# 2NC

## CP

### Overview---2NC

### AT: PDB

### AT: Perm Plan

### Yes solves

### AT: it’s bad

### ---AT: Lazy/Productivity---2NC

#### Real world experiments disprove the link.

Standing 20 – Professor of Labor Economics and Development Studies at the University of London, Co-Founder of the Basic Income Earth Network, former Director of the International Labor Organization’s Socio-Economic Security Programme, PhD in Economics from the University of Cambridge, M.A. in Labor Economics and Industrial Relations from the University of Illinois.

Guy Standing, “The Case for a Basic Income,” Great Transition Initiative, 11/2020, https://greattransition.org/gti-forum/basic-income-standing

Other critics take issue with the universality of a basic income. A basic income, such critics note, would provide “something for nothing” to the undeserving and thereby promote laziness. To the contrary, it is the poverty trap built into means-tested welfare that acts as a disincentive to take low-paid employment, requiring the threat of sanctions to force people into jobs. Real-world basic income experiments have shown that universality is not a disincentive to work.7 Moreover, conservative critics of a basic income tend to have no problem with inherited private wealth or capital gains—“something for nothing,” indeed.

But the universality critique of basic income does not just come from conservatives. Laborist social democrats argue that each person should contribute socially necessary labor time. However, pushing people into low-paid or unpaid jobs depresses wages. And what about all of the socially necessary labor that is unpaid? A basic income better enables people to perform the socially necessary work of caring for children, the elderly, or sick loved ones. The costs of screening out a tiny proportion of potential malingerers happy to live on a meager stipend would far exceed the savings.

#### If anything, UBI increases incentive to work.

Riccio and Gibbs 18 – Digital Transition Researcher at PwC; Digital Society Researcher at PwC.

John Riccio and Amy Gibbs, “Is a universal basic income the answer to robot job loss?,” PwC, 10-24-2018, https://www.pwc.com.au/digitalpulse/universal-basic-income-robot-job-loss.html

Will a guaranteed income lead to unemployment?

Some argue that a UBI would prove a disincentive to work. One view however is that unlike many welfare programs, a UBI will not penalise someone – by taking away their welfare money – for getting a job.5 In this way, employment becomes an additional source of income, not a competing one. On the other hand a UBI might encourage those who are working to stop doing so, given their higher income taxes could potentially be paying other people’s guaranteed income.6

Importantly, studies thus far have not found a correlation between UBI and unemployment. In fact, they’ve often shown the opposite. The city of Dauphin in Manitoba, for example, found that people were not dissuaded from employment when receiving a UBI, and the only two groups who worked less were mothers with young children, and teenagers who remained in school longer.7

### ---AT: automaiton

#### UBI solves the case but avoids automation.

Broder 22 – Reporter for Jacobin and Washington Post; Juan Sebastian Carbonell teaches sociology at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne.

David Broder, “No, Automation Isn’t Going to Make Work Disappear,” Jacobin, 3/28/22, https://jacobin.com/2022/03/automation-technology-precarity-employment-working-class-logistics

David Broder

One proposed solution to the effects of automation is Universal Basic Income (UBI). You reject the claim — the supposed disappearance of work — that often serves as the justification for the demand. But I’d be interested to dig down deeper into why you think the Left should reject the demand. Your book cites Daniel Zamora, who argues that UBI fits the logic of poverty reduction rather than the kind of equality and democratic control exerted by organized workers. But why isn’t a minimum income at least a foundation to build on?

Juan Sebastian Carbonell

The problem with UBI is that it rests on a premise that is normally false. Usually, the defenders of UBI do so either because they believe there is a precariat replacing the proletariat, or because they think that automation will eventually lead to a workless future and so we need a solution for all these people that will be eventually jobless.

But for me, the problems with UBI are more political. The main reason that I draw a lot on Zamora is that this demand narrows the horizons of the Left and the workers’ movement. If it used to demand the abolition of wage work, the abolition of the state, a classless society, the socialization of the means of production, UBI is just a redistributive measure binding the Left within a budgetary calculus.

Then the other problem is that it replaces the collective force of workers, with a personal and individualized — but also anonymous — relationship with the state. That’s why for me UBI is not only a problem but also could be dangerous for the Left, as a solution to the so-called crisis of work today.

### AT: perm plank 2

### AT: Tax fails

#### That all works and raises tons of money---combination with basic income solves inequality without hurting growth.

Gale 23 – Arjay and Frances Miller Chair in Federal Economic Policy at the Brookings Institution, PhD from Stanford University.   
William G. Gale and Semra Vignaux, “The difference in how the wealthy make money—and pay taxes”, 9/7/23, Brookings Institute Commentary, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-difference-in-how-the-wealthy-make-money-and-pay-taxes/

How to fix it

There are many ways to raise taxes on the wealthy without harming economic growth. Here we highlight four options.

Capital gains reform may be necessary if policymakers want to increase tax burdens on wealthy households. The simplest policy here would be the elimination of the step-up basis at death. Heirs would pay capital gains taxes on the taxable basis of the decedent who acquired the asset, instead of the basis of the asset at death. In 2020, the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) staff calculated that terminating step-up that year would raise $104.9 billion over the next 10 years. Alternatively, capital gains could be taxed at death, and treated as though the decedent had sold that asset. Batchelder and Kamin (2019) used 2016 JCT predictions to estimate that taxing accrued gains at death and raising the capital gains rate to 28% would raise $290 billion between 2021 and 2030.

Taxing intergenerational wealth transfers can make taxes more progressive and offset disparities in opportunity across income classes. Currently, less than 0.1% of all estates are subject to the estate tax, down from 7.65% in 1977. As baby boomers die, they are set to pass down $72.6 trillion in assets to heirs. Taxing these transfers more heavily would reduce inequality, increase opportunity, and raise revenues. The estate tax could be converted to an inheritance tax on recipients, with a reduced threshold of a million dollars for all gifts and inheritances (compared to the current threshold of almost $13 million) coupled with a tax rate that would equal the heir’s income tax rate plus some amount. This combined tax rate would integrate income and estate taxes. Since the heirs to wealthy estates are already usually in high tax brackets, the distributional impact would be similar to (though slightly less progressive than) the estate tax. This change has the political advantage of focusing on wealthy heirs, who were lucky enough to be the beneficiaries of wealthy relatives or friends, instead of targeting those who accumulated wealth.

Eliminating the Section 199A deduction for qualified business incomes would target another key component of income for the wealthy. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) reduced the top income tax rate from 39.6% to 37%, and the deduction brought the effective rate on qualified business income down to 29.6%. In 2020, the Tax Policy Center (TPC) estimated that the deduction would lower federal revenues by $417 billion over the following 10 years. The deduction is inequitable: the TPC estimated that 55% of the direct tax benefits in 2019 would go to families in the top 1% of the income distribution and 26% of the benefits would go to the top 0.1%. Although the deduction was intended to increase employment and investment, the incentives for both are actually quite low given the complicated structure and non-targeted nature of the deduction. Additionally, its complexity creates an opening for business owners to reduce their taxes by re-arranging and relabeling their investments and expenses, a practice which is further incentivized by the increased difference between the effective tax rates on wages and business income.

A final option would be to create a value added tax (VAT) coupled with a rebate or Universal Basic Income (UBI). This would leave the net tax burden smaller or unchanged for most households but would impose higher tax burdens on the wealthy. Currently, wealthy households can finance extravagant levels of consumption without even paying capital gains taxes on the accruing wealth by following a “buy, borrow, die” strategy, in which they finance current spending with loans and use their wealth as collateral. By avoiding realizing their capital gains, they can avoid taxes at the same time they enjoy a luxurious lifestyle. A VAT would tax consumption and hence would force the affluent to pay taxes on their lifestyle, even if they did not pay much in income tax. A VAT of 10%, combined with a UBI payment of the federal poverty line times the VAT rate times two, would raise about $2.9 trillion over 10 years. The Tax Policy Center estimates that this system would be extremely progressive: after-tax income for the lowest quintile would increase by 17%, the tax burden for middle-income people wouldn’t change, and incomes for the top 1% of households would be reduced by 5.5%. The VAT would also function as a 10% tax on existing wealth, since future consumption can only be financed with existing wealth or future wages.

## DA

### Overview---2NC

#### And, even if terrorists are responsible, we’ll misattribute. That goes nuclear.

Perkovich and Vaddi 21 – Director of the Secure World Program of the W. Alton Jones Foundation and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Vaddi was a fellow in the Nuclear Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

George Perkovich and Pranay Vaddi, January 21 2021, “Declaratory Policy,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, https://carnegieendowment.org/2021/01/21/declaratory-policy-pub-83579

To give a potential scenario, consider a cyber attack that was able to shut down the U.S. (and therefore international) economy on a scale commensurate to the economic damage wrought by the coronavirus pandemic. If the United States could with 99.9 percent certainty attribute the cyber attack to the Kremlin, would it be legally and strategically justified in responding to the attack by ordering a nuclear strike against Russia? What if China or North Korea were the villain in the same scenario? Nuclear retaliation would not stop the cyber attack or undo its damage, but it could trigger more death and destruction among belligerent and nonbelligerent nations alike. Even the threat to use a nuclear response to such a cyber attack against civilian infrastructure—one that did not cause damage commensurate with that caused by nuclear weapons—could “normalize” other states’ or nonstate actors’ use of nuclear weapons, including in response to U.S. cyber operations. Blurring cyber and nuclear thresholds also could encourage some states or nonstate actors to conduct “false flag” cyber attacks—for instance, by using leaked U.S., Russian, or Chinese malware—to catalyze conflict between the United States and Russia or the United States and China.

### T/Case---MUST READ---2NC

#### Automation zeroes the plan. They're net-worse for all their impacts.

Mpedi 25 – Vice-Chancellor & Principal, University of Johannesburg. Doctor of Laws qualification from Rand Afrikaans University.

Letlhokwa George Mpedi and Tshilidzi Marwala, “Balancing Job Security and Collective Rights in an Increasingly Automated World,” United Nations University, 02-18-2025, https://unu.edu/article/balancing-job-security-and-collective-rights-increasingly-automated-world

The erosion of collective bargaining rights

Beyond job displacement, automation poses a serious challenge to collective bargaining and the right to strike. In the modern workforce, labour unions negotiate with employers to improve wages, working conditions and employee protections. When negotiations fail, workers have the right to strike – a fundamental tool in labour relations.

However, in an increasingly automated environment, fewer human workers and the rise of autonomous systems and collaborative robots (co-bots) could reduce the effectiveness of strike actions. This shift is troubling, as collective bargaining without the right to strike risks becoming mere collective pleading.

In an automated workplace, the traditional means of withdrawing labour may no longer serve as leverage, requiring a re-evaluation of labour laws and industrial action mechanisms. Strike regulations will need to evolve to address new labour realities, ensuring that workers can still advocate for fair treatment without disproportionately disrupting business operations.

### T/Inequality---2NC

### T/Manufacturing---2NC

### UQ---Automation Limited---2NC

#### Automation is limited and gradual now because of costs. Spikes in labor costs drive rapid automation.

Thompson 24 – Director of the FutureTech Project, MIT. Ph.D., Business & Public Policy, UC-Berkeley. M.A., Economics, London School of Economics.

Neil Thompson; Interviewed by Paula Klein, Editorial Content Manager for the MIT Initiative on the Digital Economy, “New Research May Calm Some of the AI Job-loss Clamor–For Now,” MIT Initiative on the Digital Economy, January 23rd, 2024, https://ide.mit.edu/insights/neil-thompson-research-may-calm-some-of-the-ai-job-loss-clamor/

When these factors are considered, the result is a model that quantifies which tasks are technically feasible and economically attractive to automate — and which are not. Overall, the findings suggest that AI job displacement “will be substantial, but also gradual.”

While the study focused narrowly on tasks that could adopt computer vision, the findings were UC bsurprising and hopeful: Only 23% of worker wages now paid for vision-related tasks would be attractive to automate with computer vision AI “because of the large upfront costs of AI systems.”

This slower roll-out of AI could accelerate if costs fall rapidly or if it is deployed via AI-as-a-service platforms,” the paper noted, but in general, far fewer tasks will be automated than previously suggested — and in turn, that signals far less labor disruption.

“AI will deliver on its promise of greater productivity and it also poses a threat of worker displacement,” Thompson said. “Both will probably occur, but it depends on how quickly the technologies are adopted.” However, “even with rapid decreases in cost of 20% per year, it would still take decades for computer vision tasks to become economically efficient for firms.”

The paper was co-written by Maja S. Svanberg and Wensu Li of MIT, Martin Fleming of The Productivity Institute, and Brian C. Goehring from IBM’s Institute for Business Value.

MIT IDE Content Director, Paula Klein, asked Thompson to describe some of the highlights of the research in the following interview.

IDE: It seems that you are offering a more nuanced scenario — it’s not entirely doom nor is it a rosy optimism. What was the most surprising finding of the research?

Neil Thompson: We do find a middle ground: There is significant automation that will occur in the next few years, but much of it could easily take a decade or so — similar to how many technologies have spread throughout the economy.

The most surprising finding is the big difference that results based on how you analyze the data. When when you analyze AI at the level of broad technical compatibility– what jobs are vulnerable to replacement by AI, usually called AI Exposure — and when you require that deployments be economically attractive, the findings vary widely. The former assumes that all tasks that can be automated, will be. But we challenge that view, finding that only 1 in 4 of the tasks (23%) with broad technical compatibility are economically attractive to deploy today.

Framing it another way, today’s firm-level computer vision only has an economic advantage in 23% of vision tasks and barriers to AI-as-a-service deployments exist, therefore, we will most likely need to see a sharp reduction in costs for computer vision to replace human labor near term.

[See Figure 1]

IDE: How is the AI task automation model “end-to-end?” and how does it differ from previous models and assessments?

Thompson: Our model starts with the performance of real tasks in the economy, asks what AI system would be needed to automate them, and then finally considers the adoption decisions by businesses. The ability to model this entire process results in notably different answers than prior research.

IDE: Why the focus on computer vision tasks? Does that limit the scope of your study?

Thompson: In some ways, yes. But that limitation also means that we can analyze things more deeply than we could if we tried to consider all types of automation at once. In computer vision — tasks such as checking products for quality at the end of a factory assembly line or scanning medical imagery for anomalies — cost modeling is more developed, so we can estimate the cost of vision systems, which is central to our analysis. We can next ask how applying our model to automation with other technologies (e.g. large language models) would differ and how it will be similar.

IDE: Can you describe which kinds of tasks/jobs will be easy to automate and which won’t?

Thompson: Whether it’s economically attractive to automate a task with an AI system depends both on the cost of deploying the AI and the benefits to the firm of avoiding it. AI systems that are cheaper are easier to deploy, so we predict more automation when the accuracy needed from the system or the complexity of the task being done are lower.

The benefits to firms of replacing workers comes primarily from avoided labor costs;tasks done by more workers, or those with higher wages, tend to be more attractive to automate.

[See Figure 2 for the impact of computer vision on certain business sectors]

### Link---BBB---2NC

#### Stronger collective bargaining increases labor costs.

Mishel 21 – Distinguished Fellow, EPI. Former Professor, Cornell University’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Ph.D., Economics, University of Wisconsin.

Lawrence Mishel, “The enormous impact of eroded collective bargaining on wages,” Economic Policy Institute, 04-08-2021, https://www.epi.org/publication/eroded-collective-bargaining/

A major factor depressing wage growth for middle earners and driving the growth of wage inequality over the last four decades has been the erosion of collective bargaining.1 Indeed, the only factor more responsible for weak wage growth for the typical worker is the excessive unemployment perpetrated by central bank policymakers’ high interest rate policies and fiscal austerity.2 The share of workers covered by a collective bargaining agreement fell from 27.0% in 1979 to just 11.6% in 2019 (Hirsch and Macpherson 2020). The erosion of collective bargaining has been especially harmful to men’s wages because men were far more likely than women to be unionized in 1979 (when 31.5% of men were covered by collective bargaining versus 18.8% of women). Thus men had more to lose from the subsequent attack on unions and collective bargaining.3 Rebuilding collective bargaining is a necessary component of any policy agenda to reestablish robust wage growth for the vast majority of workers in the United States, and broader unionization would lessen racial inequities and benefit women at least as much as men.

Recent research on trends in wages over the last four decades has demonstrated that:

For the “typical” or median worker, declining unionization translates to a loss of $1.56 per hour worked, the equivalent of $3,250 for a full-time, full-year worker. The erosion of collective bargaining lowered the median hourly wage by $1.56, a 7.9% decline (0.2% annually), from 1979 to 2017. Deunionization lowered the male median hourly wage by $2.49, an 11.6% (0.29% annual) decline, over the 1979–2017 period. These losses from deunionization are the equivalent of annual losses for a full-time, full-year median worker and median male worker, respectively, of $3,250 and $5,171. This impact is due to both the direct effect on wages of union workers and the spillover effect on wages of nonunion workers.

Declining unionization widened inequality between high-wage earners and middle-wage earners. Deunionization widened the 90/50 wage gap (the gap between earners at the 90th percentile of the wage distribution and the 50th percentile, measured in logs) by 7.7 points and therefore explains 33.1% of the 23.2 point growth of the wage gap between high- and middle-wage earners over the 1979–2017 period. Deunionization has this result because it depressed the wages of middle-wage earners but had little impact on high-wage earners at the 90th percentile.

Unions disproportionately benefit those with low and moderate wages, those with lower levels of education, and nonwhites, and this has been the case since the birth of the modern labor movement in the New Deal. The erosion of collective bargaining, correspondingly, has therefore increased wage inequality.

Collective bargaining increases and equalizes wages for union workers and nonunion workers in unionized occupations and sectors

Researchers have long demonstrated the connection between being represented by a union and earning higher wages. This advantage, called the “union wage premium,” measures the percent difference between the wages of unionized workers and those of nonunionized workers with the same characteristics. That collective bargaining also leads to more equal wage outcomes was firmly established by Richard Freeman and James Medoff in the late 1970s and popularized in their important 1984 book, What Do Unions Do? (Jake Rosenfeld’s 2014 book, What Unions No Longer Do, provides an update of the issues). Of primary importance are the ways in which collective bargaining leads to more equal wage outcomes among unionized workers and in unionized industries and occupations.4 First, unions make wage differences between occupations more equal because they give a larger wage boost to low- and middle-wage occupations than to high-wage occupations. Second, unions make wages of workers with similar characteristics more equal because wages are “standardized” in union settings, meaning that wages are set for particular types of work and do not vary much across people doing the same work, at least not to the same degree as in nonunion settings. Third, unions have historically been more likely to organize middle-wage than high-wage workers, thereby lowering inequality by closing gaps between, say, blue-collar and white-collar workers.5 Last, where unions are strong the wages of comparable nonunion workers are also increased. The bottom line result of these influences is that being represented by a union or being in a heavily unionized industry or occupation has boosted wages for low-wage workers in these settings the most, and these union wage boosts have been larger at the middle than at the highest wage levels, larger for Black and Hispanic workers than for white workers, and larger for those with lower levels of education. This pattern of wage increases narrows wage inequalities. That unions have disproportionately benefited Black workers and workers with low and moderate wage levels and lower levels of education has been true as far back as the 1940s (Farber et al. 2018). The union impact on inequality is even greater when measured with total compensation (wages plus benefits) than with wages alone (Pierce 1999).

Research from the early 1990s documented that the erosion of collective bargaining was responsible for around a fifth of the rise in wage inequality among men in the 1980s (Card 1991; DiNardo, Fortin, and Lemieux 1996; Freeman 1991) but had a more modest impact among women.

Widespread collective bargaining has a ‘spillover’ effect on nonunion wages—it increases and equalizes wages for all workers

Recent research assessing the impact of unions on nonunion workers’ wages—sometimes referred to as “spillover effects”—finds an even larger impact of deunionization on wage inequality. When the share of workers who are union members is relatively high, as it was in 1979, wages of nonunion workers are higher. For example, had private-sector union density in 2013 remained at its 1979 level, weekly wages of nonunion men in the private sector would have been 5% higher, equivalent to an additional $2,704 in earnings for year-round workers; among those same workers but without a college education wages would be 8% higher, or $3,016 more per year (Rosenfeld, Denice, and Laird 2016; Denice and Rosenfeld 2018).6 Consequently, estimates of the impact of eroded collective bargaining on wage inequality that incorporate union spillover effects find a larger role of the impact of unions on wage inequality than do studies that focus on unionized workers alone. For instance, Western and Rosenfeld (2011, Table 2 and analyzed in Mishel et al. 2012, Table 4.38) find that the weakening of collective bargaining explains a third of the increase in wage inequality among men and a fifth of the rise of wage inequality among women over the 1973–2007 period. This research demonstrates that the erosion of collective bargaining has been the largest single factor driving a wedge between middle- and high-wage male workers, the primary feature of rising wage inequality among men (other than the pulling away of the top 1%).7

#### That effect is magnified when extended across industries or sectors.

Bustamante 23 – Director of Roosevelt Institute’s worker power and economic security program, Chief Economist at the Louisiana Workforce Commission research project, B.A. and Ph.D. in Political Economy from the University of Miami

Ali R. Bustamante, “Balancing Power between Workers and Employers Requires Sectoral Bargaining,” July 2023, Roosevelt Institute, https://rooseveltinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/RI\_Balancing-Power-between-Workers-and-Employers-Requires-Sectoral-Bargaining\_Brief\_202307.pdf

Sectoral bargaining provides a useful framework for collaboration between workers, employers, and policymakers in which equal bargaining power between workers and employers is achieved (Elrod 2023). Collective bargaining across all firms in a sector directly addresses the problems associated with employer monopsony power by eliminating employers’ unilateral control over wage setting for both current and future workers. According to Elrod (2023), fostering tripartite policy-setting through the creation of sectoral wage boards and sector-level collective bargaining creates the ideal conditions to sustain economic growth and improve labor conditions.

Existing American labor law largely limits collective bargaining to individual worksites or firms, with few exceptions. This disjointed approach to collective bargaining in the United States curtails the ability of workers to improve working conditions and allows economic inequalities to persist (Andrias and Brishen 2018). With the addition of sectoral bargaining to worksite-level bargaining, workers could organize a plurality of both union and nonunion workers to bargain for industry-wide wage levels and standardized working conditions.

Additionally, sectoral bargaining could strengthen the American labor movement by complementing the credible threat of switching jobs with the institutionalized threat of sector-wide strikes. Workers’ ability to leverage the threat of quitting is limited by their need to be employed. As a result, an individual’s credible threat of switching jobs is nullified during periods of low growth. Conversely, collective bargaining reduces employment during periods of economic recession, thereby sustaining the power of the bargaining unit to demand higher wages or improved working conditions irrespective of the state of the economy and labor market (Bustamante 2022).

#### Empirics prove a substantial wage increase.

Villanueva 22 – Head of Microeconomic Studies Division, Structural Analysis and Micro Studies Department, Banco de España, Spain

Ernesto Villanueva and Effrosyni Adamapoulou, “Employment and wage effects of extending collective bargaining agreements,” Institute of Labor Economics, IZA World of Labor, 04-12-2022, https://wol.iza.org/articles/employment-and-wage-effects-of-extending-collective-bargaining-agreements/long

The extension of collective contracts to firms that did not negotiate the agreement reduces employment

Similar to some European countries, in South Africa collectively bargained union contracts are binding for all employers within the industry and regions covered by the applicable bargaining council. Bargaining councils in South Africa are organizations formed by unions and employer federations to negotiate collective agreements and resolve labor disputes. Most bargaining councils represent groupings of the 354 magisterial districts that map to political boundaries. Following the extension of a collective contract, employment levels in firms covered by a bargaining council fell 10% while (quality adjusted) wages rose 10–15%, relative to adjacent councils [10]. Furthermore, relative to the border between areas covered and not covered by an extension of the collective contract, the rate of business creation was larger on the side of the border where the collective contract was not extended.

#### It's not just wages; other expenses spike costs.

Villanueva 22 – Head of Microeconomic Studies Division, Structural Analysis and Micro Studies Department, Banco de España, Spain

Ernesto Villanueva and Effrosyni Adamapoulou, “Employment and wage effects of extending collective bargaining agreements,” Institute of Labor Economics, IZA World of Labor, 04-12-2022, https://wol.iza.org/articles/employment-and-wage-effects-of-extending-collective-bargaining-agreements/long

In addition to wages, collective contracts regulate working conditions that may affect labor costs, such as number of holidays, overtime, and night shift pay. Some contracts also specify which workers can do which jobs, further constraining the reallocation of labor within a firm. A useful strategy for isolating the role of binding negotiated wages is to identify firms with a substantial share of employees whose wages fall below the new minimum. The use of matched data on employers, employees, and collective contracts between 1986 and 2009 in Portugal suggests that dismissals increase and hirings freeze after the extension of a bargained contract and that these effects are concentrated precisely among firms that experience the largest increases in labor costs [11].

#### More evidence.

Madland 24 – Senior Fellow and Strategic Director of the American Worker Project at the Center for American Progress, Ph.D. in Political Science and Government from Georgetown University.

David Madland, “Sectoral Bargaining Can Support High Union Membership,” 5/30/2024, Center for American Progress, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/sectoral-bargaining-can-support-high-union-membership/

Why sectoral bargaining supports high union membership

It is intuitive that sectoral bargaining would increase the percentage of workers covered by union contracts—known as the collective bargaining coverage or union coverage rate—compared with worksite-only bargaining. Yet to some union advocates, it may seem puzzling that sectoral bargaining can also increase the share of workers who are members of unions—known as union density or the union membership rate.

Under sectoral bargaining systems, employers face similar labor costs whether their workers are unionized or not.

Under sectoral bargaining, all similarly placed workers are covered by a union contract whether they are members or not. This free-rider problem can reduce workers’ incentives to join unions to varying degrees, depending on the specifics of how each sectoral system works: Systems that legally extend all terms of union contracts to nonunion workers, such as in France, have a greater free-rider problem than systems that extend only, for example, wage standards or do not have government extension, such as in Italy and Denmark, respectively. But sectoral bargaining also creates forces that encourage union membership—and these forces are generally more powerful than the free-rider problem it fosters.

As a result, employers have less incentive to fight their workers’ efforts to unionize, which can make organizing workers easier. 7 Sectoral bargaining also creates a more level playing field that protects unionized workers and high union standards from being undercut by low-paying companies. Without sectoral bargaining, unionized workers are under constant threat that companies will find ways to do similar work at lower standards.

### AT: no IL

### AT: can’t re[lace

#### Wage increases catalyze mass automation, particularly in low-skilled jobs.

Lordan 18 – Associate Professor at the London School of Economics and Political Science, Ph.D. in economics from Trinity College Dublin.

Grace Lordan and David Neumark, “People versus Machines: The Impact of Minimum Wages on Automatable Jobs,” 1/17/2018, Research Briefs in Economic Policy, No. 96, https://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/rb96.pdf

We explore the extent to which minimum wages induce substitution away from workers whose jobs are more easily automated. For instance, employers may replace labor with technological innovations—such as supermarkets substituting self-service checkout for cashiers, and assembly lines in manufacturing plants substituting robotic arms for workers. At the same time, firms may hire other workers who perform new tasks that are complementary with the new technology. For example, a firm using more robots may hire individuals to service, troubleshoot, and maintain these new machines. It seems reasonable to expect that the workers more likely to be replaced following minimum wage increases are those who are low skilled, earning wages affected by increases in the minimum wage, while workers who “tend” the machines are higher skilled. This suggests that there is a potential for labor reallocation away from jobs that are automatable following increases in the minimum wage, that low-skilled workers in automatable jobs are particularly vulnerable to minimum wage increases, and that the net disemployment effects may be smaller than the gross effects that workers in automatable tasks experience.

We choose to focus on automation because it has been one of the major forces threatening low-skilled jobs in the United States in recent decades, presumably because of both technological advances and reductions in the cost of technology that can substitute for low-skilled labor. Minimum wages can exacerbate these changes when they raise the price of low-skilled labor in automatable jobs for which machines can be substituted. 2

Our main aim is to provide a richer understanding of how minimum wage policies have been shaping the type of employment held in the United States, within industries and for particular demographic groups. Specifically, we empirically assess whether the share of employment that is automatable declines in response to minimum wage increases. We focus on jobs that tend to be held by low-skilled workers, given that these are the jobs for which labor costs increase the most in relative terms following a minimum wage increase, which can prompt firms to replace people (low-skilled ones, in particular) with machines. We complement our analyses of how the share of employment in automatable jobs responds to minimum wage increases with analyses of employment impacts for individual workers, estimating whether the probability that low-skilled workers in automatable jobs lose their jobs is greater following a minimum wage increase.

Our analysis is related to concurrent research by Daniel Aaronson and Brian J. Phelan, who, for the period 1999–2009, analyze the susceptibility of low-wage employment to technological substitution in the short run. They find that minimum wage increases lead to job losses for cognitively routine jobs, but not manually routine or nonroutine jobs. Their study provides some evidence that firms may automate routine jobs in response to a minimum wage increase, reducing employment opportunities for workers in routine jobs.

We add value beyond this analysis in a number of ways. First, whereas Aaronson and Phelan are concerned with an average individual’s job loss, we focus on quantifying how shares in the employment of automatable tasks change following a minimum wage change, to provide more evidence on how the task composition of the workforce is affected.

Second, we expect that automation is a viable and likely substitute for certain types of low-skilled jobs, and therefore also certain types of low-skilled labor, implying that average effects may mask significant heterogeneity. Therefore, our second contribution is to provide a comprehensive picture of labor-market adjustments across industries and a variety of demographic groups, which can uncover these important differential responses. This may be of particular interest within the broader minimum wage literature. While that literature has largely focused on teenagers (and more recently restaurant workers), we take a broader perspective, expanding the analysis to subgroups of workers not usually considered in the minimum wage literature, who may be adversely affected by minimum wages because they tend to be employed in automatable jobs.

#### **Consensus.**

Simonite 17 – Bureau Chief at MIT Technology Review, previous senior editor for Wired, M.S in Communication from Imperial College London.

Tom Simonite, “Raising Wages To Help Workers Could Actually Help Robots Replace Them,” 9/15/2017, Wired, https://www.wired.com/story/raising-wages-to-help-workers-could-actually-help-robots-replace-them/

A working paper distributed by the National Bureau for Economic Research last month leans on historical data to suggest that minimum-wage hikes increase the chances some low-skilled workers will be replaced by machines. A separate study of 14 advanced economies found that the balance between humans and robots shifted away from humans after the introduction of new job-protection rules, like longer notice periods and increased severance payments.

The studies are timely because rapid advances in artificial intelligence have sparked a debate about their impact on jobs. Many economists doubt that the technologies will cause widespread unemployment, arguing that, historically, affected workers have been able to shift into new jobs. Still, the new studies suggest that officials need to consider how government policies can sharpen or soften the effects on individuals.

“There are going to be many ways that robotics and automation hurt workers and we need to think about policies that may protect them,” says Darrell West, director of governance studies at the Brookings Institution. He and other labor experts argue automation should be treated more like trade—a powerful and broadly beneficial practice that still can harm individuals.

Some U.S. workers can receive job-training and other services if they lose jobs as a result of foreign trade, under the Trade Adjustment Assistance program initiated under President Kennedy. “We need to apply that kind of concept to automation because it’s a general structural change that will affect a lot of people,” West says.

To assess the impact of government policy on the pace of automation, economist Giorgio Presidente looked at sales of robots in 14 advanced economies that are members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Presidente, who consults for OECD and the World Bank, found that employers deployed more robots, relative to the number of workers, after countries introduced employment-protection laws.

#### More ev.

Dueholm 24 – Research Associate with the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, B.S in Economics, and B.A in History from the University of Minnesota.

Mick Dueholm, Aakash Kalyani, and Serdar Ozkan, “Does Worker Scarcity Spur Investment, Automation and Productivity? Evidence from Earnings Calls,” 6/20/2024, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, https://www.stlouisfed.org/on-the-economy/2024/jun/worker-scarcity-spur-investment-automation-productivity-evidence-earnings-calls

Labor Issues Are Associated with Mentions of Automation

Discussions of labor issues and automation often coincide in earnings calls. For example, in a first quarter 2024 earnings call, an executive at an automotive technology company said: “Our focus this year is on accelerating automation to address wage inflation and improve efficiencies in our plants.” This excerpt clearly demonstrates the phenomenon of firms turning to automation as a way to reduce labor costs.

To investigate this relationship, we counted instances in which automation was mentioned in earnings calls.4 We found that chatter about labor issues and mentions of automation were significantly associated. More specifically, firms that discuss labor issues are 45% more likely to talk about automation in earnings calls compared with the average firm in our sample. As with investment, labor issues and mentions of automation are more likely to coincide in industries with a higher share of routine manual tasks, which are easier to automate. This supports our initial conjecture that tight labor markets lead firms to adopt automation technologies.

#### The effect is robust, particularly in manufacturing.

Lordan 18 – Associate Professor at the London School of Economics and Political Science, Ph.D in economics from Trinity College Dublin.

Grace Lordan and David Neumark, “People versus Machines: The Impact of Minimum Wages on Automatable Jobs,” 1/17/2018, Research Briefs in Economic Policy, No. 96, https://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/rb96.pdf

Overall, we find that increasing the minimum wage decreases significantly the share of automatable employment held by low-skilled workers. Our estimates suggest that an increase of the minimum wage by $1 (based on 2015 dollars) decreases the share of low-skilled automatable jobs by 0.43 percentage point. However, these average effects mask significant heterogeneity by industry and by demographic group. 3 In particular, minimum wage increases have large effects on the share of automatable employment in manufacturing, where we estimate that a $1 increase in the minimum wage decreases the share of automatable employment among lowskilled workers by 0.99 percentage point. Within manufacturing, the share of older workers in automatable employment declines most sharply, and the share of workers in automatable employment also declines sharply for women and blacks.

#### Studies by the Census Bureau agree, especially for manufacturing.

Simonite 17 – Bureau Chief at MIT Technology Review, previous senior editor for Wired, M.S in Communication from Imperial College London.

Tom Simonite, “Raising Wages To Help Workers Could Actually Help Robots Replace Them,” 9/15/2017, Wired, https://www.wired.com/story/raising-wages-to-help-workers-could-actually-help-robots-replace-them/

New evidence suggests minimum-wage hikes, recently backed by voters and legislators from Arizona to Seattle, may be another such policy.

In a recent working paper, economists Grace Lordan, of the London School of Economics, and David Neumark, at the University of California Irvine, reviewed U.S. Census Bureau data for low-skilled workers spanning 1980 to 2015. They didn’t measure use of automation directly. But they found that when the minimum wage went up, workers who had a high-school diploma or less in “automatable” jobs such as operating sewing machines were more likely to become unemployed.

Lordan and Neumark report that connection was particularly strong in manufacturing, a sector that now employs 12 million Americans. And they found that job losses were more likely among older workers. The paper says that for people over 40 in manufacturing, an increase in minimum wage of $1 causes the sector’s share of all jobs to drop nearly 2 percent.

That concerns Neumark because workers in that group are among the least likely to be able to move into higher-value jobs—the process he and other economists say allows better automation to help both workers and the broader economy. “It’s not at all clear those workers would find other jobs that are more productive,” says Neumark, who is a longtime skeptic of boosting the minimum wage. Other studies suggest minimum-wage increases do not have a big impact on jobs.

Neumark and Lordan say the job losses presumably tied to automation and higher minimum wages have increased recently, perhaps because technology is getting more potent. Their findings could be set for a big test. In May, congressional Democrats introduced a bill that would more than double the federal minimum wage from $7.25 to $15 by 2024. “If there’s a technological effect it could be huge,” Neumark says.

#### Firms can either sell off or automate.

Stout 22 – Director of Innovation Policy, International Center for Law & Economics. J.D., Rutgers.

Kristian Stout and Julian Morris, Senior Scholar with ICLE and the Center's former Executive Director, “Lessons for the US from Germany’s Sectoral-Bargaining Experience,” International Center for Law and Economics, 09-29-2022, https://laweconcenter.org/resources/lessons-for-the-us-from-germanys-sectoral-bargaining-experience/

On the other hand, if the council setting wages and conditions decides to set wages significantly above current market rates, the consequences for franchisees and their employees could be disastrous. Faced with unsustainable wage outlays, franchisees would face a difficult choice: sell off, switch to become a franchise of a smaller chain, or automate.

It is notable that the first attempt to implement sectoral bargaining in the United States is proposed in a sector that is not subject directly to international—or even interstate—competition. But it is subject to technological competition. Already, some fast-food restaurants have begun to automate.73 In part, this is happening to increase the speed, quality, and consistency of service. But it is also being driven by costs: as labor costs rise, the incentive to switch to more capital-intensive modes of production will increase.

It is, of course, possible that the council will prohibit such automation in an effort to maintain jobs. But doing so would merely make it more difficult for covered fast-food restaurants to compete with smaller chains that are not covered by the FAST Act. Beyond that competitive distortion, such action by the council would entail a covert tradeoff that further diminishes consumer welfare. Faced with other inflationary pressures, competitive threats from smaller chains not subject to the FAST Act, and ordinary cost increases, larger chains will be forced to raise prices. In the short term, this might shift surplus toward workers. Over the medium to long term, however, it would suppress demand, harming consumers by providing them with fewer goods and services than they would otherwise demand, and harming workers by shrinking the industry overall.

VII. Conclusion

If the FAST Act is, indeed, a harbinger of the future of employer-employee bargaining in the United States, then the prospects for the U.S. economy look even bleaker than many portend. To see why, one need only refer back to Figure 3. Does the United States really want to shift toward a low-growth trajectory like those of France or Italy? Moreover, it bears repeating that, in an environment of international competition, Germany’s model required all manner of tweaks in order to make it “work.” Even then, Germany’s rate of economic growth has been considerably lower than that of the United States, as can be seen in Figure 2.

To address the other main argument made for a switch to sectoral bargaining: reduced numbers of days lost to industrial action. As demonstrated in Figure 4, the United States has already achieved that.

In short, if the United States were to import the German model of sectoral bargaining at this stage, it is unlikely to benefit from any of the advantages that the model offered to Germany early in its adoption. It would instead suffer the disadvantages and associated costs that Germany now seeks to avoid by unwinding this model at the margins. As the United States heads further into unstable economic times, it would be unwise to adopt a bargaining model that would make its labor market less flexible and more subject to the disruptive effects of competition from overseas and from new technology.

No system is perfect, but U.S. labor markets have consistently outperformed those in Germany in terms of output per worker. The wider consequence of shifting to a German sectoral-bargaining model would be to push the United States behind much nimbler competitors, ultimately hurting both consumers and the workers that such otherwise well-intentioned reforms are intended to help.

### ---but if not---2NC

#### If the plan raises labor costs but companies don’t automate, then they’ll pass on costs to consumers.

Stout 22 – Director of Innovation Policy, International Center for Law & Economics. J.D., Rutgers.

Kristian Stout and Julian Morris, Senior Scholar with ICLE and the Center's former Executive Director, “Lessons for the US from Germany’s Sectoral-Bargaining Experience,” International Center for Law and Economics, 09-29-2022, https://laweconcenter.org/resources/lessons-for-the-us-from-germanys-sectoral-bargaining-experience/

It is, of course, possible that the council will prohibit such automation in an effort to maintain jobs. But doing so would merely make it more difficult for covered fast-food restaurants to compete with smaller chains that are not covered by the FAST Act. Beyond that competitive distortion, such action by the council would entail a covert tradeoff that further diminishes consumer welfare. Faced with other inflationary pressures, competitive threats from smaller chains not subject to the FAST Act, and ordinary cost increases, larger chains will be forced to raise prices. In the short term, this might shift surplus toward workers. Over the medium to long term, however, it would suppress demand, harming consumers by providing them with fewer goods and services than they would otherwise demand, and harming workers by shrinking the industry overall.

#### That causes economy-wide hyper-inflation. Extinction.

Wright 21 – Senior Research Faculty at the American Institute for Economic Research, PhD in History from SUNY Buffalo.   
Robert E. Wright, American Institute for Economic Research, “The Horrors of Hyperinflation”, 6/16/21, https://aier.org/article/the-horrors-of-hyperinflation/

Policymakers need to ask, what is worse, hyperinflation or global climate change? Hyperinflation or social injustice? Hyperinflation or war? The answer in each case, hands down, is hyperinflation, by which I mean rapid and accelerating increases in prices caused by new money growth that outstrips new money demand. Ironically, a bout of hyperinflation would probably accelerate global climate change, exacerbate social injustice, and increase the likelihood of major war.

In short, the federal government should be focusing on the real existential threat to the nation, runaway prices, not wasting resources on partisan political issues, like treating unarmed trespassers as “insurrectionists.”

Inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), is currently running at “only” about five and a half percent and AIER’s Everyday Price Index is up “just” 6.5 percent over the last year. Both remain a far cry shy of a hyperinflationary spiral where expectations about rapidly rising prices cause prices to rapidly rise as consumers spend cash as quickly as possible and workers push for ever higher nominal wages to avoid prolonged decreases in their real wages. But why is inflation gaining momentum now and will any economic or political forces check it before it spirals out of control?

Following the global financial crisis of 2008, government policies and socioeconomic conditions were not conducive to rapid economic growth. Considerable uncertainty about financial and health sector reforms made many businesses cautious and the reforms that eventually passed, especially Dodd-Frank and the Affordable Care Act, proved nettlesome due to their size, complexity, and slow phase-in. Taxes were relatively high and many innovators feared what the Obama administration might do next.

Unsurprisingly, then, economic growth was pretty anemic for almost a decade, so increases in what macroeconomists call aggregate demand were tame as well. Moreover, much of the new money (purchasing power) that the Federal Reserve (the Fed) created in response to the 2008 crisis stayed in the banks, which were happy to earn from the Fed a small but safe return on a cash cushion called excess reserves. So upward pressure on prices proved much lighter than some feared.

During the Trump administration, however, the business environment improved markedly as taxes and regulatory burdens decreased. Unemployment dropped to record lows but the Fed kept its policy of interest rates at historic lows, so upward pressure on prices was building when Covid hit and governments across the world responded by shutting down economic activity.

The world is just emerging from those monstrous policies and pent-up consumer demand, similar to that experienced in the late 1940s after a decade of depression and world war, is being felt. Alone, those circumstances could collude to cause double-digit inflation for a year, or two, or three.

In addition to those pressures, the national government seems hellbent on spending as much money as possible as quickly as possible. Projected deficits are, in real terms, the largest in peacetime history and approach those incurred to fight World War II. They could tip the economy into a serious bout of inflation, to which policymakers — the same policymakers who thought they could “fight” a virus — might respond with price controls like those that caused widespread shortages during the Nixon administration.

The price controls failed but Paul Volcker (1927-2019) eventually caused a recession to stop America’s Great Inflation (1965-1982) by dramatically raising the Fed’s policy interest rates/cutting money supply growth. Could the Fed do the same today, if necessary? Yes. Would it? Not without hurting a lot of poor people, regardless of the color of their skin, so pretty much count even-numbered years completely out.

Political considerations aside, the federal government would certainly want a say in monetary policy too. The US government owes a lot of money to a lot of people, including many foreign governments that will not be amused if Treasuries become worthless. Moreover, most of the national government’s borrowings are at short maturities, so it has to pay off/refinance some $13 trillion of debt within the next four years.

If inflation surges, so too will nominal interest rates and hence the government’s debt burden, i.e., the proportion of the federal budget needed to make interest payments on the national debt. As that burden increases, so too will pressure to keep creating new money to help the government to pay its bills.

If, like The Atlantic, you do not think that hyperinflation can happen in America, you need to read up on your monetary history. The New England colonies and the colonial Carolinas experienced out of control inflation, as did the new nation itself during the Revolutionary War. Hyperinflation also gripped the Confederacy and its awful effects helped to keep the South impoverished for a century after Appomattox.

Hyperinflations also ruined numerous other countries and in some, like Zimbabwe and Venezuela, inflationary spirals continue to impose significant socioeconomic costs, especially on the poor, today. The hyperinflation in Germany that began exactly a century ago is perhaps the most infamous because it helped to foster political extremism, including National Socialism.

High inflation is not to be trifled with because it rips economies and societies apart at the seams, destroying some forms of life savings (e.g., bank accounts, bond funds, and life insurance) while enriching debtors and the politically well-connected. Incentives to produce plummet as aggregate demand sags along with declining real incomes and unpredictable fluctuations in relative prices.

Such carnage may seem abstract but it was very real to the middle class Germans who had to prostitute their daughters to survive the worst periods, when German paper money became more valuable as toilet paper or wallpaper than as a medium of exchange.

The Biden administration, though, implicitly assumes that combating global climate change and fostering what it considers to be social justice are more important policy goals than steering well clear of dollar collapse. It is very wrong about that because hyperinflations end only one way, the imposition of hard budget constraints through the adoption of a new monetary system based on precious metals, a stable foreign currency, or a currency board. Often, a new regime or constitution also must accompany the monetary reform in order to make the government’s commitment to stop printing money and lying about new money creation more credible to market participants.

In other words, if the price level rises too much too quickly, current illusions about Modern Monetary Theory (MMT) and costless budget deficits will be shattered by reality. America’s national government will have to go onto a real consumption basis, meaning every bit of new spending will have to come out of taxes already collected, not future taxes. Epic political battles will result but even if Progressives win them, the government will face difficult tradeoffs between funding projects like the Green New Deal or race reparations on the one hand, and national security and economic growth/tax cuts on the other.

Moreover, during and after a period of high inflation the United States would be more vulnerable to military attack than it has been since the height of the Cold War. China, Iran, North Korea, and/or Russia would almost certainly try to take advantage of its weakness, kicking it, and/or its close allies, when down.

By driving hundreds of millions of people to the edge of economic desperation, hyperinflation would also defeat attempts to reduce carbon emissions or increase racial justice because acquiring potable water, food, and fuel would top most Americans’ quotidian concerns, while adoption of electronic vehicles, ESG investment funds, or Critical Race Theory curricula would sink to the bottom of their concerns. When the economy hits rock bottom, trees will topple in rural and suburban areas while people will find urban areas uninhabitable. What happens when they migrate out in search of food and water is unclear, but likely ugly if the treatment of Arkies and Okies during the Great Depression is any indication.

Governments have few universally accepted goals. National defense, protection of property, and stability of the unit of account are arguably the three most important because all else rides on them. Hyperinflation destroys all three, so any serious risk of hyperinflation is simply unacceptable from a policy standpoint. The national government needs to improve its fiscal and monetary policies today, before it is too late.

### AT: plan solves

### AT: it’s good

### AT: no cyber impact

### AT: ai bubbl;e

## Manufacturing Adv

### US Manufacturing Up---2NC

“predicted to rebound significantly in 2025”

“Optimistic projections reflect **collective sentiment of industry executives** who foresee improved business conditions ahead.”

Squo = nearshoring, reshoring, AI, tech, IRA, tax credits

MT 12/20

#### U.S. manufacturing is booming at its highest levels in almost a year.

Mutikani 25 – Reporter, Reuters.

Lucia Mutikani, “US manufacturing PMI rises to nine-month high, but challenges loom,” Reuters, 01-03-2025, https://www.reuters.com/markets/us/us-manufacturing-pmi-rises-nine-month-high-december-2025-01-03/

WASHINGTON, Jan 3 (Reuters) - U.S. manufacturing moved closer to recovery in December, with production rebounding and new orders rising further, but the outlook remains uncertain amid the threat of higher tariffs that could raise prices of imported raw materials.

Despite the increase in the Institute for Supply Management's (ISM) Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) to a nine-month high last month, the tone of the survey was less upbeat, with phrases such as "volume decreases" and "significant slowdown" appearing in some of the comments from respondents. None of the six largest manufacturing industries grew last month.

"Manufacturers ended the year with a hint of optimism, but they could face some pretty stiff challenges in the new year," said Sal Guatieri, a senior economist at BMO Capital Markets.

The ISM said on Friday that its manufacturing PMI increased to 49.3 last month, the highest reading since March, from 48.4 in November. A PMI reading below 50 indicates contraction in the manufacturing sector, which accounts for 10.3% of the economy.

December marked the ninth consecutive month that the PMI remained below the 50 threshold. Economists polled by Reuters had forecast the PMI would be unchanged at 48.4.

Seven industries, including primary metals, electrical equipment, appliances and components as well as paper products and miscellaneous manufacturing reported growth last month. Among the seven industries reporting contraction were textile mills, machinery and transportation equipment.

Some manufacturers of food, beverage and tobacco products said they were "seeing a softening in sales," adding that this "is concerning, as it's our peak season."

Transportation equipment makers reported "automotive and powersport volume decreases."

Machinery manufacturers reported a "significant slowdown in production requirements in the last two months of the year." In the fabricated metal products industry, some businesses reported "order levels well below forecast projections."

The mood was, however, fairly optimistic among manufacturers of electrical equipment, appliances and components, with some saying that "the increase in new orders has our plant at full capacity." Makers of miscellaneous goods noted the "combo of seasonal factors plus increased demand outlook for 2025."

Primary metals producers said "there is definitely an uptick this month, though not a stable one."

Manufacturing was battered by the Federal Reserve's aggressive monetary policy tightening in 2022 and 2023 to tame inflation. But sentiment surveys, including the PMI, have exaggerated the magnitude of the decline in factory production.

#### The squo solves manufacturing competitiveness.

Williams 25 – Senior fellow at American Progress. Master’s in public policy, concentrating in environmental policy from GWU.

Mike Williams and Jamie Friedman, policy analyst on the Domestic Climate team at American Progress, “The Next Frontier in American Industrial Policy: Saving the Steel Industry by Decarbonizing It,” Center for American Progress, 01-27-2025, https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-next-frontier-in-american-industrial-policy-saving-the-steel-industry-by-decarbonizing-it/

The IIJA and IRA, likewise, have sparked a boom in manufacturing and clean energy through several policies to decarbonize heavy industry. In March 2024, The U.S. Department of Energy’s Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED) awarded $1.5 billion for six iron and steel decarbonization projects funded by the IRA and IIJA. Together, the projects will avoid 2.5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually, which is equivalent to more than 747 wind turbines running for a year or about 4 percent of domestic iron and steel emissions.16

The IRA provided grants to manufacturing facilities to decarbonize, tax incentives to support the production of key goods across the clean tech supply chain, and tax credits to support the consumption of those products. Alongside this, the IIJA’s $1 trillion investment in America’s infrastructure included a significant expansion of “Buy America,” which directed agencies to prioritize domestically produced materials for federally funded projects.17 These policies are already showing a major impact. Manufacturing construction spending is at its highest point in U.S. history, hovering near $240 billion, when it was just $80 billion three years ago.18 New facilities building electric vehicle batteries and solar cells, processing critical minerals, and electrolyzing green hydrogen have taken shape across the country.19 This is already remaking the economy, establishing the United States as a leader in the clean energy global supply chains, and rebuilding a sputtering manufacturing sector. It has created a foundation to ensure lasting U.S. industrial competitiveness for decades.

#### US industry is booming.

Willis 25 – News Editor, Argus Media.

Bob Willis, “US industrial production ends 2024 on strong note,” Argus Media, 01-17-2025, https://www.argusmedia.com/en/news-and-insights/latest-market-news/2648615-us-industrial-production-ends-2024-on-strong-note

US industrial production posted the strongest monthly growth in 10 months in December, boosted by rebounds in energy, mining and aircraft output.

US industrial production rose by a better-than-expected 0.9pc, as gains in output of aircraft contributed 0.2 percentage point after resolution of a Boeing aircraft plant strike, according to Federal Reserve data released today. That followed growth of 0.2pc in November and was three times higher than analysts' estimates for 0.3pc growth.

Manufacturing output, which accounts for about 75pc of industrial output, rose by 0.6pc after gaining 0.4pc in November after two months of declines, the Federal Reserve said.

Consumer goods output rose by 0.5pc on the month. Durable manufacturing rose by 0.4pc, with aerospace and miscellaneous transportation equipment up by 6.3pc and primary metals up by 1.7pc. Motor vehicles and parts output fell by 0.6pc.

Output of nondurable consumer goods rose by 0.7pc, boosted by a 1.9pc gain in energy. Business equipment output rose by 1.4pc, largely on the gain in civilian aircraft.

The indexes for mining and utilities, which account for 14pc and 11pc of total industrial output, climbed by 1.8pc and 2.1pc, respectively. Natural gas output was up by 6.2pc on the month.

Total industrial production was up by 0.5pc in December from a year earlier.

### No solve

#### AND if anything they tank productivity by lowering company ability to invest

Garcia-Macia 20 – Economist at the International Monetary Fund, M.Sc in Economics from Barcelona Graduate School of Economics, Ph.D in Economics from Stanford University.

Daniel Garcia-Macia, “Labor Costs and Corporate Investment in Italy,” 2/21/2020, International Monetary Fund, https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2020/02/21/Labor-Costs-and-Corporate-Investment-in-Italy-49035

The recovery of private investment in Italy has lagged its euro area peers over the past decade. This paper examines the role of elevated labor costs in hindering the recovery. Specifically, labor costs rose faster than labor productivity prior to the global financial crisis and have remained high since, weighing on firms’ profits, capital returns, and thus capacity to invest. Empirical analysis provides evidence for the impact of wages on investment at the sectoral and firm levels. Sectoral wage growth seems unrelated to sectoral productivity growth, but is negatively associated with investment. Firm-level data permit a better identification—by exploiting the interaction between sectoral wage growth (exogenous to the firm) and the lagged labor share of the firm. A 1 percent increase in real wages is estimated to cause a ⅓ percent fall in fixed capital. Profits absorb only ½ of the cost increase, pointing to the role of liquidity constraints. These results highlight the need for labor market reform to reinvigorate investment, and thus labor productivity and job creation.

### !D

#### No disruption can collapse supply chains---constant disruptions prove resilience, not AFF uniqueness.

Howells 25 – Vice President at SAP, Bachelor of Science in Computer Science from the University of Mid Glamorgan.   
Richard Howells, “From Shock To Strategy: Rethinking Supply Chains For The Next 30 Years”, 6/3/25, Forbes, https://www.forbes.com/sites/sap/2025/07/03/from-shock-to-strategy-rethinking-supply-chains-for-the-next-30-years/

If the last few years have taught us anything, it’s that uncertainty is the new normal. Supply chain leaders have navigated a relentless series of shocks—geopolitical upheaval, climate extremes, and rapid technological change. In the World Economic Forum’s latest white paper, “From Shock to Strategy: Building Value Chains for the Next 30 Years,” the message is clear:

"The era of linear, globalized value chains is over. The future belongs to those who can build resilience, agility, and sustainability into the very DNA of their operations."

Why Supply Chains Must Change

Let’s start with the big picture. The WEF’s Global Future Council on Advanced Manufacturing and Value Chains has mapped out a future where “the only certainty is uncertainty”.

Gone are the days when manufacturers could rely on a predictable, globalized model. Today, 90% of industry leaders are shifting toward regionalization and dual sourcing strategies. Headlines about trade wars, cyberattacks, and climate disasters aren’t just background noise, they’re the new operating environment.

## Monopsony Adv

### CP Solves It

### No Solve

### Income Inequality Low---2NC

#### Aff authors overestimate inflation and undercount economic progress.

Gramm et al. 24 – former U.S. Senator, former Professor of Economics at Texas A&M University, PhD in Economics from the University of Georgia; Eminent Scholar and Professor of Economics Emeritus in the Department of Economics at the University of Auburn, PhD in Economics and Political Theory from Louisiana State University, M.A. in Economics and History from St. Mary’s University; former Assistant Commissioner at the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Economist at the CATO Institute, M.A. in International Political Economy from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Phil Gramm, Robert Ekelund, and John Early, “The Myth of American Inequality,” 05-01-2024, https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/myth-of-american-inequality-9798216332466/

Fifty Years of Economic Progress

In no period of American history has the economy been more maligned than in the last fifty years. The official statistics of the US government and publications based on those statistics provide a drumbeat of economic woe. The poverty rate has remained virtually unchanged for fifty years. America has not had a pay raise in decades. Growing income inequality is now a threat to both the health of our economy and the stability of our political system.

The first eight chapters of this book have shown that those claims simply do not comport with the America we live in. The official statistics compiled by our government do not reflect the economic progress we see everywhere because those statistics are wrong. They are wrong not because of measurement error but because, by design, they don’t count most government transfer payments as income to the recipients and fail to account for taxes paid as income lost to the taxpayers. The official measures of well-being also do not use the most accurate price indexes to adjust for inflation; as a result, they understate the nation’s economic progress. The data needed to fix these and other design failures in our official measures of well-being are all available in plain sight from other official government sources.

Fifty Years of Progress

Figure 9.1 shows the distribution of income after transfers and taxes in 1967 on the left and that income distribution in 2017 on the right, both in 2017 dollars. The horizontal dashed lines define the upper limit of the income quintiles in 1967 and are extended to the 2017 distribution to show how the income quintiles in 2017 compare with the inflation-adjusted 1967 levels. Even though fifty years is a long time, the comparison is still startling.

When all the transfer payments to households are counted as income and household income is reduced by the taxes paid, not only do both the top and the fourth quintiles in 2017 have income that would have placed them in the top quintile in 1967, but all the households in the middle quintile and almost a third of those in the second quintile also had incomes equivalent to top-quintile incomes in 1967. An extraordinary 66.3 percent of households in 2017 had incomes after transfers and taxes that would have been enjoyed only by those in the top quintile in 1967.

Twenty-five percent of households in 2017 had income that would have placed them in the fourth quintile in 1967. Only 5.4 percent of 2017 households had incomes that would have put them in the middle quintile in 1967. Another 1.7 percent had incomes in the range of the second quintile, and a mere 1.6 percent would have been in the bottom quintile.

Figure 9.1 applies the same traditional price index used by Census to adjust income for inflation. But economists and statisticians have reached a broad consensus that the traditional consumer price indexes used to adjust most wellbeing measures for inflation consistently overstate inflation. Even the agencies that produce the price indexes acknowledge this fact. Chapter 6 analyzed and explained the two upward biases that, in combination, have caused the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) to overstate inflation significantly over the last fifty years (see Figure 6.1).

Recall from Chapter 6 that the first bias comes from ignoring how consumers continually improve their well-being by substituting items that become relatively cheaper for those that have become relatively more expensive while maintaining the same level of spending. This bias is called the substitution bias. For example, between 2010 and 2011 the price of ground beef rose by 41 cents per pound, from $2.36 per pound to $2.77 per pound, while the price of chicken rose by only 3 cents per pound, from $1.26 to $1.29. At the 2010 prices, consumers were required to forego 1.87 pounds of chicken in order to buy a pound of ground beef, but in 2011 they were required to forego 2.15 pounds of chicken to get that pound of beef.1 Obviously, we would expect that consumers would, on average, consume more chicken and less beef. And that is exactly what they did, consuming 12.4 percent fewer pounds of beef and 12.9 percent more pounds of chicken.2 Consumers were negatively affected as the prices of both beef and chicken rose, but by buying relatively less beef and more chicken as the price of beef rose relative to chicken, they were able to reduce some of the negative impact of the price increases. The CPI-U completely ignored this dynamic and continued measuring inflation using higher-than-actual expenditure weights for the faster-rising beef prices and lower-than-actual weights for the slower-rising chicken prices. This simple example illustrates substitution bias. It happens every day in every nook and cranny of the economy, and the CPI-U ignores it.

While the total substitution bias in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is small in a single year (an average of 0.5 percent per year for the last fifty years), official government data show that from 1967 to 2017, this bias caused the basic CPI-U to overstate inflation by 31.6 percent.3 Since August 2002, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has published a Chained Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (C-CPI-U) that eliminates this bias beginning with data for December 1999. This improved index uses a market basket of items that reflects the actual purchases of each item at the same time as the prices were collected and also reflects the value of the substitutions that the consumer chooses to make. But this more accurate index has not been used to adjust any measures of well-being for inflation. It has been applied only to adjust personal income tax brackets in the federal tax code. A very similar official index (the Personal Consumption Expenditure Price Index [PCEPI] from the Bureau of Economic Analysis) is used in the adjustment of gross domestic product and productivity calculations for inflation. That index is available for time periods before December 1999, enabling us to look at the effect of eliminating the substitution bias over the entire fifty years.

Figure 9.2 shows the results of using the official price indexes that eliminate the substitution bias. By using the more accurate measure of price changes, we can see that almost all of the second quintile households in 2017 received incomes after transfers and taxes that were large enough to have put them in the top quintile in 1967. An extraordinary total of 77.2 percent of all households had incomes in 2017 that were equivalent to the top quintile of 1967 in inflation-adjusted dollars. From the table below the chart, we can see that in 2017, fewer than 6 percent of households were receiving real incomes after transfers and taxes that would have put them in any of the lowest three quintiles for 1967.

As shown in Chapter 6, even correcting for the substitution bias does not eliminate the failure of our current measures of inflation to account fully for the additional value consumers receive from new and improved products. While BLS has not published an official index that corrects for most of the new-product biases as it did to correct for the substitution bias, ample official and other credible data are available to calculate reasonable, conservative estimates of the effects of new-product bias from more than fifty government and scholarly research papers. That research was incorporated into the congressionally chartered Boskin Commission report, “Toward a More Accurate Measure of the Cost of Living,” and subsequent updates that were discussed in Chapter 6.4

Chapter 6 further showed that half of the new-product bias can be eliminated by using the existing official BLS Disease-Based Price Indexes to calculate the medical-care component of an improved CPI. It also showed that the remainder of the new-product effects can be calculated from published research by the same statistical agency that calculates the basic CPI, advisory expert commission reports chartered by government, and a growing array of academic and other research outside government. Chapter 6 presented some of the major studies, including two recent summaries that used calculations from the combined results of more than fifty studies. This research has led to some important improvements in the official CPI in recent years, but significant additional improvements are still needed, and the historical indexes continue to contain the new-product biases that existed before these improvements were made in the current CPI.

Based on comprehensive research covering a wide range of items from telecommunication equipment to medical care, researchers have developed measures of price change that quantify the effects of the value of new products that are not yet captured in any official CPI or that are partially captured in the current CPI measure but are totally missing from historical data. These measures show that the existing official indexes most likely overstate the fiftyyear inflation rate by about 40 percent, in addition to the overstatement from the substitution bias. Real-dollar calculations in the remainder of this chapter have adopted these research measures that reduce new-product bias in addition to eliminating the substitution bias.

The physical evidence of the unmeasured value of new and improved products is all around us. Chapter 6 described that evidence in more detail, but a brief review can help explain why adjusting for the value of new and improved products is an important part of getting a complete picture of the growth in the purchasing power of household income over the last fifty years.

Examples of the impact of new and improved goods and services significantly enriching our lives are found throughout the last fifty years. Medical advances have added eight more years of life expectancy.5 The CPI calculation, however, has not accounted for all of this added value. It assumes little or no value for HIV/AIDS being transformed from a disease that produced virtually certain early death into a chronic illness with long-term survival. CPI price changes do not show the change from expensive abdominal surgery to cheap over-the-counter pills to treat stomach ulcers. It has ignored how open-heart surgery has become a routine life-saving procedure and how even it has been partly replaced with microsurgery to insert stents.

Until the last few years, the extra value of having a cell phone and the expansion of its vast capabilities had not been recognized in the CPI, and it continues to be missing in the historical data. The value of larger homes with more conveniences and functionality has been underestimated. For example, the historical CPI data do not reflect fully the fact that central air conditioning has risen from being rare to almost universal, including for low-income families, and that the typical home now has two or more bathrooms rather than one. These are but a few of the striking improvements in our lives that the CPI has undervalued or ignored altogether, and, as a result, price increases are overstated.

Figure 9.3 displays the results of adding estimates for the effects of new and improved products to the price index used to adjust household income for inflation. When the inflation adjustment accounts more completely for the extraordinary improvements in our well-being from new and improved products over the last fifty years, all but 6.2 percent of households in 2017 had incomes that would have placed them in the top quintile in 1967.

As amazing as these results are, for those who have lived through this fiftyyear period, the results look like common sense. Consider how in 1967 the bottom- and second-quintile levels of American households lived. In 1967, about half of all households in the bottom quintile lacked “complete” plumbing (piped hot and cold water, a flush toilet, and a bathtub or shower). Those days are gone because fewer than 2 percent of the bottom-quintile homes lack those basics today.6 Many homes in both of the lower-income quintiles still had partyline telephones or even none at all. Now there is hardly a household without at least one smart cell phone with internet access. Fifty years ago, instances of hunger were more common in poor households. Today they exist only in isolated households run by adults who are unable to perform common daily tasks.

Even the fact that the lower income households today are economically as well off as some households in the top 20 percent of income in 1967 is easily understood. Health insurance for the top quintile would usually have covered only hospitalization in 1967, but most of the poorest households in the land now get full, first-dollar coverage without any cost sharing. Even with full coverage, the poorest today are still about 20 percent less likely to need hospitalization than their rich predecessors in 1967 because of improved treatments. When people at any income level go to the hospital, they will stay only a fraction of the time spent in 1967, are more likely to emerge fully restored, and are far less likely to be readmitted with the same complaint. An average lower-income person in 2017 will live eight years longer than a top-quintile person did in 1967.

Nobody, however rich, in 1967 had any of the services available over the internet—and only the mega rich in the top fraction of 1 percent of income could afford personal shoppers to go to the store to pick up what they wanted, research assistants to go to the library to dig out knowledge they wanted to have, and tax advice that even the poorest household today can access through a computer or smart phone.

Miracle fabrics that required less care and wore better were available in 1967 only to those with higher incomes. And when it came to home chores, clothes dryers were rare, and dishwashers were even rarer. Now they are almost universal. In 2017, almost every household has a color television set, and most have multiple sets with large flat screens. In 1967, only about 16 percent of households had color, and nobody had flat or LCD screens.

If you were an adult fifty years ago, think about the top 20 percent of the homes in your hometown—not the top 10 percent or the top 1 percent but the homes that were comfortable but less than mansions. They were the only homes with central air conditioning and two or more full bathrooms. Today, most families classified as poor have both.7

In 1967, the middle quintile might vacation in the family car or by bus; the top quintile might fly, mostly in a prop plane. Today, cheap tickets are used by people in all income brackets to jet throughout the nation and, increasingly, throughout the world. And if they choose to travel by car, the Cadillacs and Rolls-Royces of the crème de la crème in 1967 broke down ten times more often than the Ford owned by a bottom-quintile family in 2017. The Ford will also last twice as along and be four times safer.

Eating food away from home at a restaurant where somebody else prepared the meal was a hallmark of a high-income lifestyle in 1967. In the mid-1960s, households in the top quintile spent 27 percent of their food budget on food away from home. But by 2017, the average bottom-quintile household spent 34 percent of its food budget away from home, far more than the top quintile did in the mid-1960s and more than even the top 1 percent did.8

The more basic consumption of food at home also has shown substantial improvement in the average standard of living. In 1967, the US Department of Agriculture’s “low-cost” food plan for the bottom quintile would have required the average production or nonsupervisory employee to work two hours and thirteen minutes per day during a five-day workweek to feed a family of four. In 2017, that same amount of work would have enabled the same worker to buy the “moderate cost” food plan and have earnings left over from an additional eighteen minutes of work to buy other things; an additional eight minutes of work would enable the worker to purchase the same top-grade diet consumed by the top quintile. Even in low-tech products such as food, many bottom-quintile households in 2017 could easily obtain the food consumed by the top quintile fifty years earlier.9

By any reasonable measure, the economic progress experienced across the board in the American economy over the last fifty years has been nothing short of extraordinary. Contrary claims are based on figures that do not count all the income households received from government and fail to use the most accurate measure of price changes.

### AT: corporate proagancda

### !D---Civil War---US---2NC

#### No civil war.

Kevin M. Levin 25, MA, Member, Board of Directors, National Council for History Education, Former Consultant, National Humanities Center, "No, We Are Still Not Heading Toward Another Civil War," Substack, 03/02/2025, https://kevinmlevin.substack.com/p/no-we-are-still-not-heading-toward. [italics in original]

You can’t open up a major newspaper today without reading a steady stream of op-eds lamenting the end of democracy in the United States or come across a poll predicting a civil war in the next few years. There is a balm for such doom and gloom predictions: It’s called history.

This morning I caught part of an interview between Mehdi Hasan and former Republican Congressman Joe Walsh. Early on in the interview Hasan asks Walsh, “Do you worry about civil war?” Walsh offered the following in response: “The MAGA base, they're welcoming violence... Trump wants violence, MAGA wants violence. I just don't think the American people fully understand the unprecedented moment we’re in.

There is certainly much to be worried about. We can’t go a day without reading about violent incidents taking place around the country.

But “unprecedented”? Really?

The point isn’t to suggest that these are not serious problems or that we shouldn’t be addressing them. We most certainly should, but we also need to do a better job of placing them in historical context. Somehow, in this mode of thought we lose all sight of history and context.

I suspect that most people who are predicting another civil war have an image in their mind of our own Civil War. Who can blame them. We are obsessed with our civil war. Arguably, no other moment in American history looms larger in our popular imagination than the Civil War, but perhaps this is exactly why we are so easily led astray.

The problem isn’t that we don’t know enough about the conditions that led to war in 1861 and which cost roughly 750,000 lives in four short years, though that is certainly lacking, it’s that we don’t seem to know anything about any other moment in our history.

The point here is that history often takes a back seat in these moments when everything appears to be in decline.

I’ve recommended Jon Grinspan’s wonderful book about the second half of the nineteenth century titled, *The Age of Acrimony: How Americans Fought to Fix Their Democracy*, 1865-1915, before. Grinspan tells this story through the lives of radical congressman William “Pig Iron” Kelley and his daughter, Florence Kelly. Early in the book, he writes the following:

Americans claim that we are more divided than we have been since the Civil War, but forget that the lifetime *after* the civil War saw the loudest, roughest political campaigns in our history. From the 1860s through the early 1900s, presidential elections drew the highest turnouts ever reached, were decided by the closest margins, and witnessed the the most political violence. Racist terrorism during Reconstruction, political machines that often operated as organized crime syndicates, and the brutal suppression of labor movements made this the deadliest era in American political history. The nation experienced one impeachment, two presidential elections “won” by the loser of the popular vote, and *three presidential assassinations*. Control of Congress rocketed back and forth, but neither party seemed capable of tackling the systemic issues disrupting Americans’ lives. Driving it all, a tribal partisanship captivated the public, folding racial, ethnic, and religious identities into two warring hosts. (p. x)

According to Grinspan, we are not living through unprecedented times. “It’s not that our problems are the same as those of the late nineteenth century—often they are strikingly different—but that the era in between was so unusual.” (p. xii)

Grinspan offers a vantage point from which we can look more closely at how a period that witnessed a certain amount of progress on various fronts came about. More importantly, it is a reminder that nothing is inevitable.

It’s a reminder that our history is filled with moments of intense violence, much of it racial such as the East St. Louis massacre in July 1917 and the Tulsa race massacre just a few years later in 1921.

Spend some time and read about the intense violence directed at Chinese immigrants in California beginning in the 1850s and culminating in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Michael Willrich’s new book, *American Anarchy: The Epic Struggle between Immigrant Radicals and the US Government at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century* does a great job of exploring the many violent clashes between anarchists and the federal government in the early twentieth century that inspired the rise of the civil-liberties movement.

I can’t help but think of Frederick Douglass as someone who, at the end of his long life, had every reason to be pessimistic for the nation’s future. Step back and consider the dramatic changes he had witnessed. Born into slavery, Douglass eventually freed himself and became one of the leading abolitionists in the North. Douglass pointed to the nation’s hypocrisy in its celebration as a freedom loving nation. He lived long enough to see his two sons fight to end the institution of slavery. In the years that followed, Douglass campaigned for civil rights for women and African Americans, and stood up against a growing nativism in response to an influx of immigrants.

He also lived long enough to see the gradual erosion of Black civil rights in the last years of his life.

Douglass’s defiance was on full display in one of his last major speeches delivered in Washington, D.C. on January 9, 1894.

Though it may strike down the weak to-day, it will strike down the strong to-morrow. Not a breeze comes to us now from the late rebellious States that is not tainted and freighted with negro blood. In its thirst for blood and its rage for vengeance, the mob has blindly, boldly and defiantly supplanted sheriffs, constables and police. It has assumed all the functions of civil authority. It laughs at legal processes, courts and juries, and its redhanded murderers range abroad unchecked and unchallenged by law or by public opinion. Prison walls and iron bars are no protection to the innocent or guilty, if the mob is in pursuit of negroes accused of crime. Jail doors are battered down in the presence of unresisting jailors, and the accused, awaiting trial in the courts of law are dragged out and hanged, shot, stabbed or burned to death as the blind and irresponsible mob may elect. We claim to be a Christian country and a highly civilized nation, yet, I fearlessly affirm that there is nothing in the history of savages to surpass the blood chilling horrors and fiendish excesses perpetrated against the colored people by the so-called enlightened' and Christian people of the South. It is commonly thought that only the lowest and most disgusting birds and beasts, such as buzzards, vultures and hyenas, will gloat over and prey upon dead bodies, but the Southern mob in its rage feeds its vengeance by shooting, stabbing and burning when their victims are dead.

It must have been a difficult speech to write and deliver as Douglass was forced to respond to many of the very same arguments that racist Americans had posed to the idea of Black civil rights throughout the entire nineteenth century.

And yet Douglass somehow managed to end his speech by reminding his audience of the power of the nation’s founding ideals.

But, my friends, I must stop. Time and strength are not equal to the task before me. But could I be heard by this great nation, I would call to mind the sublime and glorious truths with which, at its birth, it saluted a listening world. Its voice then, was as the trump of an archangel, summoning hoary forms of oppression and time honored tyranny, to judgement. Crowned heads heard it and shrieked. Toiling millions heard it and clapped their hands for joy. It announced the advent of a nation, based upon human brotherhood and the self-evident truths of liberty and equality. Its mission was the redemption of the world from the bondage of ages. Apply these sublime and glorious truths to the situation now before you. Put away your race prejudice. Banish the idea that one class must rule over another.

Recognize the fact that the rights of the humblest citizen are as worthy of protection as are those of the highest, and your problem will be solved; and, whatever may be in store for it in the future, whether prosperity, or adversity; whether it shall have foes without, or foes within, whether there shall be peace, or war; based upon the eternal principles of truth, justice and humanity, and with no class having any cause of complaint or grievance, your Republic will stand and flourish forever.

His faith in the nation’s future wasn’t completely extinguished, even as he watched as the door on Black civil rights was quickly closing. We know how long it took for it to begin to open again.

I am certainly not here to tell anyone how they should feel about the United States or how to assess its future. What I would suggest is that our knee-jerk predictions of civil war reveal a tendency to see violence as somehow the exception in American life or the result of an assumption that Americans are inherently a more peaceful people compared to other nations.

#### No civil war.

Van Wart et al. 24 – Professor of public administration at Cal State San Bernardino

Montgomery Van Wart, Jeremy L. Hall, and Miranda McIntyre, “Another Civil War in America? Comparing the Social Psychology of the United States of the 1850s to Today,” Administration & Society, 56(5), 515-550. https://doi.org/10.1177/00953997241244701

Concern, then, is widespread among academics and “within the Beltway.” Despite grave worries about current levels of civil discord, most academics and political commentators consider the prospects of a successful coup or civil war to be relatively low (Kelly, 2022; Pan, 2022). A civil war is not nearly as simple as the American “North versus South” paradigm appears (at least prima facie). Many factors can interact and lead to a major violent political conflict. In what follows, we assume that the more entropic factors that exist—and the greater the intensity and duration of those factors—the more plausible a civil war becomes (Goldstone et al., 2022). As with any major historical development, however, civil wars are not inevitable even when the conditions seem ripe, because trigger events may not occur, opposition may be disorganized and unrealistic, or autocratic controls are too well entrenched (e.g., Reisch, 1991).

#### Their evidence is media hype.

Hollywood 24 – Senior Decision Scientist at RAND focusing on public safety and homeland security

John Hollywood, “Against Hyping Civil War and Mass Violence,” Rand, 11/4/2024, https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2024/11/against-hyping-civil-war-and-mass-violence.html

https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2024/11/against-hyping-civil-war-and-mass-violence.html

The hype across media about the prospect of another U.S. civil war needs a response. As a researcher on terrorism and mass shootings, I take note of things like a major Hollywood movie on the subject. But when even the staid magazine Foreign Policy felt compelled to run a series of articles addressing the possibility, things have gotten bad. One of those articles even noted that civil war would be bad for the economy. Indeed, it would.

Given the narratives, it's no surprise that, in a recent poll, a quarter of Americans expressed at least some worries that a new civil war will start after the presidential election. However, what does the evidence show? I believe that if the United States were on the brink of civil war, it's safe to assume that the level of political violence in the country would be far higher than it is.

Mass attacks on the U.S. public are rare, given the size of the country. The FBI documented 50 active shooting incidents in 2023, and few appear to have been motivated by partisan divisions.

RAND studies looking at over 600 plots for mass attacks found that, historically, close to two-thirds were personally motivated, driven by factors like local grievance, desire for infamy, delusion, and so forth. Of the remainder, around one-fifth were al Qaeda– or ISIS-motivated. Less than one-fifth were attributable to domestic political agendas.

Even the would-be assassin who shot former President Trump in July appears to have been in search of a celebrity target, rather than a political one. The shooter looked at opportunities to attack in general and chose the Butler, Pennsylvania rally out of convenience.

Outside of mass attempts to kill, the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data organization notes that incidents of political violence carried out by domestic extremists are down by more than 80 percent since 2020. There were fewer than 10 across the United States during the first eight months of 2024.

Reports of Americans' support of political violence in general appear to be inflated. The think tank Populace conducted a survey that gave Americans privacy so they would be comfortable revealing what they really thought about sensitive issues; it then compared those answers with what they were willing to tell interviewers directly. Some 20 percent told interviewers that it may be necessary to resort to political violence, but, when given privacy, only four percent reported really feeling that way. It is a sad situation that today's U.S. political and information environment apparently is driving Americans to lie about supporting political violence, even when they don't.

According to other recent survey data, Americans on both sides of the political spectrum said they are not interested in subverting democracy. Further, the primary motivation for the fraction who do support anti-democratic measures is to retaliate against political opponents who they believe—you guessed it—are working to undermine American democracy.

#### There are too many costs and risks.

Koren 22 – Professor of Political Science, PhD in international relations with research on civil conflict and peace studies

Ore Koren, “Civil war in the US is unlikely because grievance doesn’t necessarily translate directly into violence,” The Conversation, 1/14/2022, https://theconversation.com/civil-war-in-the-us-is-unlikely-because-grievance-doesnt-necessarily-translate-directly-into-violence-174456

Risks to joining a rebellion

But even if they are fully willing, in almost every case, civil war will not happen unless these very angry people have the opportunity to organize and use violence on a large scale.

Joining a rebellion is extremely risky. You can die or be severely wounded. Your chances of winning are low. If you don’t win, even if you survive unscathed, you still risk prosecution and social alienation. You may lose your job, your savings and even your home and put your family at risk.

It doesn’t matter how angry you are, these considerations are usually prohibitive.

#### Statistical analysis shows civil wars deescalate before existential severity.

Clauset 25 – Professor of Computer Science at CU Boulder, recipient of 2016 Erdos-Renyi Prize, former Omidyar Fellow at Sante Fe Institute.

Aaron Clauset, Barbara F. Walter, UCSD, Lars-Erik Cederman, ETH Zurich, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, University of Essex, “Escalation dynamics and the severity of wars,” Cornell University arXiv Physics and Society, March 5, 2025, https://arxiv.org/abs/2503.03945# \*figures omitted

Escalation dynamics in armed conflicts

Substantial conflict escalation is likely to require a ratcheting-up in conflict-waging effort. Repeated escalation over multiple years should thus pose significant political and logistical difficulties from repeatedly building new capacity or continually reallocating resources away from civilian needs. Distinct difficulties are likely to apply to repeated conflict deescalation. Thus, substantial escalation or deescalation in fighting should be punctuated or occasional phenomena rather than continuous, and empirical escalation factors should tend to cluster around λ = 1 (no-change). For instance, in the Afghanistan conflict (Fig. 2A), annual severity was high and relatively steady prior to 1990, when the government supported by the Soviet Union was fighting rebels heavily armed and trained by the United States, killing around 30,000 per year. From 1990, after Soviet forces withdrew, annual severity fell to a substantially lower level, around 5000 per year, reflecting the lessened direct foreign state support to both the government and the non-state actors. In contrast, conflict severity in the Guatemalan civil war (1963-1995) was relatively stable over most of its duration, with around 2000 deaths per year, except for a brief period in the early 1980s where fighting spiked to 10,000 deaths per year before returning to its previous level. For civil wars with durations T > 1 year, empirical escalation factors across all conflict years exhibit a highly symmetric distribution that is peaked at λ = 1 (Fig. 2B) and we find no evidence of a systematic tendency to escalate or deescalate. Instead, we find that (i) the most commonly observed change in severity within a conflict (44% of all escalation factors) is no-change, i.e., fighting holds steady, and (ii) the likelihood that a conflict’s annual severity may increase to be 10 or even 100 times larger in the next year closely follows the likelihood of a concomitant decrease in severity. This unconditional distribution ignores any correlations among escalation factors or correlations with conflict covariates or the conflict’s current severity, a point we return to below. We note that the abundance of λ = 1 escalation factors is likely an artifact of the PBD’s construction: for many multi-year periods within conflicts, or for some entire conflicts, the annual severities simply equal the period’s total divided by its length. However, there is no reason to expect that correcting this artifact would alter the shape of the distribution’s tails, i.e., the tendency to escalate or deescalate. We characterize the shape of the distribution of escalation factors using a piecewise model, in which with probability q, there is no change in severity this year (λ = 1) and otherwise λ is drawn from a double Pareto distribution, which has symmetric power-law tails above and below the modal value. Using standard statistical techniques [30], we find that the maximum likelihood powerlaw tail parameter is ˆα = 2.1 ± 0.1, indicating an extremely high variance distribution [31]. Furthermore, we cannot reject the Pareto distribution as a data generating process for the tails of the escalation factor distribution (pKS = 0.31±0.03). That is, the observed escalation factors are, as a group, statistically indistinguishable from an iid draw from the fitted double Pareto distribution. Interstate wars do not permit an independent characterization of their escalation factor distribution because of their smaller number in the PBD period (1945-2008) and shorter durations. However, we find that interstate war escalation factors (excluding λ = 1) are statistically indistinguishable from the empirical distribution of civil war factors (2-tailed KS test, p = 0.16), and are a plausible iid draw from the estimated model of civil war factors (pKS = 0.61 ± 0.03). That is, we find no evidence that escalation dynamics differ significantly between civil and interstate wars, even as the cumulative sizes and durations of these conflicts differ substantially (Fig. 1C), suggesting that high-variance escalation dynamics are a generic feature of armed conflict. Within civil wars, the escalation factors correlate slightly with annual severity, such that “hot” conflicts tend to deescalate in the next year, while “cold” conflicts tend to escalate (Fig. 2C). The effect at the lower end is attributable to left-censoring, because small conflicts can only become so much smaller before their severity falls below a measurable threshold (in the PBD, xmin = 25). Hence, conditioned on conflict continuing for another year at measurable severities, an otherwise symmetric distribution of conflict escalation factors (Fig. 2A) would be truncated on the left side, shifting the average escalation factor to be hλi > 1 (escalation). Although there is no such constraint on the upper end, we nevertheless observe a symmetric tendency toward deescalation among large civil wars, i.e., hλi < 1 (but no such tendency among large interstate wars Fig. S2). The cross-over point between these two regimes occurs at about xt = 500. Hence, civil wars will tend to regress, over time, toward this “warm” value of severity, although the broad variance of escalation factors will tend to obscure that pattern in any particular conflict. An important direction of future work is to understand the causes of this systematic tendency for large civil wars to deescalate, which could be related to fundamental constraints arising from population, military capabilities, recruitment, bargaining, war fatigue, or even international pressure.

The severity of civil wars

Escalation dynamics highlight how fighting intensity often changes over the course of a conflict, and our results indicate that escalation is a common pattern in armed conflicts. We now develop a generic model of severity dynamics, based on escalation factors, and determine whether escalation dynamics can explain the cumulative sizes of civil wars (Fig. 1C). The escalation model generates a conflict time series x1, x2, . . . , xT in three parts: conflict duration, initial severity, and escalation dynamics. First, we draw the conflict duration T uniformly at random from the empirical distribution of civil war durations Pr(T ) (Fig. 1C inset). Second, we draw the severity in the first year of fighting x1 uniformly at random from the empirical distribution of initial severities Pr(x1). Third, for each year 1 ≤ t < T , we draw an escalation factor λt uniformly at random from the joint distribution of civil war escalation factors and current severity Pr(λ | xt) (see Appendix C) and record xt+1 = λt xt. The simulated conflict’s total severity X is the sum of these annual severities. The escalation model is fully non-parametric, with no fitted parameters, and instead combines the empirical distributions for duration, initial severity, and escalation factors into a simple random walk model of conflict annual severity. We contrast this escalation model with a “no escalation” null model that includes effects for duration and initial severity, but omits any effect from escalation. In this model, we draw the conflict duration T and initial severity x1 as in the escalation model, and then multiply the initial severity by the duration T to obtain the simulated total severity X (this process is equivalent to setting λt = 1 for all t). The no-escalation model poorly reproduces the observed variation in civil war size over the period 1946– 2008 (Fig. 3A), but does so in an interesting way. Initial sizes and durations alone do produce a sufficient number of both very small and very large civil wars, but they produce too few conflicts of intermediate size (those between 1000 and 100,000 battle deaths). Similarly, this model tends to produce conflicts that are systematically smaller in size X for their given duration T than the empirical data (Fig. 3A inset). Although the frequency of the very largest conflicts under the model agrees with the historical record, this agreement is misleading: the model lacks the empirical tendency for large civil wars to deescalate (Fig. 2C), and hence the agreement in the upper tail of the distribution reflects an implicit overestimate of the intensity and duration of these largest conflicts. In contrast, the escalation model closely matches the entire distribution of civil war sizes, reproducing both the overall shape of the distribution, the frequency of intermediate-sized conflicts, and the frequency of the very largest conflicts (Fig. 3B). The escalation model also reproduces the observed pattern in how conflict size X tends to increase with conflict duration T (Fig. 3B inset). Hence, escalation dynamics appear to be essential for explaining the sizes of civil wars.

The severity of interstate wars

Testing the ability of escalation dynamics to explain the sizes of interstate wars requires a different approach, because we lack sufficient within-conflict information on interstate wars in the PBD to define an equivalent nonparametric model. Instead, we adapt the civil war model to interstate conflicts by defining and testing several variations to identify the sufficient conditions for generating large interstate wars. We evaluate these models using the severities of the 95 interstate conflicts in the Correlates of War data [28]. Unless otherwise stated, all versions of the interstate war escalation model have two modifications relative to the civil war escalation model. First, because interstate wars tend to be substantially shorter in duration than civil wars, in the interstate escalation models, we instead draw a conflict’s duration T from the empirical duration distribution for interstate conflicts. Second, we do not expect the tendency for large civil wars to deescalate to also appear in interstate conflicts, in which the belligerents are state actors with much greater capacity for mobilizing resources and hence are less subject to the self-limiting tendencies non-state actors experience in fighting civil wars. For instance, state-level belligerents can mobilize greater resources through taxation and conscription, and wars can expand to additional states, e.g., via alliances or geographic proximity [32, 33]. Hence, for models with escalation, we draw escalation factors λt from the unconditioned distribution of escalation factors Pr(λ), instead of the size-conditioned one. In Model 1, we again include effects only for duration and initial severity, and omit the effects of escalation. Because we lack data on war severity in the initial year of interstate conflicts in the CoW data, we instead use the total severity of wars that lasted only 1 year in duration as a proxy. Hence, in Model 1, we draw the initial severity in this way and multiply it by the drawn duration. In Model 2, we select the initial severity by using the civil war distribution of initial severities Pr(x1) and then multiply the drawn initial size by fixed factor of 20 to capture the larger baseline size of interstate conflicts. Escalation factors are then drawn from the unconditioned distribution as described above. In Model 3, we scale up the initial severities in the same way as Model 2, and then draw two escalation factors for each increment of time in the simulation. This modification captures the idea that escalation dynamics in interstate conflicts unfold at a faster time scale than in civil wars. Model 1, which omits escalation, fails to produce large interstate conflicts and fails to produce large enough conflicts for their durations (Fig. 4A), indicating that, like for civil wars, escalation dynamics are essential for producing large conflicts. In contrast, Model 2, which includes escalation, produces very heavy-tailed distributions in final conflict sizes. However, this model produces somewhat too few of the very largest conflicts, and conflicts tend to be slightly smaller than expected for their duration, relative to the empirical data (Fig. 4B). Model 3, however, closely matches both the observed sizes of interstate wars and largely captures the observed relation between conflict size and duration (Fig. 4C). (See Appendix C for additional simulation results.) The key component of Models 2 and 3 is the unconditioned distribution of escalation factors Pr(λ), which gives large conflicts an equal chance of further escalating or deescalating. In fact, Model 2 includes little other than this feature, and produces a distribution of conflict sizes that is surprisingly close to the empirical data, indicating that the asymmetric tendency of large civil wars to deescalate is the key difference between civil and interstate war sizes. The better agreement of Model 3 among the very largest conflicts suggests that more rapid escalation dynamics is sufficient mechanism for producing the largest conflicts. (We note that other variations of the model can also replicate this empirical pattern; see Appendix C.)

Forecasting civil war severity

If escalation dynamics accurately capture how the intensity of fighting can vary within an ongoing conflict, it may conceivably be used to make model-based forecasts of how large a current or potential future conflict may become. We consider two such forecasting tasks for civil war escalation. In the first, we consider hypothetical civil wars in four large states (the United States, China, India, and Nigeria) beginning in 2025 and in 2060, and we forecast the cumulative size of the hypothetical conflict. In the second, we consider three civil wars that were ongoing in 2008 (the last year of the PBD data), in Turkey, Ethiopia, and Myanmar, and forecast their eventual total duration and cumulative severity. In each case, the primary difference among these forecasts is the escalation model’s initial severity x1, which sets the initial scale of the conflict; the severity of subsequent years are governed by the generic model of civil war escalation. For the hypothetical civil wars, we base the initial severity on the country’s estimated population in the year of conflict onset, which we multiply by a random “intensity” factor γ to produce the initial size of the new conflict. To make these initial severities reflect historical patterns, we calculate the empirical distribution of intensity factors from the PBD data using the recorded initial severities, which we match to UN estimates of state populations in that first year of conflict [29]. For instance, the PKK insurgency in Turkey becomes a civil war in 1984 with 442 battle deaths relative to a population of about 47.6 million, implying an intensity factor of 442/47569000. For the ongoing civil wars, we set the initial severity x0 to be the severity in 2008. To select their future durations, we employ a simple coin-flipping model using a hazard-rate model estimated from the historical civil war duration distribution (see Appendix D). Escalation dynamics drive broad uncertainty in the severity forecasts of all four hypothetical conflicts (Fig. 5A). In the largest states (China and India), these forecasts have a modal value around 50,000 battle deaths, while in the smaller states (**United States** and Nigeria), the forecasts produce a moderately smaller modal value around 10,000 battle deaths. However, the distribution of sizes is very broad, with most of the density ranging from 1000 deaths to 1,000,000 deaths, a difference of 3 orders of magnitude. This broad variance illustrates the way in which escalation dynamics tends to amplify uncertainty in future severity, such that the size of a civil war can be broadly uncorrelated with the size of the state, i.e., a smaller nation can produce a larger civil war than a more populous nation, even as large nations have greater potential for large conflicts. Similarly, the escalation model produces broadly distributed forecasts for ongoing conflicts, with some future severity time series exhibits dramatic escalation, while others exhibit far less variation (Fig. 5B). The resulting distributions of cumulative severity for these conflicts are broad, again highlighting the inherent uncertainty caused by conflict escalation dynamics (Fig. 5C).

#### Existing controversies aren’t even close to enough.

Rose 23 – Editor of Foreign Affairs.  Mary and David Boies distinguished fellow in U.S. foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations

Gideon Rose, May 16 2023, “Why Today Is Not Like the 1850s,” Council on Foreign Relations, https://www.cfr.org/article/why-today-not-1850s

Still, the differences seem even more compelling. Most critically, the institution of slavery affected every aspect of southern economic, political, and social life. It was the “cornerstone” of everything else in the south, as Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens put it, with racial dominance the organizing principle around which the rest of existence was arranged. This all-encompassing system was geographically limited to a single contiguous region of the country and could be sustained only by constant forceful repression inside and out—hence the whips and chains, the suppression of speech and assembly, and the extraterritorial reach of fugitive slave laws.

For the north, in short, there could be no lasting compromise with slavery, only victory over it or submission to it. Nothing in American life today is truly comparable, and without such a driver, you don’t get another civil war. (In Israel, by contrast, the situation today shares enough similarities with the United States in the 1850s to make the analogy disturbingly relevant there.)

### !D---Disease---2NC

#### Pandemics won’t cause extinction---immune systems adapt, islands and isolated communities, treatments, vaccines, social distancing---that’s Pappas citing Adalja, an infectious disease expert at Johns Hopkins.

#### Empirics and burnout.

**Farquhar 17 –** Sebastian Farquhar, Leader of the Global Priorities Project (GPP) at the Centre for Effective Altruism, et al., “Existential Risk: Diplomacy and Governance”, https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Existential-Risks-2017-01-23.pdf

For most of human history, natural pandemics have posed the greatest risk of mass global fatalities.37 However, there are some reasons to believe that natural pandemics are very unlikely to cause human extinction. Analysis of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list database has shown that of the 833 recorded plant and animal species extinctions known to have occurred since 1500, less than 4% (31 species) were ascribed to infectious disease.38 None of the mammals and amphibians on this list were globally dispersed, and other factors aside from infectious disease also contributed to their extinction. It therefore seems that our own species, which is very numerous, globally dispersed, and capable of a rational response to problems, is very unlikely to be killed off by a natural pandemic. One underlying explanation for this is that highly lethal pathogens can kill their hosts before they have a chance to spread, so there is a selective pressure for pathogens not to be highly lethal. Therefore, pathogens are likely to co-evolve with their hosts rather than kill all possible hosts.39

#### No disease impacts—past pandemics, human consciousness, and preparedness check.

Adalja 16 – Infectious disease physician at University of Pittsburgh, Writes for Tracking Zebra.

Amesha Adalja, “Why Hasn’t Disease Wiped out the Human Race,” 06-17-25, https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2016/06/infectious-diseases-extinction/487514/

“You’ll tell us when you’re worried, right?” That was the question posed to me countless times at the height of the 2014 West African Ebola outbreak. As an infectious disease physician, I was interviewed on outlets such as CNN, NPR, and Fox News about the dangers of the virus, and the answer I gave was always the same: “Ebola is a deadly, scary disease, but it is not that contagious. It will not find the U.S. or other industrialized nations hospitable.” In other words, no, I wasn’t worried—and not because I have a rosy outlook on infectious diseases. I’m well-aware of the damage these diseases are causing around the world: HIV, malaria, tuberculosis; the influenza pandemic that took the world by surprise in 2009; the anti-vaccine movement bumping cases of measles to an all-time post-vaccine-era high; antibiotic-resistant bacteria threatening to collapse the entire structure of modern medicine—all these, like Ebola, are continuously placing an enormous number of lives at risk. But when people ask me if I’m worried about infectious diseases, they’re often not asking about the threat to human lives; they’re asking about the threat to human life. With each outbreak of a headline-grabbing emerging infectious disease comes a fear of extinction itself. The fear envisions a large proportion of humans succumbing to infection, leaving no survivors or so few that the species can’t be sustained. **I’m not afraid** of this apocalyptic scenario, but I do understand the impulse. Worry about the end is a quintessentially human trait. Thankfully, so is our resilience. For most of mankind’s history, infectious diseases were the existential threat to humanity—and for good reason. They were quite successful at killing people: The 6th century’s **Plague of Justinian knocked** out an estimated 17 percent of the world’s population; the 14th century **Black Death decimated** a third of Europe; the 1918 **influenza pandemic killed** 5 percent of the world; malaria is estimated to have killed half of all humans who have ever lived. Any yet, of course, **humanity continued to flourish. Our species’ recent explosion in lifespan is almost exclusively the result of the control of infectious diseases** through sanitation, vaccination, and antimicrobial therapies. Only in the modern era, in which many infectious diseases have been tamed in the industrial world, do people have the luxury of death from cancer, heart disease, or stroke in the 8th decade of life. Childhoods are free from watching siblings and friends die from outbreaks of typhoid, scarlet fever, smallpox, measles, and the like. So what would it take for a disease to wipe out humanity now? In Michael Crichton’s The Andromeda Strain, the canonical book in the disease-outbreak genre, an alien microbe threatens the human race with extinction, and humanity’s best minds are marshaled to combat the enemy organism. Fortunately, outside of fiction, there’s **no reason to expect** alien **pathogens** to wage war on the human race **any time soon**, and my analysis suggests that any real-life domestic microbe reaching an extinction level of threat probably **is just as unlikely**. Any apocalyptic pathogen would need to possess a very special combination of two attributes. First, it would have to be so unfamiliar that no existing therapy or vaccine could be applied to it. Second, it would need to have a high and surreptitious transmissibility before symptoms occur. The first is essential because **any microbe from a known class of pathogens would, by definition, have family members that could serve as models for containment and countermeasures**. The second would allow the hypothetical disease to spread without being detected by even the most astute clinicians. The three infectious diseases most likely to be considered extinction-level threats in the world today—influenza, HIV, and Ebola—**don’t meet these two requirements**. Influenza, for instance, despite its well-established ability to kill on a large scale, its contagiousness, and its unrivaled ability to shift and drift away from our vaccines, is still what I would call a “known unknown.” While there are many mysteries about how new flu strains emerge, from at least the time of Hippocrates, humans have been attuned to its risk. And **in the modern era, a full-fledged industry of influenza preparedness exists, with effective vaccine strategies and antiviral therapies**. HIV, which has killed 39 million people over several decades, is similarly limited due to several factors. Most importantly, HIV’s dependency on blood and body fluid for transmission (similar to Ebola) requires intimate human-to-human contact, which limits contagion. Highly potent antiviral therapy allows most people to live normally with the disease, and a substantial group of the population has genetic mutations that render them impervious to infection in the first place. Lastly, simple prevention strategies such as needle exchange for injection drug users and barrier contraceptives—when available—can curtail transmission risk. Ebola, for many of the same reasons as HIV as well as several others, also falls short of the mark. This is especially due to the fact that it spreads almost exclusively through people with easily recognizable symptoms, plus the taming of its once unfathomable 90 percent mortality rate by simple supportive care. Beyond those three, **every other known disease falls short of what seems required to wipe out humans**—which is, of course, why we’re still here. And it’s not that diseases are ineffective. On the contrary, **diseases’ failure to knock us out is a testament to just how resilient humans are**. Part of our evolutionary heritage is our immune system, one of the most complex on the planet, even without the benefit of vaccines or the helping hand of antimicrobial drugs. This system, when viewed at a species level, **can adapt to almost any enemy imaginable**. Coupled to genetic variations amongst humans—which open up the possibility for a range of advantages, from imperviousness to infection to a tendency for mild symptoms—**this adaptability ensures that almost any infectious disease onslaught will leave a large proportion of the population alive to rebuild**, in contrast to the fictional Hollywood versions. While the immune system’s role can never be understated, an even more powerful protector is the faculty of consciousness. Humans are not the most prolific, quickly evolving, or strongest organisms on the planet, but as Aristotle identified, humans are the rational animals—and it is this fundamental distinguishing characteristic that allows humans to form abstractions, think in principles, and plan long-range. These capacities, in turn, allow humans to modify, alter, and improve themselves and their environments. **Consciousness equips us**, at an individual and a species level, **to make nature safe for the species through such technological marvels as antibiotics, antivirals, vaccines, and sanitation**. When humans began to focus their minds on the problems posed by infectious disease, human life ceased being nasty, brutish, and short. In many ways, human consciousness became infectious diseases’ worthiest adversary. None of this is meant to allay all fears of infectious diseases. To totally adopt a Panglossian viewpoint would be foolish—and dangerous. Humans do face countless threats from infectious diseases: witness Zika. And if not handled appropriately, severe calamity could, and will, ensue. The West African Ebola outbreak, for instance, festered for months before major efforts to bring it under control were initiated. When it comes to infectious diseases, I’m worried about the failure of institutions to understand the full impact of outbreaks. I’m worried about countries that don’t have the infrastructure or resources to combat these outbreaks when they come. But **as long as we can keep adapting, I’m not worried about the future of the human race**.

#### Empirics and isolated populations check extinction.

Beckstead 14 –Research Fellow at the Future of Humanity Institute at Oxford University.

Nick Backstead, “How much could refuges help us recover from a global catastrophe?,” 11-18-14, https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/1-s2.0-S0016328714001888-main.pdf

That **leaves pandemics** and cobalt bombs, which will get a longer discussion. While there is **little published work** on **human extinction risk from pandemics**, it seems that it would be extremely challenging for any pandemic—whether natural or manmade—to leave the people in a specially constructed refuge as the sole survivors. In his introductory book on pandemics (Doherty, 2013, p. 197) argues: ‘‘**No pandemic** is likely to **wipe out** the **human species**. Even without the protection provided by modern science, we **survived smallpox**, **TB**, and the **plagues** of recorded history. Way back when **human numbers were** very **small**, infections may have been responsible for some of the **genetic bottlenecks** inferred from evolutionary analysis, but there is no formal proof of this.’’ Though some authors have vividly described worst-case scenarios for engineered pandemics (e.g. Rees, 2003; Posner, 2004; and Myhrvold, 2013), it would take a special effort to infect people in highly isolated locations, especially the 100+ ‘‘largely uncontacted’’ peoples who prefer to be left alone. This is not to say it would be impossible. A madman intent on annihilating all human life could use cropduster-style delivery systems, flying over isolated peoples and infecting them. Or perhaps a pandemic could be engineered to be delivered through animal or environmental vectors that would reach all of these people. It might be more plausible to argue that, though the people in **specially constructed refuges** would not be the **sole survivors of** our hypothetical **pandemic**, they may be the only survivors in a **position to rebuild** a **technologically advanced** **civilization**. It may be that the rise of technologically advanced societies required many contingent factors—including cultural factors—to come together. For example, Mokyr (2006) argues that a certain set of cultural practices surrounding science and industry were essential for ever creating a technologically advanced civilization, and that if such developments had not occurred in Europe, they may have never occurred anywhere. If such a view were correct, it might be more likely that 40 N. Beckstead / Futures 72 (2015) 36–44 people in well-stocked refuges would eventually **rebuild a technologically advanced civilization**, in comparison with societies that have preferred not to be involved with people using advanced technology. However, even if people familiar with Western scientific culture do survive, on a view like Mokyr’s, there would be no guarantee that they would eventually rebuild an advanced civilization. This may be the most plausible proposed case in which refuges would make humanity more likely to eventually fully recover from a period of intense destruction that would otherwise quickly lead to extinction.

### AT: GE

### !D---Economy---AT: War---1NC

#### Economic downturns don’t cause war.

**Walt 20** [Stephen M. Walt is the Robert and Renée Belfer professor of international relations at Harvard University. “Will a Global Depression Trigger Another World War?”, May 13th, https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/13/coronavirus-pandemic-depression-economy-world-war/]

On balance, however, I do not think that even the extraordinary economic conditions we are witnessing today are going to have much impact on the likelihood of war. Why? First of all, if depressions were a powerful cause of war, there would be a lot more of the latter. To take one example, the United States has suffered 40 or more recessions since the country was founded, yet it has fought perhaps 20 interstate wars, most of them unrelated to the state of the economy. To paraphrase the economist Paul Samuelson’s famous quip about the stock market, if recessions were a powerful cause of war, they would have predicted “nine out of the last five (or fewer).”

Second, states do not start wars unless they believe they will win a quick and relatively cheap victory. As John Mearsheimer showed in his classic book Conventional Deterrence, national leaders avoid war when they are convinced it will be long, bloody, costly, and uncertain. To choose war, political leaders have to convince themselves they can either win a quick, cheap, and decisive victory or achieve some limited objective at low cost. Europe went to war in 1914 with each side believing it would win a rapid and easy victory, and Nazi Germany developed the strategy of blitzkrieg in order to subdue its foes as quickly and cheaply as possible. Iraq attacked Iran in 1980 because Saddam believed the Islamic Republic was in disarray and would be easy to defeat, and George W. Bush invaded Iraq in 2003 convinced the war would be short, successful, and pay for itself.

The fact that each of these leaders miscalculated badly does not alter the main point: No matter what a country’s economic condition might be, its leaders will not go to war unless they think they can do so quickly, cheaply, and with a reasonable probability of success.

Third, and most important, the primary motivation for most wars is the desire for security, not economic gain. For this reason, the odds of war increase when states believe the long-term balance of power may be shifting against them, when they are convinced that adversaries are unalterably hostile and cannot be accommodated, and when they are confident they can reverse the unfavorable trends and establish a secure position if they act now. The historian A.J.P. Taylor once observed that “every war between Great Powers [between 1848 and 1918] … started as a preventive war, not as a war of conquest,” and that remains true of most wars fought since then.

The bottom line: Economic conditions (i.e., a depression) may affect the broader political environment in which decisions for war or peace are made, but they are only one factor among many and rarely the most significant. Even if the COVID-19 pandemic has large, lasting, and negative effects on the world economy—as seems quite likely—it is not likely to affect the probability of war very much, especially in the short term.