inverse proportion to each other. The broader the scope of the right, the more likely it is to be weaker, largely because widening the scope increases the likelihood of conflict with other interests, some of which may be equally or more important. Conversely, rights that are narrower in scope are more easily taken to be very strong within that narrow scope. It is much easier, for example, to say that there is a very strong, almost absolute, right to purely verbal political speech than it would be to say that a right to self- expression can be as strong. Any examination of rights must first recognize this interrelationship and then try to preserve some equilibrium between scope and strength. This is easiest but not necessarily best at the extremes. Meiklejohn, for example, defined freedom of speech as freedom of political speech by those without profit motives. Within this narrow scope it was easier for him to define the right as absolute (which he did) than it would have been had he broadened the scope to include other forms of communication. Yet the more narrowly we define a right, the more likely we are to exclude from coverage those acts that may fall within the justification for recognizing the right. Freedom of speech as freedom of political deliberation gains simple absolutism at the cost of excluding much that a deep theory of the Free Speech Principle would argue for including.

**The right to join a union is distinct.**

Reggie B. Walton 11, Judge on the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, “AFGE, Local 3669 v. Shinseki,” United States District Court for the District of Columbia, Civil Action No. 08-1722, University of Kansas Libraries, Lexis

The Court finds **unpersuasive** the Under Secretary's conclusion that **all unfair labor practice** charges filed [\*\*27] under 5 U.S.C. § 7116 "are **part of** the general **collective bargaining process**." See id. at 7. HN9 The FSLMRS defines "collective bargaining" [\*348] as "the mutual obligation" of the agency and union "to consult and bargain in a good-faith effort to reach agreement with respect to the conditions of employment." 5 U.S.C. § 7103(a)(12). Regarding unfair labor practice charges, the FSLMRS authorizes the filing of a charge against an agency that has engaged in any of the eight "unfair labor practice[s]" listed at 5 U.S.C. § 7116(a)(1)-(8). Among these "unfair labor practice[s]" are actions taken by an agency "to **interfere with**, restrain, or **coerce** any employee in the exercise by the employee of any right under this chapter," id. § 7116(a)(1), "to **encourage** or **discourage** membership in any **labor organization** by discrimination in connection with **hiring**, tenure, **promotion**, or **other conditions** of employment," id. § 7116(a)(2), or—in specific reference to collective bargaining—"to refuse to consult or negotiate in good faith with a labor organization as required by this chapter," id. § 7116(a)(5). In other words, HN10 some unfair labor practice charges relate to collective bargaining, but not all of them do. [\*\*28] Indeed, nothing in the FSLMRS indicates that the right of an employee or union to file an unfair labor practice charge is necessarily part of the collective bargaining process. 7 The right to file such a charge is instead a statutory right created by the FSLMRS—one that exists apart from "the mutual obligation" of the agency and union "to consult and bargain in a good-faith effort to reach agreement with respect to the conditions of employment." See 5 U.S.C. § 7103(a)(12).

Nor does the Court find persuasive the Under Secretary's conclusion that the labor rights conferred by 5 U.S.C. § 7102 are "tied to collective bargaining." See Def.'s Mot., Ex. 1 (March 31, 2010 decision paper) at 7. Section 7102 provides as follows:

HN11 Each employee shall have the right to form, join, or assist any labor organization, or to refrain from any such activity, freely and without fear of penalty or reprisal, and each employee shall be protected in the exercise of such right. Except as otherwise provided under this chapter, such right includes the right—

(1) to act for a labor organization in the capacity of a representative and the right, in that capacity, to present the views of the labor organization to heads of agencies and other officials of the executive branch of the Government, the Congress, or other appropriate authorities, and

(2) to engage in collective bargaining [\*\*30] with respect to conditions of employment through representatives chosen by employees under this chapter.

5 U.S.C. § 7102. To be sure, an **unfair labor** practice charge premised on violations of § 7102(2) would **relate to "collective bargaining."** But the Union's charges here were based on the prefatory language of § 7102, under which employees are [\*349] guaranteed "the right to form, join, or assist any labor organization . . . freely and without fear of penalty or reprisal." Id. As the structure of § 7102 indicates, the right to **form, join, or assist** a union without reprisal is **broader** than **the right** to engage in **collective bargaining** because **the former** right **"includes" the latter** right. See id. It follows, then, that alleged **violations** of the right to **form, join, or assist** a union without reprisal **do not** necessarily implicate the right to engage in **collective bargaining**. Such is the case here, as the Union's unfair labor practice charges are based not on the Secretary's failure to engage in collective bargaining, but on alleged reprisal in violation of § 7102 for the nurses' testimony in support of the Union at the arbitration hearing.

#### Vote NEG:

#### 1. Limits---alternatives allow dozens of new categories of workers to be topical. Skirting the NEG arsenal.

#### 2. Ground---debates based off scope don’t apply to the core of the NEG arsenal, each DA is about how things are enforced, NOT who they are enforced upon.

### 1NC

ASpec

#### AFFs must specify their agent:

#### 1. Ground---they hose it, politics and trade-off DAs no longer apply, decking the negative arsenal.

#### 2. Education---the primary question for labor policy is which branch acts.

Neil Komesar 97, John and Rylla Boshard Professor at the University of Wisconsin, PhD in Economics from the University of Chicago, Imperfect Alternatives: Choosing Institutions in Law, Economics, and Public Policy, Paperback Edition, p. 4-5

My belief is that the importance of institutional choice and comparative institutional analysis is not universally shared, however. There are, in fact, dramatic anomalies in the study of law and public policy when it comes to the subject of deciding who decides. For example, one would assume that the central issue of constitutional law is the choice of who decides- the choice between alternative social decision-makers such as the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary- and that, therefore, constitutional scholarship would be replete with sophisticated analyses of these alternatives. In turn, one would assume that, when economic analysts of law-usually non-constitutional law-consider the issue of who decides these high priests of trade-offs and opportunity costs would know that one cannot decide who decides by examining only one alternative. Yet most constitutional scholars ignore the issue of who decides or at most treat it with superficial maxims. And when economic analysts of law address the subject of who decides, they often focus their attention on the attributes of only one alternative.

Constitutional law and the economic approach to law are important enough aspects of legal study that such anomalies standing alone would justify searching inquiry. But, in fact, these anomalies are only dramatic examples of pervasive problem in the analysis of law and, more generally, of public policy. Although important and controversial decisions about who decides are buried in every law and public policy issue, they often go unexamined, are treated superficially, or, at best, are analyzed in terms of the characteristics of one alternative.

### 1NC

ConCon CP

#### The United States, through a limited constitutional convention called for by at least thirty-four of the States and ratified by at least thirty-eight of the States, should increase collective bargaining rights for federal employees in the United States.

#### It solves, causes follow-on, and avoids politics

Charlie Cooper 21, President of Get Money Out Maryland and Retired Human Services Administrator, “A Convention of States is Wise and Safe”, Get Money Out Maryland – Volunteer Force of Marylanders Demanding Full Voting Rights For Every Citizen and Regulation of Big Money in Politics, https://www.getmoneyoutmd.org/peoples\_convention

When Congress fails to represent the people who elected them, the U.S. Constitution provides a path for the people to propose a Constitutional amendment through the states. Article V lays out two equal alternatives:

"The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States..."

Thus there are only two ways to amend the U.S. Constitution:

* A proposal passed by two-thirds of each chamber of Congress, then ratified by three-quarters of the states
* A proposal passed by a convention called by two-thirds of the states, then ratified by three-quarters of the states

As former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia said about this second option: "[When] the Congress is simply unwilling to give attention to many issues which it knows the people are concerned with—and which issues involve restrictions upon the federal government’s own power—I think the founders foresaw that and they provided this method in order to enable a convention to remedy that."\*

In a 2016 report, the Congressional Research Service noted that an Article V Convention “was included [in the Constitution] to provide the people, through applications by their state legislatures, with the means to call a convention having the authority to consider and propose changes to the Constitution, particularly if Congress proved incapable of, or unwilling to, initiate amendments on its own."

All 27 Amendments to the Constitution were passed using the first of the two methods: Congress proposed an amendment, then two-thirds of state legislatures ratified it. So why is a convention of states necessary to obtain a 28th Amendment? As George Mason argued when he proposed the convention language: It is necessary when Congress itself is the problem.

The 17th Amendment is the best example of a convention campaign working effectively to add an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The 17th Amendment, which allows for the popular election of U.S. Senators, came about in reaction to Senators being appointed by state legislatures until the early 1900s. That process was widely recognized as corrupt due to the disproportionate influence of wealthy individuals and special interests. In fact, the Senate became so corrupt that individual senators took nicknames such as the "Coal Senator," the "Bank Senator," and the "Oil Senator."

Citizens responded to this overt venality by using every tool of democracy available including petitions, local legislation, ballot referendums, educational campaigns, resolutions calling on Congress to propose a Constitutional amendment, and finally, after all else failed, applying for an Article V Convention to propose an amendment.

When that movement was just one state shy of the two-thirds needed to force a convention on this topic, Congress reacted by proposing an amendment requiring the direct election of U.S. Senators for the states to ratify—resulting in the 17th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The Congressional Research Service has called this technique the "prodding effect." It worked then, and it could work today.

Arguments Against an Article V Convention

Both left- and right-leaning groups—Common Cause and the John Birch Society among them—have argued vehemently against the use of Article V Conventions. They say correctly that such a convention has never been used to amend the Constitution. Never having held an Article V Convention, however, is hardly a reason to avoid one, since the framers provided this Constitutional alternative in anticipation of a time when Congress fails to represent the people. Opponents also fear the prospect of a "runaway" convention, where any topic could be proposed, possibly threatening the process for ratifying amendments or the Constitution itself. See authoritative answers to these arguments below.

Experts Respond

The Constitution’s framers foresaw a time—when Congress itself is the problem—for citizens to have the Constitutional authority to pursue an amendment through the states. That time is now: Supreme Court rulings in Citizens United and other cases have created no-holds-barred politics in which Big Money steamrolls the democratic process. A Congress that is the result of this increasingly lawless system can hardly be expected to propose an amendment to dismantle that system without an extraordinary level of public pressure. A citizens’ drive toward a convention of states under Article V would apply such pressure.

Government and legal agencies have responded to critics opposing a convention of states:

* Criticism: Individual delegates could bring up matters unrelated to those the convention was originally called to address.

Response #1: For a convention to stray from its original topic, delegates would have to propose topics that were not included in the original resolution approved by their state legislatures. Nine states to date have made it a felony for any delegate to a state-called convention to call for or vote on any topic that was not part of the original convention topic.

Response #2: The Justice Department concluded in 1987 that Article V Conventions can be called "for limited purposes, and that a variety of practical means to enforce such limitations are available." In addition, "Congress may decline to designate the mode of ratification for those proposed amendments that it determines are outside the scope of the subject matter limitation and therefore beyond the authority of the convention to propose."

### 1NC

Coercion DA

#### Federal labor policy is coercive---tramples individual rights.

Dr. Charles W. Baird 25, PhD from Berkeley, Senior Fellow at the American Institute for Economic Research, Professor Emeritus of Economics at California State University, East Bay, former Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Business and Economics at CSUEB, “Reforming Federal Laws on Private Sector Labor Unions”, https://www.cato.org/policy-analysis/reforming-federal-laws-private-sector-labor-unions

In America’s labor markets, interactions between employers and employees are generally based on voluntary exchange. Employers make offers of wages and benefits, while workers offer their services at terms that are suitable to them. In the absence of force and fraud, job providers and job applicants can bargain to reach agreement in a mutually beneficial manner.

In the early 20th century, however, the idea that employers had too much bargaining power relative to employees began gaining favor. Congress responded by passing a series of laws allowing the formation of worker cartels called labor unions, which replaced individual employment agreements with collective bargaining.

Congress imposed the Davis–Bacon Act of 1931, the Norris–LaGuardia Act of 1932, and the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) of 1935 on the private sector workforce. The laws created rules for exclusive representation, mandatory union dues, and other labor force restrictions.

These labor laws are still on the books, and they are deeply flawed. They damage the economy and violate individual rights, particularly the freedom of association. This study describes the 1930s labor laws and discusses why they should be repealed to allow greater freedom for workers and employers.

#### That outweighs.

Sylvester Petro 74, Wake Forest Professor in Toledo Law Review, Spring, p. 480

However, one may still insist, echoing Ernest Hemingway - "I believe in only one thing: liberty." And it is always well to bear in mind David Hume's observation: "It is seldom that liberty of any kind is lost all at once." Thus, it is unacceptable to say that the invasion of one aspect of freedom is of no import because there have been invasions of so many other aspects. That road leads to chaos, tyranny, despotism, and the end of all human aspiration. Ask Solzhenitsyn. Ask Milovan Dijas. In sum, if one believed in freedom as a supreme value and the proper ordering principle for any society aiming to maximize spiritual and material welfare, then every invasion of freedom must be emphatically identified and resisted with undying spirit.

### Civil Service ADV---1NC

#### 1. The damage has been done---nobody wants to go back

Mimi Montgomery 2025, Axios, “Agencies scramble to rehire federal workers after DOGE layoffs”, June 10, https://www.axios.com/local/washington-dc/2025/06/10/federal-workers-rehired-doge-layoffs, accessed 8-23-25, HMc

The intrigue: Some of the workers who've peaced out don't want to return, so the administration is trying to get around this by asking existing employees to work overtime, take on new roles, or volunteer to fill the empty spots.

What they're saying: The move is heightening wariness among federal employees already sapped from DOGE's whirlwind house cleaning.

"They wanted to show they were gutting the government, but there was no thought about what parts might be worth keeping," an FDA staffer told the Post. "Now it feels like it was all just a game to them."

#### 2. The plan is circumvented.

Jared Serbu 9/23/2025, Federal News Network’s deputy editor, “Are FLRA, OSC, MSPB ‘functionally impaired’?”, https://federalnewsnetwork.com/federal-report/2025/09/are-flra-osc-mspb-functionally-impaired/, accessed 9-23-23, HMc

There have been several cases this year in which federal employees and unions have had their cases thrown out by judges because, in general, federal employment disputes are supposed to be handled by administrative agencies like the Merit Systems Protection Board and the Federal Labor Relations Authority, not U.S. district courts.

But what if those agencies are no longer operating in the ways Congress intended when they were established in law? Does that give federal courts more latitude to decide they have jurisdiction over federal employment policies? A new decision by a federal judge in San Francisco at least hints at that prospect.

In a Sept. 12 ruling that found the Office of Personnel Management illegally ordered agencies to fire nearly 25,000 probationary employees, U.S. District Judge William Alsup said the agencies have become “functionally impaired” for various reasons. While he didn’t make his decision on that basis, he used a portion of the opinion to take aim at the government’s argument that employees can and must take their employment disputes to those executive branch agencies, not federal district courts.

Leadership replacements and policy changes

Beginning with the Office of Special Counsel — the office that’s supposed to investigate federal agencies when they engage in prohibited personnel practices — critics, including Alsup, argue that the administration created a conflict of interest when it fired Hampton Dellinger, the Senate-confirmed special counsel, and then appointed an acting leader, Jamieson Greer, who also heads the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. In other words, the leader of an office that’s supposed to investigate federal agencies also heads one of those federal agencies.

And when the White House fired Dellinger, OSC also dramatically changed its view of what federal employment law says with regard to probationary workers and how they can be fired.

“Whereas under Senate-confirmed Special Counsel Dellinger the ‘OSC [had] made certain claims’ that terminating probationers in droves was contrary to law, his replacement has ‘repudiated [those claims] in full,’ and even put them on their head,” Alsup wrote. “Now, per the current OSC, agencies that have terminated probationers en masse have complied with the ‘appropriate’ policies of OPM, and ‘have [not] effectuated a constructive RIF.’ Rather, it is the agencies that have not terminated probationers in droves that ‘have failed to abide by the regulatory mandate to use the probationary period as a tool to screen out inadequate or unsuitable probationers.’”

Meanwhile, the Merit Systems Protection Board, the independent agency that’s supposed to hear individual employees’ claims of agency wrongdoing on personnel issues, is operating without a quorum since April, when President Trump fired one of its members, Cathy Harris. The MSPB can still take some actions via its administrative law judges, but with only one member seated on what’s supposed to be a three-member board, it can’t render final decisions, if, for example, the agency or the employee disagrees and wants to exercise their right to have the full board make a determination.

And, the Federal Labor Relations Authority — the agency that’s supposed to adjudicate disputes between federal agencies and unions — also has quorum problems after President Trump fired then-Chairwoman Susan Tsui Grundman. She is fighting her termination in court, but for now, FLRA has only two members.

“Yes, it does have two of three members, which suffices for quorum to decide matters. But where the two disagree, two is no better than one or none,” Alsup wrote. “For example, in 2024, the FLRA decided six matters in July; in 2025, the FLRA decided just one matter in July.”

Added all together, the judge wrote, “The administrative schemes have stopped doing as much work as before (FLRA), have stopped doing any work at all (MSPB), or have started working for the other side (OSC).”

#### 3. Rolling back labor protections will stimulate anti-Trump militancy among the federal workforce now, containing his agenda. The aff reverses.

Joseph A. McCartin 25, April 1; PhD, professor and director of Georgetown University’s Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor and president of the Labor and Working-Class History Association; Dissent Magazine, "Will Federal Workers Rediscover Their Militancy?" https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online\_articles/will-federal-workers-rediscover-their-militancy/

What Next?

While the Trump order threatens to produce a veritable nuclear winter in U.S. labor relations, its very radicalism makes its long-term impact more unpredictable. The past is full of cautionary tales reminding us that the more an ambitious actor tries to bend history to their will, the more likely the unintended consequences of their actions will undo their grand plans.

One unintended consequence of Trump’s move is that it could very well rouse the union movement and its allies to a more confrontational opposition to his agenda than anyone could have foreseen. Up to this point, federal unions have confined their resistance to filing lawsuits and contract grievances, circulating petitions, holding rallies, and lobbying legislators. Unions have not contemplated job actions to date in large part because they are forbidden by law; engaging in them could lead workers to lose their jobs and cost unions their certifications as bargaining agents, as happened in the PATCO case. But will calculations change in a world where workers no longer feel protected by civil service regulations and their unions have already been decertified for all intents and purposes?

As the sociologist C. Wright Mills observed long ago, where they are firmly established unions tend to act as “managers of discontent.” They seek to direct their members’ grievances into channels that might produce significant—if usually incremental—gains, and to restrain their members from actions that might threaten the union’s survival or damage its credibility as a reliable negotiating partner in the eyes of management. Yet what happens to workers’ discontent when unions are no longer able to play that role? And what happens to union behavior when the system in which they have invested and from which they derived their own stability is shattered?

Up to this point, most federal workers have operated as though the old assumptions still hold true, believing that the terms and conditions under which they work cannot be revoked by one man’s politically motivated order. Most federal unions believed that a presidential fiat could not override the protections they had under the CSRA as long as their organizations abided by its rules.

As the old order crumbles, however, faith in the courts’ ability or willingness to stand up to Trump’s aggression is waning. On the day after he announced his union-busting executive order, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled 2–1 that Trump had the authority to fire Cathy Harris of the MSPB and Gwynne Wilcox of the National Labor Relations Board in the middle of their Senate-confirmed terms. In his concurring opinion, Judge Justin Walker, a Trump appointee, argued that the Constitution’s framers vested in the president “full responsibility for the executive power.” It seems likely that a majority of justices on the current Supreme Court will arrive at the same conclusion when Trump’s wholesale restructuring of federal labor relations reaches their docket—unless something changes the present dynamic.

Can unions bring about that change? The day after Trump’s order was announced, the AFL-CIO acknowledged the existential threat it posed. “No union contract is safe after last night,” it said. Yet whether unions feel incentivized to resist Trump’s attack with more than rhetoric, lobbying, and redoubled lawsuits is an open question. Union leaders realize that the sudden conversion of federal workers to what is effectively at-will employment status and the simultaneous termination of their bargaining rights merely puts them in the same position as the vast majority of private-sector workers, who lack both union representation and employment security. Could the public be stirred to support government workers in a confrontation with the Trump administration? Uncertain of the answer, union leaders are likely to continue to take a cautious approach to this crisis—at least in the near term. Yet even if union leaders do not seek it, an escalating confrontation is more likely now than it has been in generations.

It is worth remembering that federal labor relations were not always as pacific as they have been in recent decades. One reason that Kennedy signed his 1962 executive order was to head off growing unrest among federal employees. Although it has long been illegal for federal workers to engage in strikes, such actions were not uncommon during the years when the system of federal labor relations was under construction. (Between 1956 and 1961, there were ninety-two work stoppages at Cape Canaveral, where America’s space program was based.) Nor did the Kennedy and Nixon executive orders eliminate such activity. Between 1962 and 1981 federal workers engaged in thirty-nine illegal work stoppages.

Unrest among federal workers peaked in March 1970—after the executive orders were promulgated. In that month, hundreds of thousands of postal workers defied the federal ban on striking and staged an eight-day wildcat walkout, frustrated by their inability to negotiate over pay under the government’s limited form of collective bargaining. When Nixon called out the National Guard to deliver the mail, postal workers held firm and only returned to work after they were promised a wage increase. Just as they returned to work, several thousand air traffic controllers staged a seventeen-day sickout to protest the Federal Aviation Administration’s refusal to negotiate with their union. Both job actions produced results. The walkout made it possible for postal workers to win the creation of the U.S. Postal Service, a semi-autonomous federal agency that was allowed to bargain with them over their pay. For their part, air traffic controllers were able to speed up the official recognition of PATCO as their exclusive bargaining agent. It was only after PATCO’s ill-fated 1981 strike that job actions by federal workers became exceedingly rare.

Trump’s radical executive order could reawaken this long-dormant tradition of collective action among otherwise seemingly docile federal workers. Such actions, should they arise, will likely not take the form of a strike. There is a long history of slowdowns, sickouts, and work-to-rule actions by federal workers. Such actions are often difficult for the government to detect, let alone defuse. And they do not require official union sanction. Indeed, like the postal workers’ 1970 wildcat strike, these activities tend to be more effective and harder to defeat when they are unofficial.

Prior to Trump’s executive order, federal unions were experiencing a surge in membership. Moribund locals were springing to life and new ones were in the process of formation. A new group, the Federal Unionists Network, emerged to coordinate activity at the grassroots level across many agencies and unions. This energy will undoubtedly seek an outlet. If there are no longer structures in place to direct that energy into orderly channels, then it could take surprising forms in the months ahead.

#### 4. No civil servants’ impact---Trump won’t listen. This independently takes out every other impact.

Selena Simmons-Duffin 8/8, Health Policy Correspondent at NPR; Domenico Montanaro is Senior Political Editor/Correspondent at NPR, “How a Distrust of Experts is Shaping Government Policy Under Trump,” NPR, 8/8/25, https://www.npr.org/2025/08/08/nx-s1-5494569/how-a-distrust-of-experts-is-shaping-government-policy-under-trump

President Trump and members of his administration have often expressed a distrust of science and experts. That distrust is now helping to shape policies in several areas of government, from vaccines and health care to trade and the economy.

MARY LOUISE KELLY, HOST: Last week, the Trump administration canceled approximately $500 million in contracts to develop mRNA vaccines that protect the nation against future viral threats. The move alarmed public health experts. That was big news. But disregarding the advice of experts is nothing new for this administration, whether it's about health policy or other areas of government work like, say, the economy or foreign aid, just to name two. We want to hear more about the broader implications of that distrust of science and expertise, so for the next few minutes, we're going to turn the microphone over to two NPR reporters who have been following this closely - health policy correspondent Selena Simmons-Duffin and senior political editor and correspondent Domenico Montanaro.

DOMENICO MONTANARO, BYLINE: This decision at HHS canceling all this money for mRNA vaccines is kind of wild to me because it feels like a reversal from Trump's first term. He pushed to develop these vaccines in the first place.

SELENA SIMMONS-DUFFIN, BYLINE: Yeah, you know, it is, in some ways, a dramatic U-turn from the first Trump administration, which was in place when the COVID-19 pandemic began. So under Trump, the National Institutes for Health and private pharmaceutical companies collaborated to create vaccines incredibly fast. And you remember that effort was called Operation Warp Speed. And the speed was possible because the vaccines were built using this relatively new mRNA platform. The vaccines weren't perfect. There were a lot of breakthrough infections, but they are credited with saving many, many lives and preventing hospitalizations. And since that success, many scientists have been excited to figure out what else mRNA technology can do.

However, mRNA vaccines have also been a longtime target of Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who is now the U.S. health secretary. He built his reputation and fortune by disparaging vaccines and suing drugmakers and regulators. He once tweeted that the COVID vaccines were, quote, "a crime against humanity." And even though he reassured senators during his confirmation hearing he wasn't going to bring his anti-vaccine activism to this new, very powerful role, that's exactly what he has done, and this is the latest example of that. And President Trump seems to be happy with this development, even though he used to call Operation Warp Speed and the vaccines it produced a miracle.

MONTANARO: Yeah. I mean, he's not going to put his neck out there, you know, to stand up for them anymore as a miracle, as he did describe them. But, you know, the fact is COVID was a huge political problem for Trump. He was trying to find anything that would help solve the problem and help him politically. But his handling overall of that is arguably why he lost in 2020. You know, many in his base turned on the vaccines. So Trump had to wind up walking this very fine line.

There was a huge overlap with RFK Jr.'s base of people who'd long, you know, been seen as on the fringe, and Trump needed them in 2024. But Trump really doesn't have very strongly held beliefs on this topic. You know, remember, he's also expressed his own skepticism about vaccines, so now Trump's allowing RFK Jr. the room to run, regardless of the best science because his movement and that of so many right-wing populist movements around the world, by the way, are dependent on this distrust of expertise.

SIMMONS-DUFFIN: Yeah. And, you know, Secretary Kennedy has really disparaged the Department of Health and Human Services, which he now oversees. He's laid the blame for American population - the American population's relatively poor health on rank-and-file HHS employees. He says they failed to improve America's health for decades. He's pointed to that as justification for abruptly firing approximately 10,000 workers, shutting down federal labs, canceling billions in funding for public health departments and researchers. And he doesn't just say these experts are ineffective. He told Lara Trump on Fox News that they're deliberately manipulating the truth.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING) ROBERT F KENNEDY JR:

ROBERT F KENNEDY JR: There's all kinds of biases, and we need to have a system in place that will account for those biases and that will produce the best gold-standard science for Americans and evidence-based medicine.

SIMMONS-DUFFIN: Kennedy talks about gold-standard science constantly, but he doesn't really define what he means. He said in his confirmation hearings this isn't just a label he uses for research whose results fit with his preconceived beliefs. He says it's more objective than that. But gold-standard science is not a term that's used among scientists, and he seems to be using it as a filter for what research gets funding and credibility and what can be brushed aside.

MONTANARO: Yeah. And Kennedy isn't the only member of this administration with a deep distrust of experts. You know, there's this anti-elitism, anti-intellectualism, this distrust in the experts. It's really something that's fueled Trump's politics. That was made explicit in the October vice presidential debate. Listen to now-Vice President JD Vance then strongly disagreeing with the idea that it's important to listen to the experts - in this case - about health.

#### 5. No disease impact.

Dr. Ilan Noy 22, Chair in the Economics of Disasters and Climate Change at the Victoria University of Wellington, PhD from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and Dr. Tomáš Uher, PhD, Professor at Masaryk University, “Four New Horsemen of an Apocalypse? Solar Flares, Super-volcanoes, Pandemics, and Artificial Intelligence”, Economics of Disasters and Climate Change, 1/15/2022, SpringerLink

High-Mortality Pandemics

A naturally occurring pandemic (i.e., not from an engineered pathogen) that would threaten human extinction is a very small probability event. However, historical accounts point to several instances where disease spread played an important role in causing very significant decline of specific populations. For example, the introduction of novel diseases to the Native American population during the European colonization of the Americas had deadly consequences. It is difficult to distinguish the effects of the diseases that came with the Europeans from the war and conflict they also brought with them. Nevertheless, during the first hundred years of the colonization period, the American population may have been reduced by as much as 90% (Ord 2020).

Moreover, two major pandemic events, the Justinian Plague in the sixth century and the Black Death in the fourteenth century appear to have been severe enough to cause a significant population decline of tens of percent in the populations they affected. Both events are believed to have been caused by plague, an infectious disease caused by the bacteria Yersinia Pestis (Christakos et al. 2005; Allen 1979). While there is a certain degree of uncertainty involved in studying these events’ societal impacts, historical accounts in combination with modern scientific methods provide us with some valuable insights into the effects they may have had on the societies of the time.

With respect to the possibility of a future catastrophic global pandemic, it appears that this risk is increasing significantly along with the advances in the field of synthetic biology and the rising possibility of an accidental or intentional release of an engineered pathogen. While some of the scientific efforts in the field of synthetic biology are directed towards increasing our understanding and our ability to prevent future catastrophic epidemic threats, the risk stemming from these activities is non-trivial, and may outweigh their benefits.

The Justinian Plague

The Justinian Plague severely affected the people of Europe and East Asia, though estimates of its overall mortality vary. Focusing exclusively on the first wave of the pandemic (AD 541–544), Muehlhauser (2017) suggests the pandemic was associated with a 20% mortality in the Byzantine empire. This estimate is based on the mortality rate estimated for the empire’s capital, Constantinople, by Stathakopoulos (2007) to produce a death toll of roughly 5.6 million. For a longer time span, AD 541 to 600, which included subsequent waves of the plague, scholars estimate a higher mortality rate of 33–50% (Allen 1979; Meier 2016).

The demographic changes associated with this high mortality led to a significant disruption of economic activity in the Byzantine empire (Gârdan 2020). A decline in the labour force caused a decline in agricultural production which led to food shortages and famine (Meier 2016). Trade also collapsed. Decreased tax revenues caused by the population decline initiated a major fiscal contraction and consequently a military crisis for the empire (Sarris 2002; Meier 2016). In the longer run, however, the massive reduction of the labour force appears to have had a positive economic effect for the surviving laborers, as the increased marginal value of labour caused a rise in real wages and per capita incomes. These beneficial effects for the survivors were also observed after the Black Death (Pamuk and Shatzmiller 2014; Findlay and Lundahl 2017).

The mortality and the disruption of activity the plague caused in the Byzantine empire also led to further direct and indirect cultural and religious consequences. Meier (2016) particularly highlights the plague’s indirect effect of an increase in liturgification (a process of religious permeation and internalization throughout society as defined by Meier 2020), the rise of the Marian cult, and the sacralization of the emperor.

The direct and indirect effects of the plague also appear to have had far-reaching and long-term political repercussions. The societal disruptions caused by the plague are believed to have significantly weakened the position of the Byzantine empire and arguably led to the decline of the Sasanian empire (Sabbatani et al. 2012). Interestingly, the pandemic indirectly favoured the nomadic Arab tribes who were less vulnerable to the contagion while traveling through desert and semi-desert environments during the initial expansion of Islam (Sabbatani et al. 2012).

Of note is the absence of a scientific consensus on the severity of the Justinian Plague’s impacts. For example, Mordechai and Eisenberg (2019) and Mordechai et al. (2019) argue against the maximalist interpretation of the historical evidence described above. They suggest that the estimated mortality rate of the plague is exaggerated, and that the pandemic was not a primary cause of the transformational demographic, political and economic changes in the Mediterranean region between the sixth and eighth century. Recently, White and Mordechai (2020) highlighted the high likelihood of the plague having different impacts in the urban areas of the Mediterranean outside of Constantinople.

The Black Death

The Black Death which ravaged Europe, North Africa, and parts of Asia in the middle of the fourteenth century is considered the deadliest pandemic in human history and potentially the most severe global catastrophe to have ever struck mankind. With respect to its mortality, Ord (2020) argues that the best estimate of its global mortality rate is 5–14% of the global population, largely based on Muehlhauser (2017).

The plague created a large demographic shock in the affected regions. It reduced the European population by approximately 30–50% during the 6 years of its initial outbreak (Ord 2020). It took approximately two centuries for the population levels to recover (Livi-Bacci 2017; Jedwab et al. 2019b). As the mortality rates appear to have been the highest among the working-age population, the effects on the labour force were acute (Pamuk 2007).

The plague's mortality, morbidity and the associated societal disruption led to a major decline in economic output both in Europe (Pamuk 2007) and the Middle East (Dols 2019). In Europe, however, this decline in economic output was smaller than the decline in population; output per capita began to increase within a few years of the initial outbreak (Pamuk 2007).

The large demographic shock caused by the plague led to a shift in the relative price of labour which, similarly to the Justinian Plague, had a positive impact on wages. With a reduced labour force, real wages and per capita incomes in many European countries increased and were sustained at higher levels for several centuries (Voigtländer and Voth 2013a; Jedwab et al. 2020; Pamuk and Shatzmiller 2014). Scott and Duncan (2001) point out that real wages approximately doubled in most countries of Europe in the century following the plague.

An additional insight into the long-run relationship between the Black Death’s mortality and per capita incomes in Europe is offered by Voigtländer and Voth (2013a). Using a Malthusian model, they suggest that over time, the rise in income caused by the plague’s mortality led to an increase in urbanization and trade. Furthermore, the increased tax burden (per capita), combined with the contemporary political climate, increased the frequency of wars. Consequently, higher urbanization and trade led to an increase in disease spread which along with a more frequent war occurrence caused a long-term increase in mortality and a further positive effect on per capita incomes. In this way, the Black Death appears to have created a long-lasting environment of high-mortality and high-income specifically in Western Europe, functioning as an important contributing factor to its economic growth in the next centuries (Alfani 2020). However, while in Western Europe incomes remained elevated over the next centuries, in Southern Europe they began to decline as the Southern European population started recovering after AD 1500 (Jedwab et al. 2020).

Apart from the positive effects on wages, the increased marginal value of labour combined with other factors had further economic and social implications. A decreased relative value of land and the lack of workforce to use it effectively caused land prices and land rents to decrease (Jedwab et al. 2020; Pamuk 2007). A decreased marginal value of capital assets in general led to a lapse in the enforcement of property rights (Haddock and Kiesling 2002). Interest rates and real rates of return on assets also decreased (Pamuk 2007; Jedwab et al. 2020; Pamuk and Shatzmiller 2014; Jordà et al. 2021; Clark 2016).

Higher wages in combination with a relative abundance of land increased people’s access to land/home ownership, likely reducing social inequality (Alfani 2020). On the other end of the income distribution, decreased incomes for landowners led to an overall decrease in income inequality (Jedwab et al. 2020; Alfani and Murphy 2017).

With respect to the effects on agriculture, the structure of agricultural output moved away from cereals to other crops following the plague. Furthermore, the workforce shortages and the incentives to increase the labour supply are believed to have caused a shift from male-labour intensive arable farming towards pastoral farming, consequently raising the demand for female labour (Voigtländer and Voth 2013b). However, while the Black Death appears to have caused certain structural agricultural changes, Clark (2016) finds no effect of the plague on agricultural productivity in the long run.

In terms of other social consequences, the evidence suggests that the plague's mortality reduced labour coercion, particularly throughout Western Europe (Jedwab et al. 2020; Haddock and Kiesling 2002; Gingerich and Vogler 2021). The increased bargaining power of labour caused by the plague’s demographic shock contributed to and accelerated the decline in serfdom and development of a free labour regime. Gingerich and Voler (2021) further argue that these effects may have had long-lasting political implications and that a decline of repressive labour practices (such as serfdom) permitted the development of more inclusive political institutions. They find that the regions with the highest mortality were more likely to develop participatory political institutions and more equitable land ownership systems. They find that centuries later, In Germany, the populations in these high-mortality regions were less likely to vote for Hitler’s National Socialist (Nazi) Party in the 1930 and 1932 elections in Germany.

However, the positive effects on the emergence of freer labour did not take place in Eastern Europe, where serfdom was sustained and even intensified. Robinson and Torvik (2011) attempt to explain this asymmetry arguing that these differential outcomes may have been caused by the varying power and quality of institutions. The authors suggest that opportunities generated by the increased bargaining power of labour, in an environment of weak institutions, were less likely to lead to a positive effect than in the case of regions with stronger institutions (with more robust rule-of-law or less corrupt or predatory practices).

Apart from causing a negative demographic shock to the affected populations, the Black Death appears to have caused further indirect demographic changes, particularly in Western Europe. The increased employment opportunities for females caused by worker shortages and a higher female labour demand led to a decline in fertility rates and an increased age of marriage (Voigtländer and Voth 2013b). This demographic transition to a population characterized by lower birth rates likely helped to preserve the high levels of per capita incomes and contributed to further economic development of certain parts of Europe, enabling it to escape the “Malthusian trap” in the following centuries (Pamuk 2007). Siuda and Sunde (2021) confirm the pandemic’s effect on the accelerated demographic transition empirically, as they find that greater pandemic mortality was associated with an earlier onset of the demographic transition across the various regions of Germany.

Unfortunately, the Black Death also led to an increase in the persecution of Jews (Finley and Koyama 2018; Jedwab et al. 2019a). Interestingly, Jedwab et al. (2019a) were able to estimate that in the case of regions with the highest mortality rates, the probability of persecution decreased if the Jewish minority was believed to benefit the local economy.

It is important to highlight that the long-term repercussions of the Black Death were highly asymmetrical. While in Western Europe the pandemic appears to have led to some long-term dynamic shifts associated with increased wages, decreased inequality and a decrease in labour coercion, this was not the case for other regions. A decrease in wages was observed for example in Spain (Alfani 2020) and Egypt. In Spain, the plague's demographic impact on an already scarce population caused a long-lasting negative disruption to the local trade-oriented economy. The workforce disruption in Egypt led to a collapse of the labour-intensive irrigation system for growing crops in the Nile valley, with consequent disastrous effects on the rural economy (Alfani 2020). Borsch (2005) argues that the economic decline in Egypt caused by the Black Death “put an end to the power in the heartland of the Arab world” (p. 114) and to the impressive scientific and technological developments that came out of this region.

A consensus for an explanation of the Black Death’s varied impacts across regions, and their determinants, does not appear to exist. However, several researchers attempt to provide partial insights. For example, Alfani (2020) considers the differential outcomes to be broadly dependent upon the initial conditions in each region. More specifically, both Robinson and Torvik (2011) and Pamuk (2007) propose that the asymmetry of impacts can largely be explained by the differences in the institutional environments of the affected societies.

It is argued that the Black Death defined the threshold between the medieval and the modern ages, similarly to the way the Justinian Plague did for antiquity and the Middle Ages (Horden 2021). Furthermore, the differential long-term outcomes of the Black Death likely provided a significant contribution to the so-called “Great Divergence” between Europe and the rest of the world and the “Little Divergence” between North-western and Southern and Eastern Europe (Jedwab et al. 2020; Pamuk 2007).

From this perspective, it would seem rational to conclude that apart from causing substantial and long-term demographic, economic, political, and cultural changes, both the Justinian Plague and the Black Death likely significantly altered the course of human history.

Considering the above, it is not unreasonable to expect that a pandemic of a similar magnitude to these past catastrophes would do the same in the present day. However, what societal impacts a pandemic of similar or higher mortality would inflict in the twenty-first century has not really been the subject of any study, as far as we were able to identify. A possibility exists, given the newly developed capacity of humanity to create new pathogens, that the outcomes of a future catastrophic pandemic will be even more adverse than those of the Justinian Plague and the Black Death.

Probability

In terms of the probability of naturally occurring pandemics, an informal survey of participants of the Global Catastrophic Risk Conference in Oxford in 2008 shows that the median estimate for a probability of a natural pandemic killing more than 1 billion people before the year 2100 was surveyed to be 5%, and the probability of such pandemic to cause human extinction was 0.05%. Ord (2020) uses a slightly broader definition of existential risk, which apart from human extinction also includes a permanent reduction of human potential. He estimates the probability of an existential risk stemming from a natural pandemic in the next 100 years to be 0.01%.

#### 6. No pollution impact.

Jennifer Bernstein 24, May 2; Editor in Chief for Case Studies in the Environment, Senior Fellow Liaison at the Breakthrough Institute, Adjunct Faculty at Tarleton State University; The Academic, “Climate in crisis: The deceptive call of the apocalypse,” https://theacademic.com/climate-crisis-deceptive-call-of-apocalypse/

“Planetary boundaries” are problematic

Much of the apocalyptic rhetoric is based on the idea that quantifiable limits, once breached, signal the end of life on this planet. Johan Rockström and colleagues coined the term in 2009. It defines nine biophysical factors—land-use change, biodiversity loss, nitrogen and phosphorous levels, freshwater use, ocean acidification, climate change, ozone depletion, aerosol loading, and chemical pollution—which are “hard boundaries”. The appeal of the Planetary Boundaries hypothesis lies in its clarity and clear directives.

But like so many scientific theories, the concept of planetary boundaries does not emerge objectively from science; rather, it is the product of a number of methodological—and sometimes prescriptive—decisions made by very human scientists at a particular place and time.

Rockström clearly stated that the Planetary Boundary hypothesis was a normative project. But science is infused with problematic assumptions. For one, planetary boundaries are determined using the global scale. Assuredly, one of the nine factors—climate—is global in scope. However, the other eight factors vary at the local and regional scale. Some, like biodiversity, have no global tipping point at all. Despite appearing as hard science, the Planetary Boundaries hypothesis is part of science and advocacy.

#### 7. No ozone impact.

Simon Torkington 24, Madeleine North; November 28; Senior Writer; World Economic Forum, “The ozone layer is on the path to recovery: Here's how the world made it happen,” https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/11/ozone-layer-hole-update-nasa/#:~:text=In%20January%202023%2C%20an%20UN,Air%20Actions%20in%20Cities%20report.

In January 2023, an UN-backed scientific panel published its latest assessment report. It confirms that 99% of ozone-depleting gases have been phased out. Projections from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) suggest the Antarctic ozone layer will recover to 1980 levels by around 2066, with recovery in the rest of the world between 2040 and 2045.

UNEP says international action to restore the ozone layer has protected millions of people from cancer: “Without this treaty, ozone depletion would have increased tenfold by 2050 compared to current levels, and resulted in millions of additional cases of melanoma, other cancers and eye cataracts. It has been estimated, for example, that the Montreal Protocol is saving an estimated 2 million people annually by 2030 from skin cancer.”

It's a positive and reassuring example of how the international community can come together to resolve a global environmental challenge. But on the wider issue of the climate crisis, the world is still "massively off track to limiting global warming to 1.5°C," warns the UN. And power plants run on fossil fuels account for around 14% of global population exposure to particle pollution and ozone, according to the World Economic Forum's Clean Air Actions in Cities report. Addressing the issue can not only improve health outcomes, it says, but also enable progress towards the world's climate goals.

### Presidency ADV---1NC

#### 1. Loyalists are inevitable---Trump has every intent to do so.

#### 2. This is offense---giving bargaining rights to loyalists locks in authoritarian policy and prevents democratic accountability

Nicholas Handler 2024, Thomas C. Grey Fellow and Lecturer in Law, Stanford Law School, “SEPARATION OF POWERS BY CONTRACT: HOW COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RESHAPES PRESIDENTIAL POWER”, https://nyulawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/99-NYU-L-Rev-45.pdf#page=31.46, accessed 8-20-25, HMc

The Trump Administration saw the full reversal of labor’s position from insurgent outsider to privileged insider in immigration policymaking, and of labor law from a stumbling block of enforcement policy to a primary driver of it. As a candidate, Donald Trump had actively sought the support of immigration enforcement unions, which took the unprecedented step of endorsing him.257 Brandon Judd became a prominent advisor of the Trump campaign, and later of the transition team, and Trump actively campaigned to earn the support of rankand-file agents, for instance by appearing on a Border Patrol Council podcast sponsored by Breitbart News.258 With his election, President Trump granted the unions extensive access to the White House and allowed them to exert considerable influence on agency management. The administration took a number of policy cues from the unions on key issues, for example, by deciding to oppose so-called “catch-and-release” policies directing CBP agents to release many detained immigrants without criminal records.259 President Trump also appeared to defer to them in regards to CBP leadership, replacing Mark Morgan, an agency outsider who had been criticized by the unions, with an insider favored by labor.260 The ICE Council likewise successfully pressured the Trump Administration to withdraw his nominee for ICE Director, Ron Vitiello, in favor of a “tougher” candidate.261

Most dramatically, the Trump Administration sought to entrench the political power of unions with expansive new contracts. When CBP negotiated a new contract in 2019, Brandon Judd negotiated the agreement directly with President Trump, bypassing the CBP Director.262 The contract granted the union extensive new rights, including expansive rights to challenge and negotiate changes to staffing and enforcement policy.263 It also expanded the union’s power through an extraordinarily generous grant of official time.264 While most federal unions lost considerable official time under President Trump’s Executive Order 13,837, the National Border Patrol Council received a three-fold increase to 150,000 hours, far exceeding the 18,000 hours to which it would have been entitled under the Administration’s standard formula.265

The contract awarded to the ICE Council in 2020 follows a similar pattern but reflects an even more explicit attempt by the President to entrench the power of loyal unions. The agreement authorized over 85,000 hours of official time, nearly twice what is granted to the union representing USCIS, despite ICE having half the staff.266 The contract also paid per diems for union-related travel expenses, despite such concessions being prohibited by Trump’s own EO 13,837. More unusual still, under the agreement, ICE expressly waived its management rights to alter employees’ working conditions at will when necessary for agency operations; instead, the new contract required ICE to bargain with the union before implementing any change to working conditions, effectively giving the union a veto over any meaningful changes in enforcement policy.267 The extraordinary nature of the contract is reflected in the chaotic process by which it was signed. The agreement was signed by Ken Cuccinelli, then serving as the de facto deputy head of DHS on January 19, 2021, the day before President Biden’s inauguration.268 Cuccinelli signed in lieu of Jonathan Fahey, the former Director of ICE, who resigned after “being pressured” to sign the agreement and refusing.269 After the agreement was leaked by an agency whistleblower, President Biden rescinded it within the thirty day window for disapproval authorized by the CSRA.270 But the contract, which would otherwise have taken effect, provides an example of the extremes to which labor rights can be stretched to influence and constrain agency policy when the parties are sufficiently motivated.

#### 3. Trump errs towards restraint.

Andrew Byers and Randall L. Schweller 24, Nonresident Fellow at Texas A&M University’s Albritton Center for Grand Strategy; Professor of Political Science and Director of the Program for the Study of Realist Foreign Policy at Ohio State University, “Trump the Realist”, Foreign Affairs, 7/1/24, accessed 9/2/24, https://archive.is/sUiIu#selection-1221.0-1224.0

In his first term, Trump’s realist instincts were frequently thwarted by his senior national security advisers. But the former president’s inclination for restraint nonetheless shaped his policies. Trump avoided new military entanglements, began extricating the United States from its 20-year occupation of Afghanistan, and engaged adversarial states such as China, North Korea, and Russia in ways that lessened the possibility of conflict. He shifted the burden of paying for mutual defense to allies and away from American taxpayers. He talked tough as a means of pressuring other leaders and appeasing his domestic base. But he never acted like a neoconservative primacist. Even when it came to Iran, the country toward which he was most belligerent, Trump always pulled back from the brink of using significant military force.

#### 4. No DPT impact.

Robert Skidelsky 22, Member of the British House of Lords, Professor Emeritus of Political Economy at Warwick University, "The False Promise of Democratic Peace," 4-19-2022, https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/democratic-peace-theory-is-wrong-by-robert-skidelsky-2022-04

The argument that democracy is inherently “peaceful,” and dictatorship or autocracy “warlike,” is intuitively attractive. It does not deny that states pursue their own interests; but it assumes that the interests of democratic states will reflect common values like human rights, and that those interests will be pursued in a less bellicose manner (since democratic processes require negotiation of differences). Democratic governments are accountable to their people, and the people have an interest in peace, not war.

By contrast, according to this view, rulers and elites in dictatorships are illegitimate and therefore insecure, which leads them to seek popular support by whipping up animosity toward foreigners. If democracy replaced dictatorship everywhere, world peace would follow automatically.

This belief rests on two propositions that have been extremely influential in international relations theory, even though they are poorly grounded theoretically and empirically. The first is the notion that a state’s external behavior is determined by its domestic constitution – a view that ignores the influence the international system can have on a country’s domestic politics. As the American political scientist Kenneth N. Waltz argued in his 1979 book, The Theory of International Politics, “international anarchy” conditions the behavior of states more than the behavior of states creates international anarchy.

Waltz’s “world-systems theory” perspective is particularly useful in an age of globalization. One must look to the structure of the international system to “predict” how individual states will behave, regardless of their domestic constitutions. “If each state, being stable, strove only for security, and had no designs on its neighbors, all states would nevertheless remain insecure,” he observed, “for the means of security for one state are, in their very existence, the means by which other states are threatened.”

Waltz offered a bracing antidote to the facile assumption that democratic habits are easily transferable from one location to another. Rather than trying to spread democracy, he suggested that it would be better to try to reduce global insecurity.

Though there is undeniably some correlation between democratic institutions and peaceful habits, the direction of causation is disputable. Was it democracy that made Europe peaceful after 1945? Or did the US nuclear umbrella, the fixing of borders by the victors, and Marshall Plan-fueled economic growth finally make it possible for non-communist Europe to accept democracy as its political norm? The political scientist Mark E. Pietrzyk contends that, “Only states which are relatively secure – politically, militarily, economically – can afford to have free, pluralistic societies; in the absence of this security, states are much more likely to adopt, maintain, or revert to centralized, coercive authority structures.”

The second proposition is that democracy is the natural form of the state, which people everywhere will spontaneously adopt if allowed to. This dubious assumption makes regime change seem easy, because the sanctioning powers can rely on the welcoming support of those whose freedom has been repressed and whose rights have been trampled underfoot.

By drawing superficial comparisons with postwar Germany and Japan, the apostles of democratization grossly underestimate the difficulties of installing democracies in societies that lack Western constitutional traditions. The results of their handiwork can be seen in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, and many African countries.

Democratic peace theory is, above all, lazy. It provides an easy explanation for “warlike” behavior without considering the location and history of the states involved. This shallowness lends itself to overconfidence that a quick dose of economic sanctions or bombing is all that is needed to cure a dictatorship of its unfortunate affliction.