# Cards---Round 3---Wiki

## Case

### Impact---1AC

#### An unprotected civil service unleashes “the biggest portfolio of catastrophic risks ever.”

Loren DeJonge Shulman 22. Lecturer of international affairs at George Washington University, M.P.P. from the University of Minnesota, "Schedule F: An Unwelcome Resurgence." Lawfare. 8/12/2022. lawfaremedia.org/article/schedule-f-unwelcome-resurgence

Best-Case Scenario: Weakening the Civil Service Risk Management Role

Over 2 million career civil servants working across dozens of large and small agencies are hired under the competitive service process. More than 70 percent work in national security-oriented agencies, such as the Defense Department, the State Department, the Treasury Department, and the Energy Department. Many more work in technical, administrative, policy, and legal roles. They do work that often results in news that makes headlines—negotiating sanctions policies, advising on the legality of drone strikes overseas, maintaining relationships with allies and partners, preparing procedures and resources for future pandemic response—and a great deal more behind the scenes that may end up on a cabinet secretary’s or president’s desk for consideration.

Author Michael Lewis describes civil servants’ responsibilities in the “The Fifth Risk,” calling the U.S government the manager of “the biggest portfolio of [catastrophic] risks ever managed by a single institution in the history of the world.” Some are obvious—the threat of nuclear attacks, for example—but most are glacial and opaque, demanding a portfolio of reliable and steady risk managers who can prioritize the nation’s security without fearing for their job security.

Thousands of such “risk managers” who work in policy-adjacent roles would be implicated by a Schedule F policy that removes the civil service protections set out for them in the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978. Civil servants today are protected against possible political retaliation, coercion, or removal by presidents and political appointees. They must be hired on the basis of relative ability, knowledge, and skills, using fair evaluation metrics. And they are protected against reprisal for whistleblowing.

These rules are frequently shorthanded derisively in (false) assumptions that civil servants cannot be fired. To the contrary, there are set guidelines for when federal employees can be lawfully terminated and disciplined based on performance or misconduct. The antiquated federal hiring process faces similar—albeit fairer—criticism, but its slowness is intended to screen for those who have “a high standard of integrity and trust to promote the interests of the public” and for good reason. Overall, these critiques misunderstand that the competitive hiring process and subsequent protections are what make it possible for civil servants to perform exceptionally, particularly in high pressure, complex policy areas where the government is managing extreme risk on behalf of the country, such as national security.

By protecting them from political reprisal, these rules give civil servants in policy roles the foundation to offer advice that may be tough for presidents to hear, to execute policies with high stakes, to report illegal activity and misconduct as a part of their duties, and to trust that they and their peers owe their first fealty to protecting and defending the Constitution. They do all of this with the confidence that their integrity will be rewarded and protected.

At best, shifting policy-aligned roles to Schedule F roles would have a chilling effect on such policy experts whom we rely on for their unique expertise, candor, and integrity, potentially making them more cautious about the advice they give, the portfolios they support, the risks they take in defending the Constitution, and their willingness to call out malfeasance or bad news.

Worst-Case Scenario: Harming National Security

At its worst, Schedule F will make it possible for presidents to remove thousands of experts who make U.S. global leadership possible. By shifting protected civil servants to at-will employees, Schedule F makes it possible to fire them without the due process currently owed to civil servants. In other words, civil servants could be fired for any reason at all—for giving unwelcome advice, for prior jobs, for being the subject of unsubstantiated accusations of any type, for perceptions of partisan affiliation, or simply for being in a role the president wishes to open up for a loyalist.

Some Schedule F advocates make clear that large-scale removals are under consideration and that removal, not oversight, is their ultimate goal for Schedule F. “Fire everyone you’re allowed to fire,” one commented, according to the Axios reporting. “And [then] fire a few people you’re not supposed to, so that they have to sue you and you send the message.”

Because the policy would also allow replacement of current civil servants without a competitive process, replacements for nonpartisan civil servants could be made without regard to qualification and suitability, or based on partisan affiliation, creating a new kind of political appointee.

The potential loss of talent could be wide and extremely damaging. Axios also reported that, according to sources close to Trump, the former president intends to “go after” the national security establishment as a matter of “top priority,” including those in the intelligence community and State Department. Policy roles that could be reclassified as Schedule F could cut across many high-import areas: Russian defense strategy, Iranian nuclear programs, or Chinese regional security capabilities, among hundreds of other categories. The harm to national security of removing and replacing civil servants—whose work, as we have established, requires expertise, relationships, and clear understanding of risk—with individuals with no required qualification except loyalty to a single individual is self-evident.

But, should a future president pursue this action, beyond missing an endless list of risk portfolio managers, the United States will miss something more fundamental to its success and security: its reliability. American alliances are valuable because of the steady undercurrent of the nation’s civil servants who maintain networks, expertise, and consistency regardless of who inhabits the Oval Office. Despite its turmoil, the American political system is a strong model and international interlocutor because its civil servants serve expertly and well across presidential administrations of any political affiliation. Schedule F, by stifling or removing long-serving civil servants, would make the United States a weaker, less reliable, and less trusted partner.

Why Shouldn’t the President Get a Say?

A president’s desire to shape a policy team, and to be sure it is filled with strong performers who are closely aligned with their views, is understandable. After all, presidents are elected to implement their chosen policy agenda, and having a team around them who can work in support is critical. But presidents already can wield enormous influence over both their closest policy advisers and the most far-flung agency overseers: through the 4,000 political appointees who are named, or removed, at the pleasure of the president. The Schedule F proposal would be an enormous and unnecessary expansion of this already poorly utilized system.

Most administrations never come close to seeing all those politically appointed policy roles filled despite the tremendous access and leverage such appointments bring them. And some presidential teams still struggle to make best use of political appointee and career civil servant partnerships. Rather than adding more chaos and instability with a Schedule F policy, administrations could be maximizing the opportunity that comes with leveraging their career and political leaders together. As noted in a recent Partnership for Public Service and Boston Consulting Group report:

Career executives bring program and policy expertise from their long familiarity with their agencies which can help them manage programs better and work more effectively with external stakeholders and inside actors. Politically appointed leaders can bring energy, risk-taking and responsiveness into an agency’s decision-making process which can improve performance. When leaders are matched with missions, agendas and teams that align with their distinct approaches and perspectives, they can find success in creating a government that is more efficient, innovative and responsive to the needs of the public.

The civil service system is not perfect. The pay system has its origins in World War II. The hiring process, though well-intended, is glacial. The permeability of the system in an era that requires close understanding and collaboration across sectors is limited. But the fundamentals are powerful, and they serve as a critical ingredient to the success of the United States’ global leadership and the sustainability of its democracy.

The U.S. government is able to take on high-risk, high-cost ventures—nuclear security, pandemic response, environmental clean-up, food safety, and more—because civil servants are hired based on qualifications, not party affiliation; give advice based on data and integrity, not fear of reprisal; and owe allegiance to the Constitution, not the president. It needs to stay that way.

#### And guarantees that the cumulative effect of multiple risks is extinction.

Henry Farrell 25. Professor of international affairs at Johns Hopkins University, Ph.D. in government from Georgetown University. "When the polycrisis hits the omnishambles, what comes next?" Programmable Mutter. 2-21-2025. programmablemutter.com/p/when-the-polycrisis-hits-the-omnishambles

A couple of years ago, on my now deleted Twitter account, I had a brief joking dialogue with Adam Tooze, about the concept of polycrisis, which he didn’t invent but has popularized. Adam explains the polycrisis as a concatenation of big problems - e.g. climate change; the crisis of democracy; global migration - that not only hit simultaneously but plausibly make each other worse. I pointed to another neologism, the “omnishambles” (from Arnaldo Ianucci’s dark comedy, The Thick of It - Wikipedia definition), describing governmental situations in which no-one has any idea what is going on or what to do, and policy-making is utterly shambolic and fucked up. By construction, I suggested, there must be such things as the polyshambles and omnicrisis.

It wasn’t a very good joke, but I think that there is a useful intuition behind it, which is worth turning into an entirely unfunny diagnosis. We are in a world where our problems are getting bigger, and are feeding on each other. Those of us who live in the U.S. are at the beginning of a sudden and dramatic worsening of the quality of government policy making. In other words, we are about to see a collision between the polycrisis and the omnishambles. So how do we think about this collision usefully?

From this perspective, both Paul’s post, and our op-ed map specific pieces of a larger and more complex problem. And when I use the term ‘complex,’ I use it advisedly. The polycrisis is a simplified way of talking about the world as a complex system. In Scott Page’s description, a “complex system consists of diverse entities that interact in a network or contact structure.” In less academic language, it is a larger system composed of smaller sub-systems that interact with each other. Even when these sub-systems are relatively simple, the whole may be complex and unpredictable. And when they are themselves complex …

This way of thinking about the world helps clarify what the polycrisis involves. Complex interactions may give rise to positive feedback loops, in which different parts of the system reinforce each other so as to induce instability. To apply this to the polycrisis, think crudely of how climate change may increase the likelihood of large scale migration across borders, leading to crises of democracy and government legitimacy, which in turn makes governments less capable of regulating the economic activities that make climate change worse. But complex systems may also give rise to homeostasis, in which some parts of the system become adaptive, perhaps dampening down positive feedback loops and responding dynamically to unexpected changes in the environment.

One of Paul’s early books builds on these ideas (although he later became skeptical, since they are notably better at describing the phenomenon than predicting how it will unfold, let alone providing precise guidance on what to do about it). Indeed, the Minsky cycle is exactly an example of how government may act to limit the likelihood of positive feedback loops getting out of hand. Without regulation, irrational exuberance feeds upon itself and the behaviors it induces. The role of the Federal Reserve, famously, is to order “the punch bowl removed just when the party [is] really warming up.”

Behind Paul’s post - and our piece - lies a possible understanding of the larger situation we face. In good times, we have an environment in which the problems are not too big, or can be dealt with one by one, or, ideally, both things are true at once. We have a government that is capable of dealing with them, acting as a kind of homeostatic regulator, which dampens down the possible chaos without, and perhaps even takes advantage of the unexpected possibilities it provides (while avoiding eviscerating the dynamical aspects of the economy - one can absolutely have too much government).

We are not in those good times. Instead, we are in an increasingly unpredictable environment with multiple major problems reinforcing each other in complex ways (the polycrisis). At much the same time, the most significant government in the world is absolutely not acting as a homeostatic regulator. Instead, of dampening down the chaos, it is accelerating it, while ripping out large swathes of the administrative apparatus that potentially allow it to understand the environment and influence it.

Trump’s second term is going to be the apotheosis of the omnishambles. And it is potentially even grimmer than that. In an ideal world, there is at least a second order feedback loop such that bigger problems leads to better government and the expansion of capacity for government to deal with these problems in conjunction with other modes of problem solving (markets; democracy). In the world we are in right now, there seems to be just the opposite set of feedbacks. Bigger problems are not leading to better government in the U.S. and elsewhere, but to worse.

As noted already, complexity theory is much better at describing problems like this than at predicting how they will turn out, let alone solving them. But it at least provides a framework for seeing how the different sub-systems might interact together.

The crises we are likely to face in Trump’s second term are not simply going to be crises of financial regulation, or of tariffs, or of withdrawn security guarantees, or breakdowns of scientific knowledge, or loss of capacity to respond to emergencies. They are likely, instead to involve the interactions of two or more of these factors with each other, and with the pre-existing problems of the polycrisis. Mapping out - even crudely - the relationships between these different sub-systems will help us be better prepared for what happens, even if we cannot fully anticipate it.

### Unions Key---1AC

#### Bargaining uniquely defuses disputes AND improves morale.

Casey Keppler 24. Major in the United States Air Force, L.L.M. from the George Washingtom University Law School, J.D. from the University of Iowa College of Law. "The Propriety of Restraint: Assessing the Viability and Wisdom of Executive and Legislative Branch Action to Eliminate Collective Bargaining Rights in the Department of Defense." *Hofstra Labor & Employment Law Journal*, 41(297), 357-358.

C. The Benefits of Collective Bargaining Extend Beyond the Tangible Results Obtained Via Negotiation and Litigation.

An individual employee is significantly disadvantaged when attempting to seek relief from his or her employer.523 Collective bargaining gives employees a collective "voice" in an effort to level the playing field.524 A primary driver behind employees' efforts to organize and collectively bargain is, in fact, to gain a voice in the conduct of operations.525 Exercising their voice not only permits employees to improve their working conditions but also results in information sharing between employees and management that can produce a more effective and efficient working environment.526

The Supreme Court has acknowledged the important role that collective bargaining serves in providing an opportunity for employees to communicate information and suggestions that may be helpful to management.527 Unions can effectively gather information from their membership, bring concerns to management's attention, and provide clarification to their membership regarding rules or policies being proposed or implemented by management.528 There is significant evidence, in fact, that collective bargaining serves as an effective mechanism for employees and employers to work together, thereby giving employees a voice and boosting their performance and morale.529 Studies have shown that employee engagement with management is more productive when employee communications are channeled through an independent representative such as a labor union.530 Given the adversarial approach that naturally results due to the parties' commonly conflicting interests, the statutory requirement to bargain in good faith serves an invaluable purpose of securing a channel of communication.531 Removing that requirement increases the likelihood that open communication will cease and workplace disputes will linger without resolution.

Giving employees a voice in the conduct of operations reaps benefits beyond information sharing; it also positively impacts morale and productivity.532 Direct engagement that results in even small concessions from management can generate a sense of employee empowerment that has out-sized effects on morale.533 According to a report published by the World Bank, countries with higher unionization rates tend to exhibit higher productivity, and a sizable population of labor union members tends to have a stabilizing and beneficial effect on the national economy.534 Empirical evidence also shows a positive correlation between participation in collective bargaining and participation in societal democratic processes.535 Collective bargaining's positive impact on communication, morale, and productivity demonstrate that its importance extends beyond the tangible gains yielded by negotiation and litigation.

#### And provides a “collective identity” that strengthens governance.

Robert Bruno & Brandon Grant 16. Director of the Labor Education Program and Project for Middle Class Renewal, professor of Labor and Employment Relations in the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Ph.D. candidate in labor and employment relations at the University of Illinois. “The Relationship Between Unions and Meaningful Work: A Study of Public Sector Workers in Illinois.” IUIC School of Labor and Employment Relations. 10/14/2016. lep.illinois.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Public-Sector-Meaningful-Work-Report-FINAL.pdf#:~:text=union%20as%20a%20primary%20source,experience%20while%20on%20the%20job

This report, The Relationship Between Unions and Meaningful Work describes findings from a survey of a small group of Illinois public sector workers which investigates the work motivations of public employees. The study shows new evidence that government employees are strongly motivated to find “purpose in work that is greater than the extrinsic outcomes of the work.” Additionally, we find that government employees view their public sector union as a primary source of intrinsic motivation.

The unions that public sector workers belong to, do more than simply negotiate and enforce collective bargaining agreements. As our findings suggest, they are also related to the competence and performance level of public sector employees. But perhaps more provocatively, it is likely that the union plays an important role in the meaningful work that they experience while on the job, the job satisfaction they experience, and the prosocial values they maintain; some of the very factors that draw individuals into public service.

The policy implications for Illinois and other states are obvious. First, by taking away the right to unionize or denigrating the value of collective bargaining, as occurred in Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan the state may be removing one of the most important incentives to recruit highly educated people to public service. Second, a weaker or nonexistent unionized government labor force may transform the choice of public service into merely a self-interested financial exchange; labor becomes just another commodity.

Finally and most potentially troubling, if workers are without a collective identity that potentially facilitates their quest for meaningful work and subsequently, they perceive their employment as primarily or solely as a way to earn living, then public service itself loses a significant portion of its service dimension. Ironically, weakening the institution that is unjustifiably characterized as imposing a financial burden on citizens may produce a workforce that labors for little more than a paycheck. Fair compensation should be a minimum requirement for government employees, but so should a commitment to preserving the people’s common assets.

Our study challenges the claim that public sector unions act contrary to the common good. We found evidence that not only do workers who choose to pursue careers in the public sector do so in spite of the comparative lower wages that they earn, but that the unions they belong to strongly related to their desire to accomplish more thorough work than earning an income. Work in the public sector serves as a vehicle to fulfill, at least in part, a personal need to experience a meaningful life and job.

#### The signal sent by collective bargaining rights is key.

Andrea Hsu 25. Journalist. "How Trump is decimating federal employee unions one step at a time." NPR. 8/31/2025. npr.org/2025/09/01/nx-s1-5515633/trump-federal-workers-labor-unions-va

Fears of a brain drain

Across the federal government, some workers aren't waiting around to see what happens. They're quitting now, having decided a government job just isn't worth it anymore. Many workers fear with unions gone, they won't have a say in matters such as telework or family leave policies that make a difference to their quality of life.

"Although they came to the federal government because of their passion for public service, they also came because of the flexibility of the government, and those flexibilities are just being wiped away," says Anthony Lee, a longtime Food and Drug Administration employee who's also president of NTEU Chapter 282, representing some 9,000 FDA employees across the Mid Atlantic.

Although the FDA has not yet terminated the union's contract, it has ordered the union to pack up its offices.

Lee says the government is losing chemists, toxicologists, engineers and others who ensure drugs and medical devices are safe and effective and food ingredients aren't poisonous.

"It is already, in my view, harming the public because we're losing that institutional knowledge. We're losing that subject matter expertise," Lee says. "As much as the current administration thinks that everyone is just quickly replaceable, they're not."

#### Rehiring can’t solve morale.

Sophie Gardner 25. Healthcare reporter. "Inside the CDC whiplash." Politico. 11-21-2025. politico.com/news/2025/11/21/inside-the-cdc-whiplash-00664632

Hundreds of workers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who were fired in October returned to work this week, thanks to a provision in the shutdown-ending deal passed by Congress.

For many, however, the trip back to the office is far from joyful.

Over the past nine months, under the supervision of Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., CDC employees have experienced more turmoil than most under the Trump administration.

They’ve faced several rounds of firings and sporadic reinstatements, witnessed the dramatic ousting of their director and the resignation of top career leaders in protest. Some were shot at by a gunman targeting the agency’s Atlanta headquarters in August and all have watched as Kennedy fired and then replaced a key panel of CDC vaccine advisers.

In addition to all that, like most federal workers, many CDC employees went without paychecks during the longest-ever closure of the federal government.

On Wednesday, as some employees returned to buildings riddled with bullet holes, morale took another hit with a surprise update to the CDC’s vaccines and autism webpage. It suggests that vaccines may cause autism and states that “studies supporting a link have been ignored by health authorities.” The move upended decades of work by senior career vaccine scientists to combat misinformation about a potential link between vaccines and autism – which many large studies have found no evidence of.

In a statement, HHS spokesperson Andrew Nixon described the change as a “common-sense update” to fulfill a “commitment to transparency and Gold Standard Science.”

He also said that Kennedy is trying to restore a “broken” CDC: “His focus is on returning the CDC to its core mission and ending the culture of insularity that has undermined public confidence.”

Some employees have a different take.

“On top of the never-ending feeling that we have metaphorical targets on our backs, a lot of employees feel like they have literal targets on their backs,” one CDC employee said. “The mood among CDC staff is ‘dead man walking.’”

The congressionally-mandated reinstatement of fired CDC workers marks at least the fourth time the administration has had to backtrack on planned firings of large chunks of the agency’s workforce.

POLITICO interviewed current and recently departed CDC employees about the changed work environment. Most of them were granted anonymity for fear of retribution.

Taken together, the eight workers described a culture of declining faith in the agency and a lack of guidance and communication from leadership. In his nearly three months on the job, CDC Acting Director Jim O’Neill has sent only one agency-wide email, two employees said, about how the agency should improve.

“Usually we have regular ‘all hands’ calls with the director. And the director takes time to meet the agency,” said a second CDC employee. “We’ve never heard the man even speak.”

Nixon said that O’Neill is having “almost daily meetings with CDC leadership” and has led the response to a recent infant formula recall.

In early October — just 10 days into the shutdown — the Trump administration laid off around 1,760 HHS employees, primarily hitting the CDC. It later reversed about half of those firings, citing “data discrepancies and processing errors.”

Democrats negotiated a provision in the continuing resolution that requires the CDC employees laid off during the shutdown and not initially reinstated — and the hundreds in the same situation at other agencies — be brought back. But CDC employees are skeptical that their reinstatements will stick.

“These people, especially those who received the reduction-in-force notices on Oct. 10, are wondering what happens Jan. 31,” the day after the continuing resolution expires, said Yolanda Jacobs, president of American Federation of Government Employees 2883 representing CDC workers in Atlanta.

“Are they going to be back [to] … being used as bargaining chips?,” Jacobs said. “When this administration makes threats, it does everything that it possibly can to make good on those threats.”

Max Stier, president and CEO of the Partnership for Public Service, a nonprofit that promotes government service, said those concerns are not baseless.

“Come Jan. 31 — the CR ends Jan. 30 — all bets are off,” Stier said. He added that other protections governing the firing of federal workers still apply.

The laid-off CDC staff who were not initially reinstated include employees on the Institutional Review Board, which evaluates research studies, the Technology Transfer Office, which deals with patents, and the Employee Assistance Program, which provides counseling and emotional support for the agency’s staff, former CDC Chief Medical Officer Debra Houry said on a call with reporters in October. Houry also noted that CDC employees who worked on a critical nutrition survey were not initially reinstated, as well as employees who worked on communications and policy.

The shutdown-ending deal means those employees are now being reinstated.

The agency has seen three large scale layoffs, in February, April and October — making it one of the hardest hit agencies during the Trump administration. In the days or weeks following each round, some employees have been told their firings were a mistake and asked to return.

“We know of people who have now received three RIF notices,” a third CDC employee said.

An agency in chaos

Despite the volatility, Amy Kirby had assumed her team — which had been working on a project to centralize CDC disease surveillance data from across the agency — was safe.

Kirby has been part of the leadership for the One CDC Data Platform effort since 2024, and the Trump administration had indicated it was a priority. O’Neill’s lone email to CDC staff after he assumed the acting director role in August pointed to the 1CDP project as an example of innovation, Kirby told POLITICO.

Kirby was shocked to learn that, on Oct. 10, the majority of employees working on the project – around 16 people — had received reduction-in-force notices.

Unlike many CDC employees that HHS has said were mistakenly fired, the 1CDP staff did not have their reduction-in-force notices rescinded the following day. HHS and CDC told Kirby’s bosses that the firings had been a mistake, she said, but “it was never reversed. It only got reversed when Congress put it in the bill.”

“It’s very odd that in a month, they couldn’t reverse what they were saying was a mistake,” Kirby said.

She believes the firings were purposeful. “Even if you’re working on an agency priority, they will still fire you.”

Kirby herself never received a reduction-in-force notice. But she decided to quit after most of her team was fired.

Her team is now returning, but they “don’t feel safe,” she said. “They are working under the assumption that in February they’re going to get RIFed again.”

“It is heartbreaking,” Kirby said. “I’m sad for the people that are still there having to struggle through all of that. I’m sad for our country that we don’t have CDC at its best.”

A fourth employee said they have struggled to plan for the future without a clear picture of what it will look like — and who will be left.

“We simply can’t do the kind of transformative long-term thinking that is needed for this work (or this administration) to be a success,” they said.

Several leadership positions have been left vacant, including chief medical officer. Houry resigned from that job in August, citing politicization of the agency.

The Office of Public Health Data, Surveillance, and Technology lost its director, Jennifer Layden, after she too resigned in August. Kirby’s division — which sits inside that office — also had lost some staff, and needed to restructure.

But because no one had been tapped as acting director of the office, “there was no one to approve those changes” and the plan had to be tabled, Kirby said. “Then the shutdown hit and the RIFs added other pressing issues to resolve.”

Layden’s position is still vacant.

‘Basically a hostile work environment’

In addition to logistical challenges, the volatility has also created an environment where employees often feel they can be ousted at any moment. And they’ve also lost a key layer of protection.

In August, HHS moved to stop recognizing several unions, including one that represents CDC workers at the agency’s Atlanta headquarters.

Nixon, addressing HHS’s decision to stop recognizing the unions, said President Trump implemented Executive Order 14251, which excluded many agencies from collective bargaining, “to remove unnecessary obstacles to mission-critical work and space previously used for union activities.”

As a result, said Jacobs, there is no one to de-escalate conflicts, and more employees than usual are facing disciplinary actions.

Jacobs said they’ve seen more employees placed on performance improvement plans or suspended.

“When the union is in the building, a lot of these disciplinary actions don’t have to escalate to that point, because a lot of times, a lot of those situations can be resolved at much lower level,” Jacobs said.

#### Protections against politicization are key.

Erin Schumaker 25. Health care reporter, covering the National Institutes of Health. "The ‘deep state’ is proving to Trump it’s a worthy foe." Politico. 9-14-2025. politico.com/news/2025/09/14/trump-federal-workers-deep-state-civil-service-00558940

But if Trump’s goal was to dismantle the workforce he calls the “deep state” — and blames for the failings of his first term — he’s got a long way to go. Although he’s disrupted swaths of the government, the vast majority of career federal employees who avoided the firings of the past seven months are sticking it out, according to Labor Department statistics and the White House’s own admission.

Many of those who’ve chosen to remain are keeping their heads down. Some aren’t — and their open defiance of Trump administration policies may make it harder for the administration to achieve Trump’s goals — much like Trump complained they did in his first term.

At the end of the day, career staffers still believe that politicians come and go and it’s them who will persevere, the survivors told POLITICO.

“They are staying in their jobs — the vast majority of people, even though they could get a job somewhere else or look for a job somewhere else,” said Rushab Sanghvi, general counsel for the American Federation of Government Employees, whose bargaining agreements at at least six agencies Trump has sought to scuttle. “There will be a new administration, with new priorities.”

For many, that’s true, but for others, such as those in highly specialized fields like foreign aid, the job market for former government workers is limited. The Bureau of Labor Statistics said Sept. 9 it likely overestimated past job growth by hundreds of thousands, painting a grimmer picture of the employment market than previously thought. That too could be a factor in federal workers’ apparent resolve to stay.

While 200,000 federal workers have left the government this year, the most in a single year since World War II, Trump still employs about 2.2 million civil servants.

By year’s end, the administration expects to cut loose 100,000 more federal workers, according to the White House Office of Personnel Management. That’s a lot, but it amounts to a cut of about 12 percent.

Some agencies have taken bigger hits. Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., for one, says he expects the staff of the Department of Health and Human Services will shrink by a quarter. Others, such as the Department of Education and the EPA, have taken deep blows.

In terms of sheer numbers, the biggest hits have come at the Department of Defense, which has shed 56,000 workers out of about 900,000 civilians; the Department of Agriculture, down 22,000 from about 98,000, and HHS, which has 13,000 fewer people on the payroll compared to a year ago, when there were 93,000, according to a tally as of the end of August compiled by the Partnership for Public Service, a nonprofit group that opposes Trump’s downsizing.

But for all of Trump’s broadsides — he’s called civil servants “crooked” and “dishonest” people who are “destroying this country” — the percentage of federal workers quitting each month hasn’t budged, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data. The quit rate is holding steady at 0.5 percent as of July, the same percentage as last year before Trump took office and down from 0.7 percent at the height of the pandemic.

A minority of federal workers back Trump and support what he’s doing. Thirty-eight percent of them voted for him last November, according to a Washington Post-Ipsos poll conducted in early March, and 83 percent of those who voted for Trump approved of his job performance, despite the turmoil in their workplaces that was well underway at the time.

The quit rate among federal workers is still far below the 2.2 percent rate of the private sector.

That’s despite the White House’s estimate that 80 percent of the departures were voluntary.

It’s not clear how many of those workers were planning to quit, or retire, anyway — and enjoyed a few extra months’ pay thanks to the “deferred resignation” deal Elon Musk’s Department of Government Efficiency offered. The White House doesn’t have the data yet on the retirement eligibility of workers who took Musk’s “fork in the road” — or even hard numbers on how many did — but expects at least a third and as many as half had enough service to start collecting their pensions.

Rather than go quietly, workers who resent Trump’s attacks, as well as the damage they say the president has done to the programs they work on, intend to fight it out.

In response to Kennedy and Trump’s firing of the director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Aug. 27, more than 1,000 civil servants, some current, some former, published an open letter demanding Kennedy’s resignation. CDC workers at agency headquarters in Atlanta held a “clap out” to thank three departing colleagues who’d quit in protest.

At the National Institutes of Health, workers have publicly accused Director Jay Bhattacharya of prioritizing politics over human safety, prompting him to meet with them. Bhattacharya promised to permit open debate and said he wouldn’t retaliate against them for speaking out.

In an interview with POLITICO, Trump’s personnel chief, former venture capitalist Scott Kupor said: “I don’t fault anybody for having views that are different from what the administration is doing.” Kupor added: “This is a completely different motion than anybody’s ever seen. So it’s not surprising to me at all that people are reacting to it.”

Agency leaders have, in other cases, punished workers who’ve resisted Trump’s moves. The Environmental Protection Agency fired employees who wrote a letter criticizing agency leadership and the Federal Emergency Management Agency suspended workers who warned in a letter that the Trump administration’s actions were preventing the agency from fully responding to extreme weather events like hurricanes and floods.

Those in the crosshairs say they’re leaning on the extensive system of protections Congress created to shield the civil service from political interference. “I’m grounded in what the rules are,” said a career senior executive at the Department of Health and Human Services, who was placed on administrative leave and offered a transfer to the Indian Health Service.

### Warming Add-On---2AC/1NC

#### Aff solves warming!

Juan Cole 24. PhD, Collegiate Professor of History at the University of Michigan (boo!). "Trump would be an ‘Extinction-Level Event’ for the Planet, Turbocharging Climate Change. Vote Accordingly." Informed Comment. 11-5-2024. juancole.com/2024/11/extinction-turbocharging-accordingly.html

Ann Arbor (Informed Comment) – UC Berkeley scholars warn that “with plans to expand the production of fossil fuels, curtail environmental regulations, dismantle key climate monitoring agencies and even undermine the Endangered Species Act, there is no question that Project 2025 would be disastrous for the climate.”

Project 2025, despite his dishonest denials, is Trump’s plan to gut the U.S. government, developed for the Heritage Foundation by Trump hangers-on.

I have said some of this before. It bears repeating.

Author Mary Annaïse Heglar said on social media, “If you know even a small amount about the fragile state of our ecosystem, you can recognize Donald Trump as an extinction level event.”

The Trump team will significantly raise US carbon dioxide emissions (4.8 billion metric tons in 2023, down from 4.9 billion in 2022), returning us to levels last seen in 2007, when we emitted 6 billion metric tons of CO2. The entire world releases 36.8 billion metric tons of CO2 each year. The US, with just 4.23% of the global population, generates 13% of all carbon dioxide emissions.

The United States is finally making some halting progress toward reducing greenhouse gases. The EPA looked at some 8,000 large industrial facilities, including power plants, and found that emissions were down 4% last year from 2022. This progress is fragile and Trump will overturn it, increasing fossil fuel use and torching the globe.

In Europe, the European Union’s deployment of wind, hydro, solar power, and batteries, along with the shift towards electric vehicles in some nations — coupled with enhanced energy efficiency — resulted in a nearly 9% reduction in total CO2 emissions from the combustion of fossil fuels within the European Union in 2023, despite some economic growth.

Only governments can act on climate change with the scale and speed that is necessary.

The Biden administration’s Inflation Reduction Act allocated $369 billion for clean energy initiatives and combating climate change. This amount surpasses the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of many nations, including Egypt, Pakistan, Chile, Greece, and others. This outlay represents an enormous lever. As Archimedes famously stated, “Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to rest it, and I will move the world.”

We have just 26 years to bring the world to carbon neutrality.

26 years.

The celebrated climate scientist Michael E. Mann shows that if we cease burning fossil fuels (petrol, natural gas, coal) by 2050, the planet will immediately stop warming. Additionally, all the hundreds of billions of tons of carbon dioxide we have released into the atmosphere since 1750 will be absorbed by the oceans. Between 65% and 80% of CO2 is taken up by the oceans over a period of 20 to 200 years.

It means that the threat of the planet’s climate going chaotic and threatening human civilization can be averted. The trick is that we must swing into action several times faster than we are presently doing.

Instead, Trump would take us back to the bad old days of ever-increasing emissions.

If we continue releasing billions of metric tons of CO2 into the atmosphere beyond 2050, we will exceed the oceans’ capacity to absorb it, and everything, 100% of the emissions we produce after that point, will remain in the atmosphere for centuries. The average rise in the earth’s surface temperature since 1750 could surpass 5.4º F (3º C.), a level that scientists fear could destabilize our climate system.

The shifts in the Earth’s climate that we are already witnessing — including enormous wildfires, extreme heat waves, ocean temperatures surpassing 100º F (37.7º C.), powerful hurricanes, and catastrophic floods — are far more intense than the models predicted at this stage of climate change. These unexpected developments suggest that, in the near future, the climate could become extremely hostile if we fail to change our behavior. What if we are forced to retreat underground due to unbearable surface temperatures? What if all the power lines are destroyed by storms? Society cannot function without electricity. What if all buildings need to be redesigned to withstand winds of 160 miles per hour?

We saw the flash floods inundate Spain’s Valencia over the weekend, when the city suddenly was hit with torrential rains. They killed over 200 people. This sort of very heavy 1-day rainfall event is 12% more intense and 2 times as likely because of the increase we have provoked through burning coal, gas and petroleum, of 1.3º C. / 2.3º F. of the average temperature of the earth’s surface since 1750. Hot air has more moisture in it, so the rainfall is heavier than it used to be.

George Lee at Ireland’s RTE writes that World Weather Attribution, a group of climate scientists, “published an analysis of the ten most deadly extreme weather events of the past 20 years as a result of which more than 570,000 people died. They concluded unequivocally that, yes, human-caused climate change intensified every single one of those most deadly events. Four of those top ten global weather disasters occurred in Europe.”

What can stop the worst of this mounting catastrophe from striking us, our children and grandchildren? Governments. In the industrialized democracies, government policy is set by the parties that win elections.

#### Global warming ensures multiple pathways to extinction through non-linear feedback loops

Spangenberg 25 [Joachim H. Spangenberg Professor at University of Versailles St. Quentin, Research Coordinator at the Sustainable Europe Research Institute, member of the Executive Committee of the International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility, PhD in Economics. Citing, among others: Chi Xu, Professor of Ecology at Nanjing University; Timothy A. Kohler, Professor of Anthropology at Washington State University, Fellow at the Research Institute for Humanity and Nature; Tim Lenton, Professor of Earth Science at University of Exeter, PhD, University of East Anglia; Jens-Christian Svenning, Professor in the Department of Bioscience at Aarhus University; Marten Scheffer, Professor at Wageningen University; Nicole D. Miranda, Professor of Engineering Science at the University of Oxford; Jesus Lizana, Associate Professor in Engineering Science at the University of Oxford; Sarah Sparrow, Associate Professor in Environmental Impact, University of Oxford; Miriam Zachau-Walker, PhD Candidate in Engineering Science; Peter A.G. Watson, PhD, Senior Lecturer at School of Geographical Sciences at Bristol University; David C.H. Wallom, Professor in Informatics at Oxford; Radhika Khosla, PhD, Associate Professor at the School of Geography and the Environment at Oxford; Malcolm McCulloch, PhD, Professor of Engineering at Oxford, “The roadmap to collapse: whatever the last summers have been like for you, one thing is clear: you are currently experiencing the coolest period of your lives,” Consumption and Society Journal, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 141-55, 2025]

Science

The effects of such a strong warming are still insufficiently researched – some scientists speak of the ‘climate endgame’ (Kemp et al, 2022). Climate researchers have constantly underestimated both the extent and the speed of change, and economists, who have long played down climate change, still massively misperceive science (economics is a scholastic system, not a science: Diesendorf et al, 2024), underestimate the social costs of the climate crisis, and thus misadvise policy (Rennert et al, 2022).

2030

Economy and Politics

The war in Ukraine has ended with a compromise, Russia keeping Crimea, but the Near East conflict is close to a nuclear confrontation. The United States has withdrawn support from Ukraine, leaving the multi-billion job to rebuild the country to Europe; no comparable efforts are undertaken in Palestine. The significant weaponry production facilities built up during the war in Ukraine continue producing, flooding the world with exports from Europe, Russia and the United States, and fuelling military conflicts around the world. The international order, international regulations and norms are eroding. Throughout the world economy, resource constraints are felt – this is a major challenge to the EU refining economy model (importing cheap resources at low cost, exporting sophisticated products at high ones). With these effects on top of the decades-old trend of secular stagnation, economic growth has come to a standstill. To secure resource access and trade, the major powers (United States, China, Russia and their satellites) increasingly use military means.

The electrification of all spheres of life continues, following US standards for the West, and Chinese ones for the rest of the world. Artificial intelligence and Large Language Models made the share of global greenhouse gas emissions double from about 4 per cent of the global total – an unbroken trend driven by demand and supply. Governments invest heavily in subsidising technical solutions to still not declining CO2 emissions like carbon capture and storage (CCS – capturing CO2 from production processes, purifying and compressing it, transporting it to on-shore and off-shore underground dumping sites and storing it there). However, the volumes stored remain marginal, and the process is expensive and increases overall energy consumption. The new ‘hydrogen ready’ natural gas fired power stations built in the first half of the decade continue running on fossil fuels as the limited amount of ‘green hydrogen’ available is used for production processes. Hence, even if some of them are converted to hydrogen, the hydrogen they use is generated from natural gas. So while gasoline use is decreasing, natural gas consumption increases steeply.

Consumers are still unwilling to change habits – solar energy production in households has been growing significantly as it saves costs, but overall energy consumption is still increasing. Reduction of heat demand falls short of what is needed to limit the climate crisis, sustainable mobility including less car use, and even the market share of electric vehicles, is only growing slowly – bans on fossil fuel cars have been abandoned under the pressure of public opinion and conservative parties. Sufficiency is still anathema, even more so as expectations of rising incomes are being disappointed. After a short phase of war Keynesianism (growth through military investment), economic growth is further slowing down due to higher resource and energy costs, insecure supply chains, re-shoring (relocating industries back into the national economy – a kind of insurance against supply risks, associated with less division of tasks and higher cost).

Society

Social inequality is increasing, as the richer strata of society are better able to protect themselves from climate impacts than the poorer, but this is accepted after decades of neoliberal education – social consideration is dwindling, self-fulfilment at the expense of others is on the rise (Benz, 2022), the brutalisation of elites has taken hold of the middle classes (Heitmeyer, 2012). The crisis of care, remunerated and voluntary, is accelerating (Spangenberg and Lorek, 2022). As in the past after floods, droughts, cyclones and heat waves, violence against women and members of gender minorities is on the rise – mental stress, drug abuse, economic problems, food insecurity and poor social infrastructure after climate disasters are the immediate triggers (Rodrigues, 2022).

The readiness to employ violence in all kinds of conflicts, or just for the fun of it, continues to increase – police, fire brigades and ambulances are attacked, as are local politicians. As frightened people withdraw from such engagement, public security and democracy are suffering, and extremism is on the rise. Together with the increasing income polarisation, this leads to emerging unrest, intensifying social tensions exploited by the far right/neo-fascists; and populist parties win majorities.

Climate

The global temperature rise has surpassed 1.5°C and is on its way to 2° to 3°C (Carrington, 2022). The causes are manifold – besides the lack of political will and sufficient funding, and institutional feasibility constraints, the conversion of many economic sectors is failing due to a lack of skilled workers, especially in handicraft professions. Second, physical resources are lacking, not only because of unreliable supply chains, but also because minerals and metals are not available in sufficient quantities – past expansion plans have systematically ignored the finite nature of resources. Given the lack of resources, competition of decarbonisation strategies with digital applications and armament is leading to a price explosion that is slowing down the expansion of renewable energies. NATO members have increased their military spending to 2 per cent of their GDP, causing annual additional emissions larger than those of Russia, the world’s largest natural gas producer. Accelerated clean energy production reduces the energy cost, but contributes little to reducing the overall emissions.

Due to insufficient decarbonisation, lack of conservation of materials and energy, and the influence of the fossil fuel industry, greenhouse gas emissions remain too high. For example, since 2022, the 12 largest oil and gas companies alone have spent €103 million per day on the development and exploitation of new oil and gas fields (Carrington, 2021). Correspondingly, emissions have increased by 14 per cent since 2020 instead of falling by 50 per cent as required (McKie, 2022). Governments did nothing to prevent oil and gas multinationals from embarking on these projects, which clearly made compliance with the 1.5° limit impossible (Carrington and Taylor, 2022).

As a result of higher evaporation, summer drought is the new normal in Europe, including heat waves and large-scale forest fires (up 40 per cent in the Mediterranean). The number of heat days has doubled compared to 1971–81 and the number of frost days has dropped significantly. At the same time, there are extreme cold spells (persistent low temperatures of up to minus 20°C in Central Europe and massive snowfalls in the Mediterranean) due to polar air intrusions, caused by the weakening of the circumpolar jet stream. The ongoing Amazon dieback has turned wider parts of the basin from carbon sinks into carbon emission sources, further accelerating climate change.

Although heavy rainfall on land has increased by 16 per cent in Europe, and massive investments in flood protection are required, more than 270 million people suffer from water shortages, and in some regions water has to be rationed regularly. Water-intensive agricultural crops are being cut back, ploughing is becoming problematic. Harvests are at risk due to the mix of heat, drought, heavy rain and frost periods, while varieties genetically optimised for one environmental condition fail under the other conditions. In particular, winter cereals, depending on a prolonged period of low temperatures before they can shoot and flower (vernalisation), produce significantly reduced yields.

The collapse of the Greenland ice sheet is accelerating, but it is not yet clear by when it will have melted completely, raising global sea levels by seven metres. Decision-makers are hoping for the long term and postponing protective measures for coastal regions that go beyond incremental dike increases. The tipping points of the climate, first exceeded in the early 2020s, are becoming a cascade (Armstrong McKay et al, 2022). Migration and immigration of species result in communities that have never existed in the past 10,000 years, altering the spectrum of ecosystem services provided. The restoration of ecosystems and their services proves to be impossible.

Health

In particular in ageing societies, health costs are spiralling out of control (in European public health systems less than in the United States). The problem is aggravated by the additional challenges caused by environmental degradation, like more frequent pandemics, new infectious diseases and the curbs on medical research introduced to minimise the risk of terrorists using bio-medical know-how to produce and disseminate bioweapons (Brent et al, 2024).

The areas suitable for malaria transmission have grown by 10 per cent and more where re-wetting of wetlands was implemented. Disease vectors such as the tiger mosquito are forming stable local populations in formerly temperate climate zones, ticks continue to spread, and known tropical pathogens are spreading at an increasing rate (Mora et al, 2022). It is not possible to prevent the new waves of infection through precautionary measures due to the multitude of mechanisms of action.

2040

Economy

The obstacles to growth already manifest in 2030 have been growing, and new ones have emerged, for individual countries (mostly the heavily export-dependent ones like China and Germany), and for the world economy as a whole. Already 15 years ago, economic research estimated that an increase in global temperature of 1°C would lead to a 12 per cent decline in global GDP (Bilal and Känzig, 2024), and the ‘locked in’ global economic damage caused by global warming up to the year 2050 was estimated to be almost US$60,000 billion, corresponding to 30 per cent of the global economy (Kotz et al, 2024) – now the bill has to be paid. Add to this the expenditure on coastal protection, relocation of dykes and partial abandonment of cities and settlements due to the faster than expected rise in sea levels now and in the next decades (Taberna, 2022), what we have been facing since 2030 is just the beginning of a long-term, climate change-induced recession of the entire global economy (Kotz et al, 2024).

Hence, after years of stagnation, economic growth has turned negative. The economic reason is that to generate growth, the annual investment must be higher than what is needed to compensate for loss to wear and tear, and the requirements of technological development – otherwise the production potential does not increase. Investments are financed from the surplus of the previous year, plus by credit. The latter is limited in the private sector by the risk of over-indebtedness, and in the public sector by the necessity to keep redemption below a level impinging on key policy priorities, and to limit the regressive effects of taxpayers financing the interest for rich lenders. Hence the necessary massive defensive investments in climate adaptation, the repair of environmental damages, protection of biodiversity (not least for food security) and cleaning the environment from health-threatening pollution with particulate matter, microplastics and the like – economically necessary to avoid future losses – begin crowding out investments in expanding the production potential. The increased spending on CCS and hydrogen processes and infrastructures, armaments, and business subsidies for climate neutral production (state subsidies cover a significant share of the European chemical industry’s 2021–50 decarbonisation funding gap of US$550 billion [Scott, 2024]), and so on, exacerbates the situation. Furthermore, the health systems are at the brink of collapse due to heat-induced treatment needs, and with them the stability of an ageing society (Romanello et al, 2021). Such investments are classified as ‘defensive’, as they prevent damages accumulating, but are not (or only to a certain part) enhancing the production potential. Subsidies are claimed as for the business sector, defensive investment needs are mostly the result of mandatory legal obligations. Innovation, dematerialization and digitalization suffer, in particular as decarbonization, digitalization and weapons production are competing for the same or similar physical resources. As defensive investments are crowding out business production capacity enhancing investments, the production potential is shrinking, and GDP declines. For some time, public authorities have tried to compensate such investment capital scarcity with public funding, but the required level is surpassing all estimates of public fund availability. The necessary level of government spending begins to lead to a higher tax burden on corporate profits and to declining real incomes, public disapproval and social unrest.

Consumption

Consumption, which has been the main driver of ecological burdens since the turn of the millennium, is declining – the consumer society is running out of consumers (Spangenberg and Kurz, 2023). However, this externally enforced reduction in consumption leads an ever fiercer defence of privileges, less willingness to voluntarily reduce consumption, or to share the remaining wealth with others, in particular with the Global South. Hence, public pressure results in an end to development cooperation and (the always insufficient) financial support for climate adaptation to poor countries. The result is more climate refugees, clashing with a decreasing willingness to welcome any kind of migrants as they are – wrongly – perceived as competitors for the diminishing consumption space. Consumer dissatisfaction spills over into increasing scepticism regarding the liberal democratic system – an institutional crisis is emerging (Kalke et al, 2024).

Politics

The global political situation has become volatile, with a group of major powers struggling for dominance, while the majority of countries tries to navigate the stormy waters in changing collaborations and confrontations. Trade wars and patent conflicts prevail; international regimes of intellectual property rights have collapsed and free trade in resources has come to a virtual standstill. Armed conflicts are fueled by geopolitics and upscaled by weapons export since 2025, resource wars increase, but in order to avoid nuclear escalation, the major powers impose an allocation system for raw materials, with quotas for all countries (which many consider a neocolonial means to deny access to non-affiliate countries). There are political and armed conflicts about access to increasingly short freshwater supplies. The global water crisis takes its toll, hunger is getting normalized in many parts of the world, due to declining harvests due to heat stress and lack of irrigation water.

Public pressure demands a ‘Fortress’ policy, denying climate refugees access to the still relatively affluent countries – a demand the strong extreme right is more than happy to fulfil (nativism, economic fears, and so on). Permanent involvement in resource wars and repulsion fights against refugees at all borders leads to a militarizing of societies, but also to a more favorable view on elements of a war economy. This, together with the shortage of physical resources, has drastic political consequences.

Domestically, in most European countries and beyond, politicians have pulled the emergency brake and declared both a ‘climate war’ (mostly neglecting other environmental problems) and ‘identity defense’ (rejection not only of refugees, but all ‘foreign’ inhabitants – at the expense of lacking skills and workers in the labor force). As the permanent resource constraints and the high cost of enforcing access make it impossible to any longer ignore the problem of overconsumption, decisionmakers try to find ways to accommodate the internationally set resource quota. The limited materials are auctioned off nationally, with special purchase rights for non-commercial users. This mechanism, borrowed from war economics, leads to a massive restructuring of industry, as high resource efficiency becomes a prerequisite for a secured further existence. In order to limit overconsumption, those consumer goods that have become scarce are given away on non-tradable ration coupons. This ensures that scarce goods are available to all and are not consumed or hoarded by a privileged few at the expense of the general public.

2050

Rising temperature, rising sea levels, rising migration

The emergency measures introduced in 2040 have managed to prevent or at least postpone the collapse otherwise due. Nevertheless, global warming surpasses 2.5°C (that is, 5°C over land), triggered by tipping cascades such as the melting of permafrost regions since 2040, when the conditions for their permanent existence were no longer given, transforming large parts of Siberia, Alaska and northern Canada into barely usable, greenhouse gas emitting swamps (IPCC, 2021; Fewster et al, 2022) plagued by wildfires. Wetlands and moors are drying out – and thus releasing additional CO2. Deadly heat waves and temperatures of over 50°C are no longer uncommon in the tropics, and temperate latitudes exceed 40°C in summer, causing tens of thousands of heat deaths annually in Europe. In many regions in the South, but also in European regions such as the Spanish highlands, human life is no longer possible.

Anthropogenic warming is casting billions of people outside of the boundaries of normal human habitation, with abundant negative consequences for human wellbeing, mortality and levels of international migration (Scheffer et al, 2024). A billion people are facing coastal flooding risk from rising seas, and more people are forced out of their homes by weather disasters, in particular flooding, sea level rise and tropical cyclones (Selby et al, 2024). Once warming exceeds a few more tenths of a degree, it will lead to large areas becoming uninhabitable (IPCC, 2022).

While most refugees stay in neighbouring countries until their capacities are exhausted, many move to the North, only temporarily stopped at the crumbling military border defence of the EU (less so, and later, the United States). Migration is enhanced by the neocolonial economic policy of the dominant powers, with militarily supported land-grabbing where fertile ground and water are available (for example, Ukraine) to overcome domestic food supply volatility problems.

Freshwater scarcity

Heavy rainfall on land has increased by more than a third; summer precipitation comes in the form of flash floods, which only partly seep into the ground and replenish the groundwater available for dry periods. Freshwater has become scarce and is part of the rationing system. Private swimming pools, watering lawns or washing private cars have been banned. Not least because of the melting of the last glaciers in the Alps and the Andes/Rocky Mountains, river levels fluctuate extremely, affecting both shipping and summer water supplies. More than 390 million people are suffering from water scarcity, and their number is bound to rise. The thawing of the Himalayan glaciers accelerates (they had lost 40 per cent of their area by 2020 [Lee et al, 2021]), putting the regular water supply of two billion people at risk, who depend on the waters of Indus, Ganges, Brahmaputra, Irrawaddy, Mekong and Yangtzekiang (Wester et al, 2019).

Sea levels are rising faster than expected and are approaching one metre. Salt water penetrates the groundwater reservoirs in coastal regions and all major river deltas, putting some of the ‘bread baskets’ of the world at risk (for example, in Egypt, Vietnam, India, Bangladesh, Argentina, the United States). The tidal flats and salt marshes along the North Sea and similar coastal regions are under pressure – where dikes are not moved back, sacrificing land to the sea and allowing salt marshes to move inland, they are flooded and some of the most biologically diverse habitats on earth are thus lost (Saintilan et al, 2022). The oceans are not only becoming warmer and hence low-oxygen, but also more acidic, affecting countless species along the entire food chain. Shell-forming animal species are dying out, fish stocks – until 2040 a major protein source of humankind – have more or less collapsed due to past overfishing, persistent ocean pollution, acidification and the loss of breeding grounds (temperate salt marshes decline, coral reefs are gone). Habitat for nearly 20 per cent of all insect species has at least halved.

Food (in)security

The cultivation of wheat, barley, rye, oats and maize is hardly possible anymore (wheat becomes sterile at 30°C, maize pollen at 35°C); agriculture has switched to millet/sorghum and chickpeas instead of wheat, yams instead of potatoes, as well as cassava/ manioc and sweet potatoes. Small farmers have not survived the crisis economically. In addition, higher CO2 concentrations reduce the quality of proteins in cereals and fruits, and cows have to digest more grass for the same milk yield.

The number of frost days has decreased sharply, in many years they no longer occur – a problem for food production from fruit trees, vegetables and wheat. To these plants, prolonged cold exposure is required to provide competency to flower (vernalisation). In other years, non-moving polar air masses lead to weeks of deep low temperatures, which do not suit many of the new, drought-resistant agricultural plants. These are hot–cold times. Vegetation also feels the effects: native tree species are not adapted to heat and drought, but Mediterranean species are not adapted to the cold spells. As a result, more than half of Europe’s tree species are threatened with extinction. Forest fires accelerate that – burning areas in the Mediterranean region have grown by more than 60 per cent.

Health

Areas suitable for malaria transmission have grown by 15 per cent. Tropical disease vectors are well established, but tropical and emerging pathogens are spreading mainly through transmission by indigenous species; dengue, chika and West Nile fever are regular occurrences. New pathogens have emerged from zoonoses, pandemics with previously unknown pathogens regularly claim numerous victims worldwide – the ‘age of pandemics’, of which IPBES had warned urgently, has dawned (IPBES, 2020).

Alternative scenario for Europe (other regions unaffected)

Following the calculations of Ditlevsen and Ditlevsen (2023), the AMOC/Gulf Stream warm water circulation would collapse between 2025 and 2095 with a central estimate of 2050 (assuming emissions are not reduced, in line with our earlier assumptions). Such a collapse would result in Western Europe suffering far more extreme winters, rapidly rising sea levels on the east coast of the United States and a lack of vital tropical rainfall. During the last ice age, some major changes in AMOC flow caused winter temperatures to change by 5–10°C in just one to three years. The chilling effect would be moderated by the heating that has already occurred in the northern hemisphere (Spangenberg et al, 2012).

2070

A dystopian situation has emerged: planetary boundaries continue to be crossed, tipping cascades cause irreversible damage and have escaped human control, ecosystem cycles are collapsing. The loss of pollinators reduces food availability; fermented substitutes are consumed instead. Desperate attempts at geoengineering have not solved any problem, but created new damages and conflicts. The global heating has surpassed +2.5°C and is heading for 3°C – which implies 5–6°C heating over land (IPCC, 2021). All coral reefs and almost all large tropical forests have disappeared. The melting of the Greenland ice sheet, the increasing loss of South Polar ice and of almost all glaciers is driving up sea levels. Coastal cities around the world are being abandoned, partly because of direct flooding and ever stronger typhoons, partly because infrastructures cannot withstand rising sea levels despite high dikes. Life expectancy is decreasing, and water and food supply has become unreliable, even in the richest parts of the world.

For two billion people, survival in their homeland is no longer possible – flight or death is the alternative as a result of heat, drought, lost soil fertility or as a result of flooding and salinisation. As neighbouring countries and regions can no longer absorb the refugees – they are already overburdened and suffer just as much from climate and environmental destruction – a global migration of more than one billion of people has set in, upsetting all previous geopolitical power constellations. Countries are at permanent war to uphold the neocolonial status quo, but the threat of nuclear escalation is growing by the day. The mood of migrants is not only desperate, but also aggressive: those affected are well aware that they are innocent victims of the North’s overconsumption. Already in 2020, the richest 10 per cent of humanity (that is, all those with an annual income of over US$90,000) emitted almost half of all CO2 emissions, while the poorer half of the world’s population was only responsible for 12 per cent (Herrmann, 2022). Such facts have been sinking into the collective consciousness and attitudes. The Global North has been stealing the future as well as the present, not only from its own children but, above all, from those who live in the most affected parts of the world. The EU and the United States are losing their defensive wars against migrants, and their militarised societies fail to adapt to the inflow of refugees. The result of the conflict is unpredictable, but will certainly be paid for with high human sacrifices.

In temperate latitudes, landscapes are dotted with wind turbines and solar panels; there are also a few trees, but only a few species that have adapted to climate change and water scarcity. Lush greenery, buzzing insects, singing birds – absent. The planet has become silent – 90 years after Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring.

## Counterplan

### Perm: Do CP---2AC

#### 4. Permutation: do the counterplan then the plan. It’s certain but not immediate.

Mary Ann Brown 8. Judge on the Court of Appeals of Iowa. “In re Est. of Guthrie.” Westlaw. 75 2 N.W.2d 452.

Brock and Kaitlyn look to the word “should” in the phrase “in the event any of my children should predecease me” and claim the district court improperly found the word looked to the future. They claim the word should be interpreted as the past tense of “shall” to imply a duty or obligation. See Black's Law Dictionary 1379 (6th ed.1990). Looking at the phrase as a whole, however, rather than at a single word, we determine the phrase is considering possible future events. See In re Estate of Grulke, 546 N.W.2d 626, 627 (Iowa Ct.App.1996) (noting we must ascertain a testator's intent from the entire will).

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

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

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

Consider the sentence:

Employees should stay home when they are sick.

It could be recast as:

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

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

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

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

### Say No---2AC

#### Trump ignores courts. Not link to the aff.

Maya Sen 25. Professor of Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School, Ph.D. in Government from Harvard University. “Why federal courts are unlikely to save democracy from Trump’s and Musk’s attacks.” Harvard Ash Center. 2-12-2025. ash.harvard.edu/articles/why-federal-courts-are-unlikely-to-save-democracy-from-trumps-and-musks-attacks

Breadth

When Republicans disagreed with any of Joe Biden’s executive actions – for example, his student debt forgiveness plan – they went to federal court to obtain nationwide injunctions stopping the implementation of the plan.

But injunctions will not be as helpful given Trump’s recent playbook. A court blocking one order isn’t enough to stop the administration from trying different tactics. In 2017, courts blocked the first two versions of Trump’s ban on travel to the U.S. from majority-Muslim countries – but ultimately allowed a third version to take effect. And if an attack on one agency is blocked, the administration can try similar – or different – tactics against other agencies.

The strategy of moving fast and breaking things is successful if the other side – or even the process of repair – can’t keep up with all the different strategies. Courts can be part of the strategy to preserve the Constitution, but they cannot be its only defenders.

Authority

Researchers have argued that court-issued injunctions mostly work to stop the government from doing something, not to compel the government into doing something. Judges are already expressing concern that the Trump administration may fail to comply with orders to stop funding freezes.

For instance, a federal district judge in Massachusetts has ordered the government not only to refrain from implementing changes to federal research grant funding but to provide evidence to the court that it was complying with the court’s order, immediately and every two weeks until the case is decided.

Another federal judge has already found the administration failed to abide by a court order – but so far has not imposed any consequences on Trump, the administration or other officials.

It’s unclear whether Trump would obey Supreme Court rulings against him, either. On the campaign trail, Trump’s running mate JD Vance said, “When the courts stop you, stand before the country like Andrew Jackson did and say, ‘The chief justice has made his ruling, now let him enforce it.’” He also recently remarked that “Judges aren’t allowed to control the executive’s legitimate power,” hinting at strong opposition to rulings the administration disagrees with.

### Certainty Deficit---2AC

#### Private rights of action are a disaster.

Mark Brennan 19. Partner at Hogan Loellis. “Ill-Suited: Private Rights of Action and Privacy Claims.” July 19, 2019. https://www.hoganlovells.com/en/publications/ill-suited-private-rights-of-action-and-privacy-claims\_1#:~:text=Private%20rights%20of%20action%20undermine,forefront%20of%20transformative%20new%20technologies.

Ill-Suited highlights numerous detrimental consequences from privacy private rights of action, including:

Private rights of action undermine appropriate agency enforcement and allow plaintiffs’ lawyers to set policy nationwide, rather than allowing expert regulators to shape and balance policy and protections.

Private rights of action lead to a series of inconsistent and dramatically varied, district-by-district court rulings.

Combined with the power handed to the plaintiffs’ bar in Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 23, private rights of action are routinely abused by plaintiffs’ attorneys, leading to grossly expensive litigation and staggeringly high settlements that disproportionally benefit plaintiffs’ lawyers rather than individuals whose privacy interests may have been infringed.

### Certainty Key---1AC

#### Uncertain processes fail.

EPI 25. Nonprofit think tank. "Trump administration attempts large-scale federal employee layoffs during government shutdown." Economic Policy Institute. 10-28-2025. epi.org/policywatch/trump-administration-attempts-large-scale-federal-employee-layoffs-during-government-shutdown

Prior to the government shutdown beginning in October 2025, the Trump administration had already pursued several avenues to attempt to dramatically slash the size of the federal workforce, including terminating or limiting collective bargaining agreements with federal employees unions, offering a deferred resignation package to all federal employees, closing agencies or offices whose mission does not align with the administration’s political agenda, wand proposing a new worker classification that would make it easier to for federal employees to be fired for political reasons. Most of these moves have been challenged in court by federal employee unions or other interested parties, and in some cases the government has been blocked from firing more employees while the litigation proceeds.

Impact: The Trump administration’s recent actions have added to the chaos and uncertainty experienced by many federal workers by months. At at least one agency where workers received layoff notices on October 10, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, some were speedily rehired. Most others may now need to look to proceedings in the lawsuits brought on their behalf by federal employee unions to determine the ultimate fate of their jobs. These continued attacks on federal employees continue to undermine the public sector, weaken the effective operation of countless government programs and public service, and to harm the federal employees who may lose employment or be forced to seek out other jobs due to the uncertainty.

### AT: FLRA Fails---1AC

#### The cumulative effect of collective bargaining is greater than the sum of its parts. Also, FLRA enforcement is effective.

Nicholas Handler 24. Lecturer at Stanford Law School, J.D. from Yale Law School. "Separation of Powers by Contract: How Collective Bargaining Reshapes Presidential Power." *New York University Law Review*, 99(45), 84-90.

III Bargaining as Bureaucratic Power in Contemporary Practice

Part II provided a typology of federal labor rights and examined how different rights can constrain presidential power. This Part provides data and real-world examples from three policy areas - immigration, tax, and environmental regulation - to show how these different forces can work in tandem to shape bureaucratic culture and affect policy outcomes throughout very different areas of federal law. These case studies are critical to understanding the true power of labor rights to reshape the executive branch. In isolation, the different contractual rights outlined above can hinder or redirect certain managerial initiatives. But when many of these contractual rights are deployed simultaneously, over years and decades, by sophisticated and well-organized unions, they can profoundly change an organization's culture, its institutional practices, and its mission.

These rights have been used differently in the different policy areas surveyed below. In immigration, labor rights have been increasingly weaponized by bureaucrats and their political allies to pursue certain ideological objectives. In the tax and environmental areas, they have been used more defensively, as a shield against structural deregulation. But each study demonstrates the role that labor can play in pushing back against presidential administration.

This Part consists of four subparts. Section III.A examines a novel dataset of 986 FLRA cases involving immigration, tax, and environmental regulation over the past 40 years. A central claim of this Article is that labor rights exert an important influence on the executive branch. The data confirms that hypothesis: Labor often prevails in contract disputes with agency management, including under hostile presidential administrations and hostile FLRA majorities. Many of these cases carry important implications for presidential control of specific agencies. The data also demonstrate that as labor is increasingly weaponized to contend with more aggressive versions of presidential administration, it is becoming more controversial. As measured by the number of dissents filed in FLRA cases and the rate of reversals of putatively neutral arbitration awards, labor litigation has become more divisive and harder fought over the last decade. Sections III.B, III.C, and III.D then provide case studies of how labor rights have reshaped bureaucratic-presidential relations and policy outcomes in immigration, tax, and environmental regulation.

A. Data

This Section presents an analysis of 986 FLRA adjudications spanning more than forty years, from 1979 to 2022, across seven agencies in three policy areas. Despite the importance of bargaining to modern bureaucracy, there exists very little empirical research on its implementation, including on fundamental questions such as how frequently labor and management prevail in labor disputes, how frequently litigations implicate particularly contested questions of managerial control, and how frequently disputes generate controversy. This Section seeks to fill that gap by providing a broad overview of how labor disputes play out over time across the immigration, tax, and environmental policy spaces. It first examines how frequently labor and management prevail in disputes to determine whether the CSRA serves its original purpose of promoting a relatively stable balance of power between the President and the bureaucracy. It then seeks to determine the degree to which labor disputes have generated controversy or become sites of legal or political contestation.

A caveat is necessary at the outset. The three-person FLRA is, in most instances, an appellate body. Most contractual disputes are resolved in the first instance by internal grievance processes or third-party arbitrators. Disputes over unfair labor practices are generally adjudicated first by administrative law judges.206 Disputes over bargaining unit recognition are heard first by FLRA Regional Directors; and negotiating impasses are typically resolved by the Federal Service Impasses Panel (FSIP).207 But the FLRA plays a formative role in setting federal labor policy, issuing authoritative constructions of the CSRA, and determining appeals from the hardest fought labor disputes. I therefore treat it as a reasonable proxy for which party the labor regime favors, and the controversy attending its decisions.

1. Wins and Losses

Key to understanding the effect of labor rights on bureaucratic relations is understanding which parties benefit from its provisions. Federal sector labor rights were designed to secure industrial peace within the executive branch. As described above, federal sector labor rights were the product of compromise between a presidency seeking greater freedom to structure the executive branch and a labor movement, supported by congressional Democrats, seeking more robust protections for federal employees. If they are serving that purpose, one would expect both labor and the President to prevail a meaningful percentage of the time. Guarantees of moderating power would be useless if one side gains a decisive or permanent advantage.

The data indicates that both labor and management do win a meaningful percentage of the time.208 As shown in Figures 1 and 2, this is true across presidential administrations, from 1979 to the present. It is true in periods of labor turmoil, such as the Reagan Administration, as well as times of relative rapprochement, such as the Clinton era.

As shown in Figures 3 and 4, while labor wins slightly more frequently when the FLRA has a Democratic majority (51.7% versus 48.0% during Republican majorities), the difference is relatively modest. Indeed, win rates for labor are much higher than for equivalent disputes before the MSPB, where surveys have consistently shown that agencies win over 75%, and perhaps as much as 90%, of the time.209 This data supports labor and Congress's assumption that unionized representation could serve as a more effective check on managerial authority than traditional civil service protections.

One other aspect of this data is worth noting. The total number of cases declined dramatically from the 1980s to 2020s. This is not a quirk of the specific agencies studied here. The total number of FLRA decisions has declined over the past four decades. From January 1, 1979 to December 31, 1989 the FLRA issued 4,196 opinions; from January 1, 1990 to December 31, 2000, it issued 3,147; from January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2010, it issued 1,514; and from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2020, it issued 1,176.210 The decline of the total number of FLRA cases does not mean that the federal labor regime has declined in importance. First, many disputes that were litigated in the CSRA's first decade are now settled informally through grievance procedures and labor-management programs such as those established under President Clinton's NPR program.211 These efforts reflect the bargaining power of federal workers. FLRA litigation is costly and disruptive. While there is no clear data on management council outcomes, anecdotes suggest that labor has a meaningful role in shaping management policy, and the councils are responsive to unions' concerns.212 Likewise, many disputes that might otherwise be litigated are instead now resolved through negotiated grievance procedures. Here again, anecdotal evidence suggest that these procedures can be more favorable to labor than the alternative.213

2. Controversy

The data also appear to show relative stability through the Trump Administration. This is significant, given President Trump's overt hostility to labor and the many ways in which his administration departed from traditional norms of labor relations.214 Observers have presumed that the FLRA majority appointed by President Trump was more hostile to labor than previous boards, including those with Republican-appointed majorities.215 Indeed, these accusations were so frequent that the FLRA's Chairman was questioned by the House Oversight and Reform Government Operations Subcommittee over her alleged "`anti-union' modus operandi."216 In terms of raw numbers on wins and losses, there is no clear indication of a strong anti-union bias. However, I reviewed additional metrics to examine whether there was any empirical support for the claim that the Trump-appointed FLRA was uniquely hostile to labor. Consistent with observations of labor hostility, and consistent with the general trend toward greater politicization of democratic institutions,217 these data do provide some indication that labor has become more politically divisive in the past decade.

## Court Politics

### Tariffs Inev---2AC

#### Tariffs are inevitable, but a Trump loss on IEEPA turns their economy internal.

Joseph Brusuelas 1/14. Chief Economist and Principal, RSM US LLP, UCLA Anderson School of Management's Board of Directors. “Market Minute: What happens if the Supreme Court overturns the tariffs?” https://realeconomy.rsmus.com/market-minute-what-happens-if-the-supreme-court-overturns-the-tariffs/.

A watershed day for U.S. trade policy is approaching as the Supreme Court prepares to rule on the legality of the administration’s aggressive use of tariffs.

As soon as Wednesday morning, the court will decide on whether higher tariffs imposed last year under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, without approval from Congress, are allowed under the Constitution.

If the administration loses its case, the federal government could have to refund anywhere from $80 billion in tariffs that have been collected to our estimate of $130 billion.

The Treasury Department has collected $236.15 billion in tariff revenues for 2025, with most of it following the imposition of significantly higher levies in April.

The average tariff as of Nov. 14 was 14.03%, with trade taxes on major trading partners like Canada at 5.96%, Mexico at 8.43% and China at 30.75%.

The administration is counting on these revenues. If the tariffs are upheld, the annual collections in the future will be near $367 billion by our estimate.

But a ruling against the administration would, at least in the short term, roil fixed income markets and cause interest rates to increase as the nation’s fiscal path is disrupted. In addition, businesses would need to decide how to handle their cash windfall: Do they use the cash to cut prices, or reinvest in their business, or buy back their stock?

At the least, businesses have endured thinner profit margins as the tariffs have escalated, which may lead some to compensate themselves.

However it plays out, the money at stake is significant.

There was roughly an additional $155 billion in revenues obtained through the increase in trade taxes last year. Of that total, 84%, or about $130 billion, were custom duties, which may need to be refunded.

Not the end of the story

It’s unlikely, though, that the administration would simply fold its tent on its desire to use tariffs as cudgel in trade policy, and boost the government’s coffers.

We took Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent at his word when he recently said that he “was confident in the ability to reconstitute any lost tariff revenue by imposing duties under other legal authorities.”

Under this scenario, the administration could still seek to impose tariffs under Section 232 of the 1962 Trade Expansion Act, Sections 122 and 301 of the 1974 Trade Act or Section 338 of the 1930 Tariff Act.

If that happens, the probability of a sustained market reaction following any decision against the administration is low.

### Tariffs Inev---1AR

#### Trump has backup plans AND downsides are already priced in.

Ariel Zilber 12-30. Reporter. "Trump admin has plan B to keep tariffs going if Supreme Court deems current approach unconstitutional: report." New York Post. 12-30-2025. nypost.com/2025/12/30/business/trump-admin-has-plan-b-to-keep-tariffs-going-if-supreme-court-deems-current-approach-unconstitutional-report

President Trump is reportedly preparing to unleash a fresh wave of tariffs under alternative trade laws if the Supreme Court strikes down the levies he imposed using emergency powers.

The administration is expected to use decades-old trade statutes to keep its tariff regime going if the high court rules against the president as soon as January — potentially reissuing levies under different legal rationales, according to the Financial Times.

Markets are already bracing for turbulence, with traders warning a ruling against the tariffs could leave the federal government on the hook for billions of dollars in repayments and force the White House to move quickly to reissue levies to avoid a sudden revenue hit.

The contingency plans include expanded use of arcane laws like Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act, which allows tariffs on national security grounds and has already been used to target steel, aluminum, autos, copper and lumber.

The White House is weighing additional statutes that give the president broad authority to penalize foreign trade practices.

“Nobody thinks the tariffs are going away,” Ted Murphy, a trade lawyer at Sidley Austin, told the FT.

“They are just going to be reissued under a different umbrella. They will reissue tariffs the same day.”

### Conceded Impact Defense---1NC

#### No impact to civil collapse

Mueller 21 [John; February 17; Adjunct Professor of Political Science and Senior Research Scientist at the Mershon Center for International Security Studies; The Stupidity of War: American Foreign Policy and the Case for Complacency, “The Rise of China, the Assertiveness of Russia, and the Antics of Iran,” Ch. 6]

Hitlers are very rare, but there are some resonances today in Russia’s Vladimir Putin and China’s Xi Jinping. Both are shrewd, determined, authoritarian, and seem to be quite intelligent, and both are fully in charge, are surrounded by sychophants, and appear to have essentially unlimited tenure in office. Moreover, both, like Hitler in the 1930s, are appreciated domestically for maintaining a stable political and economic environment. However, unlike Hitler, both run trading states and need a stable and essentially congenial international environment to flourish.128 Most importantly, except for China’s claim to Taiwan, neither seems to harbor Hitler-like dreams of extensive expansion by military means. Both are leading their countries in an illiberal direction which will hamper economic growth while maintaining a kleptocratic system. But this may be acceptable to populations enjoying historically high living standards and fearful of less stable alternatives. Both do seem to want to overcome what they view as past humiliations – ones going back to the opium war of 1839 in the case of China and to the collapse of the Soviet empire and then of the Soviet Union in 1989–91 in the case of Russia. Primarily, both seem to want to be treated with respect and deference. Unlike Hitler’s Germany, however, both seem to be entirely appeasable. That scarcely seems to present or represent a threat. The United States, after all, continually declares itself to be the indispensable nation. If the United States is allowed to wallow in such self-important, childish, essentially meaningless, and decidedly fatuous proclamations, why should other nations be denied the opportunity to emit similar inconsequential rattlings? If that constitutes appeasement, so be it. If the two countries want to be able to say they now preside over a “sphere of influence,” it scarcely seems worth risking world war to somehow keep them from doing so – and if the United States were substantially disarmed, it would not have the capacity to even try.

If China and Russia get off on self-absorbed pretensions about being big players, that should be of little concern – and their success rate is unlikely to be any better than that of the United States. Charap and Colton observe that “The Kremlin’s idee fixe that Russia needs to be the leader of a pack of post-Soviet states in order to be taken seriously as a global power broker is more of a feel-good mantra than a fact-based strategy, and it irks even the closest of allies.” And they further suggest that

The towel should also be thrown in on the geo-ideational shadow-boxing over the Russian assertion of a sphere of influence in post-Soviet Eurasia and the Western opposition to it. Would either side be able to specify what precisely they mean by a regional sphere of influence? How would it differ from, say, US relations with the western-hemisphere states or from Germany’s with its EU neighbors?129

Applying the Gingrich gospel, then, it certainly seems that, although China, Russia, and Iran may present some “challenges” to US policy, there is little or nothing to suggest a need to maintain a large US military force-in-being to keep these countries in line. Indeed, all three monsters seem to be in some stage of self-destruction or descent into stagnation – not, perhaps, unlike the Communist “threat” during the Cold War. Complacency thus seems to be a viable policy.

However, it may be useful to look specifically at a couple of worst-case scenarios: an invasion of Taiwan by China (after it builds up its navy more) and an invasion of the Baltic states of Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia by Russia. It is wildly unlikely that China or Russia would carry out such economically self-destructive acts: the economic lessons from Putin’s comparatively minor Ukraine gambit are clear, and these are unlikely to be lost on the Chinese. Moreover, the analyses of Michael Beckley certainly suggest that Taiwan has the conventional military capacity to concentrate the mind of, if not necessarily fully to deter, any Chinese attackers. It has “spent decades preparing for this exact contingency,” has an advanced early warning system, can call into action massed forces to defend “fortified positions on home soil with precision-guided munitions,” and has supply dumps, booby traps, an wide array of mobile missile launchers, artillery, and minelayers. In addition, there are only 14 locations that can support amphibious landing and these are, not surprisingly, well-fortified by the defenders.130

The United States may not necessarily be able to deter or stop military attacks on Taiwan or on the Baltics under its current force levels.131 And if it cannot credibly do so with military forces currently in being, it would not be able to do so, obviously, if its forces were much reduced. However, the most likely response in either eventuality would be for the United States to wage a campaign of economic and military (including naval) harassment and to support local – or partisan – resistance as it did in Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion there in 1979. 132 Such a response does not require the United States to have, and perpetually to maintain, huge forces in place and at the ready to deal with such improbable eventualities.

### Impact Defense---1AR

#### No risk mitigation. Their authors are dumb.

Dr. David Thorstad 23. PhD, Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Vanderbilt University, Senior Research Affiliate at the Global Priorities Institute, Oxford, and Research Affiliate at the Machine Intelligence and Normative Theory Lab, ANU. "High Risk, Low Reward: A Challenge to the Astronomical Value of Existential Risk Mitigation.” Philosophy & Public Affairs, 51(1).

I think this is among the best arguments for the time of perils hypothesis. At the same time, I have two doubts about this form of the argument. First, the Aschenbrenner model treats consumption as the driver of existential risk. But most pessimists do not think that consumption is even the primary determinant of existential risk. In the special case of climate risk, consumption does indeed drive risk by emitting fossil fuels and causing other forms of environmental degradation. But pessimists think that the lion’s share of existential risk comes from risks such as rogue artificial intelligence and sophisticated bioterrorism. These risks are not caused primarily by consumption, but rather by technological growth. Risks from superintelligence grow with advances in technologies such as machine learning, and bioterrorism risks grow with advances in our capacity to synthesize, analyze, and distribute biological materials. So a reduction in existential risk may be largely achieved through slowing growth of technology rather by slowing consumption.

We could revise (3) to let technologies A and B replace consumption outputs C as the main drivers of existential risk. But technology occupies a very different role from consumption outputs in the Aschenbrenner model. One difference is that technology is an input rather than an output to production in (1) and (2). In general we have no reason to expect symmetrical results to govern inputs and outputs in mathematical models, hence we have no good reason to expect results proved for consumption outputs to generalize to technology.

Another difficulty is that technology governs both the safety and consumption sectors, whereas consumption outputs have no direct bearing on safety outputs. This is important, because the proofs of Aschenbrenner’s main results rely on the idea that societies can sharply curtail existential risk by devoting increasing amounts of labor and scientific research to the safety sector. But increased labor alone is often insufficient to guarantee safety given current technologies, and new safety technologies may themselves carry risk. When this is the case, it is not so clear that we can significantly reduce risk by shifting labor and research from the consumption sector to the safety sector.

For example, one risk discussed by pessimists is the risk of asteroid impacts.34 There is mounting evidence that an asteroid impact during the Cretaceous period wiped out every land-dwelling mammal weighing more than five kilograms,35 and a similar impact could well extinguish humanity. It is widely accepted that increased labor, given current technology, cannot eliminate risks from asteroid impacts. Although there are some things we can do to promote safety given current technology, such as stockpiling food, full safety would require the capacity to deflect large incoming asteroids. Developing this capacity would require research into deflection technologies. But in fact, leading pessimists think that researching asteroid deflection technologies would be a bad idea.36 Deflection technologies are likely to be used for mining and military applications, and those applications carry a higher risk of deflecting asteroids toward Earth than away from Earth. Here, we have a case where existential risk cannot be substantially reduced by reallocating labor to the safety sector and in which safety research may increase rather than decrease existential risk. Cases such as this one put pressure on the idea that we can produce a manyfold reduction in existential risk by reallocating labor and technological research from the consumption to safety sectors.