

NDCA_Elections

Combination of

- Michigan starter pack
- UTNIF starter pack
- Independent research

Note on distribution / waves

The file is intended to make these debates as diverse as possible throughout the semester – I understand that this can create chaos at the beginning, so it may be useful to distribute parts of each section over time

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***** NEG *****

--- 1NC ---

1NC

Biden will win now but the race is still competitive – even marginal shifts in voter enthusiasm will swing the election

Milligan 7/15 – senior political writer at U.S. News & World Report

(Susan Milligan July 15 2020 “New Biden Voters Could Give Him the Election” <https://www.usnews.com/news/elections/articles/2020-07-15/new-support-for-joe-biden-could-give-him-a-win-over-trump-poll>) IB

DESPITE JOE BIDEN'S consistent lead in national and battleground state polls, the lingering worry among Democrats is that the veteran politician is not inspiring enough to mobilize a winning coalition against President Donald Trump's deeply devoted base. Hand-wringers point to Hillary Clinton, who lost to Trump in 2016 in large part because she failed to get the Democratic base out in sufficient numbers to tip several key states in her direction. [READ: Biden's Polling Surge Mirrored in States] New polling by Priorities USA suggests that's not the case. The Democratic Super PAC took a close look at "new Biden voters" – people in six battleground states (Arizona, Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin) who were not committed to Biden two months ago, but now say they will vote for him – and found that the former vice president is attracting support from the very kind of voters who denied Clinton the job in 2016. Cartoons on the 2020 Election View All 223 Images In 2016, 47% of voters in those six battlegrounds cast ballots for Trump, 46% for Clinton, while 4% said they voted third party, the poll found. This year, there is a "new Biden voter," representing about 7% of voters in those six states. Among that smaller (new Biden voter) group, 21% voted for Trump in 2016, while 8% voted third party and 10% did not vote four years ago. When the numbers are crunched further, those who voted for a third party in 2016 now favor Biden over Trump, 46% to 21%, according to Priorities USA chairman Guy Cecil. Just a tenth of people who voted third party in 2016 in those battleground states say they will do the same this year, he said. Non-voters in 2016 also prefer Biden, with 51% saying they will vote for Biden, and 37% ready to cast a ballot for Trump (2% said they will go third party, and 10% are undecided). "Among both of these types of voters, Trump fundamentally faces an uphill battle," Cecil told reporters in a conference call. The shifts are seemingly small but have a potentially pivotal impact on who will be America's next president. Trump's wins in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan were by less than a single percentage point in each state, meaning slight movements in support are critical. Florida which Trump won by 1.2 percentage points four years ago, and Arizona, which the president took by 3.5 percentage points, are both more competitive this year. [READ: Democracy Demographics: The data behind the votes.] Biden has long struggled to animate young and progressive voters, many of whom are still stung by the second failed presidential bid of Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont. Polling has consistently shown that a major part of Biden's appeal is the desire to oust Trump, and the Trump campaign has counted on the fact that the president's backers are more dedicated, and more likely to show up and vote. The Priorities USA poll, however, shows that Democrats are not only solidifying their base, but winning over more "persuadables," Cecil said. The group's Electoral College analysis now shows Biden with a likely 278-vote minimum – 7 more than he needs to secure the presidency – with another 58 Electoral College votes leaning Democratic. The Trump campaign is also amping up its campaign, Donald J. Trump, Jr., the president's son, told reporters in a conference call last Friday. The campaign now has 1,500 paid staffers in 23 states, and they have contacted 55 million voters, he said, calling it "the biggest and baddest presidential ground game in this history of this country." And the Priorities USA poll found that Biden's apparent advantage is somewhat tenuous. If Biden's backing among white working class voters – who favored Trump heavily in 2016 but who have moved a bit more towards the Democrat this cycle – drops by even 5 percentage points in the six battlegrounds, Biden loses his Electoral College advantage, Cecil said. And if support among people of color, long critical to the Democratic base, diminishes by just 2 percentage points in those states, Biden is also playing defense, Cecil notes. The major issues helping Biden (or

hurting Trump) are the coronavirus and the president's handling of racial issues, the survey found. While the battleground has been expanding – Georgia, Texas, Iowa and Ohio are now considered in play – Priorities USA will continue to direct its resources at the six core battlegrounds, Cecil said. "Our most important thing is to get to 270," he said. "Most, if not all, of our spending will be in those six states."

Criminal Justice reform causes Trump's reelection – lets him appeal to black voters while maintaining his base – that flips battleground states

Thiessen 6/18 (Marc Thiessen, Columnist for the Washington Post, "Trump must reach out to black voters. His Tulsa Rally is the place to start," Washington Post, June 18, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/06/18/trump-must-reach-out-black-voters-his-tulsa-rally-is-place-start/>, WC)

President Trump will hold a rally this weekend in Tulsa, where he will bask in the adulation of his adoring base. His approval rating is the most stable in modern presidential history. **No president has ever had such a committed core of supporters.**

But Trump's Achilles' heel has been his seeming lack of interest in not just rallying his base but also **expanding it** by winning over skeptics who did not vote for him in 2016 yet have benefited from his policies. The recent crises facing our country have provided a **historic opportunity to sway these voters**, one that Trump has so far failed to seize. **It's not too late to do so** — and his Tulsa rally is the place to start.

After the Democrats' failed impeachment drive, Trump's approval rose to 49 percent in the Gallup poll — an all-time high for him. The poll also showed that 63 percent approved of his handling of the economy. That meant 14 percent approved of his policies but did not approve of him — yet. **If he could win even some of those voters over, he could not just win reelection but do so in a landslide.**

Then came an unprecedented trifecta of crises: the worst pandemic since 1918; the worst economic destruction since the Great Depression; and the worst social unrest since the 1960s. No president had ever faced such a sequence of devastation. With Joe Biden hiding in his basement, Trump has had the national stage all to himself — and a golden opportunity to win over persuadable voters with his leadership. But instead of rising in the polls, Trump's approval has slipped back down to the low 40s in most polls. Instead of gaining even more supporters, he lost his new converts.

Trump can still turn it around, but to do so he must recognize that he can tend his base and grow it at the same time. His voters are already highly motivated. A Post-ABC News poll from March found that among registered voters, 55 percent of Trump supporters are "very" enthusiastic about supporting him, compared with just 28 percent of Biden supporters — the lowest level of enthusiasm for a Democratic candidate in 20 years. This presents an opportunity for Trump.

Biden is especially vulnerable with African Americans. The Post reports that Biden is underperforming with black voters, just 79 percent of whom say they plan to vote for him compared with 88 percent who voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016. Young black voters are even less enthusiastic about Biden than their elders. Only 68 percent of African Americans aged 18 to 29 intend to vote for Biden — 17 points fewer than supported Clinton four years ago. Another 13 percent say they will vote for Trump, while 18 percent say they don't know.

In other words, 31 percent are not backing Biden right now. So, persuade them to support you, Mr. President. **It should not be hard for the president who delivered criminal justice reform, funding for opportunity zones and the lowest black unemployment rate in history.**

During his Tulsa rally, the president should appeal directly to black Americans. He should express his solidarity with George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, and **declare his determination to reform the police** and get rid of bad cops who mistreat our African American brothers and sisters. He should say that he stands with the peaceful protesters and that he will not be satisfied until the promise of equality is realized for every one of our citizens regardless of the color of their skin.

He should also tell the stories of the black Americans who were killed in the riots — like David Dorn, Chris Beaty and Italia Marie Kelly — and explain that defunding the police would hurt minority communities the most. When he touts the recent jobs numbers, he should also acknowledge that African American unemployment rose slightly — and promise that he will make it his mission to ensure that we return to the historic levels of black employment we enjoyed before the pandemic. That is a message that will resonate both with black voters and with independents who hunger for a message of unity.

The president feels that he already says these things, but the media does not report it. He is right. But that just means he needs to say it more. Everyone will be watching his Tulsa rally. He should use it as an opportunity to speak not only to his supporters in the hall, but also to the millions of Americans who have never been to a Trump rally and who did not vote him in 2016 — but who might just pull the lever for Trump in November if he appeals for their votes.

<INSERT 1NC IMPACT SCENARIO>

--- Uniqueness ---

UQ—Biden Win—Polls

Trump is losing now, but polling numbers and history show that he still can win

Hohmann 7/20 (James Hohmann, 7-20-2020, accessed on 7-23-2020, The Washington Post, "The Daily 202: Biden's lead is tighter than it seems", <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/07/20/daily-202-bidens-lead-is-tighter-than-it-seems/>)//Jam

The presidential campaign remains closer than top-line polling numbers suggest. Joe Biden leads President Trump by 15 points among registered voters, 55 percent to 40 percent, in a Washington Post-ABC News poll released Sunday, up from 10 points in May and two points in March. Among those who say they are certain to vote, the presumptive Democratic nominee's lead shrinks to 11 points. Among those who say they voted in 2016 and are certain to do so again in 2020, Biden's lead narrows to seven points. The Post-ABC poll, conducted July 12-15 among a random national sample of 1,006 adults, has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. The percentage of adults who back the president and say they are certain to vote stands at 81 percent, up from 78 percent in May. Among adults supporting Biden, 77 percent say they are certain to vote, up from 67 percent in May. Democrat Hillary Clinton won the national popular vote four years ago but lost in the electoral college because of narrow defeats across the industrial Midwestern states of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Operatives involved in the contest agree the race is tighter in these battlegrounds than nationally. Though Biden finds himself in an undeniably enviable position for a challenger, Clinton also led Trump in every national poll four summers ago.

Democratic nominees John Kerry and Michael Dukakis both led in polls conducted during the summers of 2004 and 1988, respectively, only to lose in the fall. Moreover, the advantages of incumbency are significant. It has been 28 years since a president lost his bid for a second term. The country remains deeply polarized. The political environment has proven volatile. What will happen 100-plus days from now is unpredictable. What if a Supreme Court vacancy unexpectedly opens? What if Biden flubs in the debates? What if he picks a running mate who struggles to withstand the spotlight of national scrutiny?

Our poll finds a lot of interest in the election: 86 percent of registered voters say they are certain to vote in November, higher at this point in any of the past three elections. But the novel coronavirus injects layers of uncertainty related to forecasting turnout, with open questions about how millions will cast their ballots and whether mail-in voting might deter some people from participating. The poll finds that 59 percent of Americans say they prefer to vote in person, compared to 38 percent who say they would rather vote by mail. "Trump has repeatedly attacked voting by mail as subject to fraud, and the new survey shows that slightly more Americans say they think mail-in voting is vulnerable to significant levels of fraud, with 49 percent agreeing with that statement compared with 43 percent who say there are adequate protections to prevent significant fraud."

Dan Balz and Scott Clement report. "But those percentages are driven by Trump's own party, with 73 percent of Republicans saying mail-in voting is subject to significant levels of fraud and 66 percent of Democrats saying there are adequate levels of protection against such problems." There are two other caution flags for Biden, who failed in his first two bids for the presidency. Despite the myriad of deeply reported blunders in the president's response to the cascade of crises enveloping the country, Trump and Biden are tied at 45 percent when respondents were asked who they think is the stronger leader. Trump still retains a narrow advantage on the economy, with 47 percent saying they trust him more and 45 percent saying they trust Biden more. That is down from an eight-point edge in March. Notably, Biden has a 20-point lead on who is more trusted to deal with the coronavirus, a 25-point advantage on race relations and a nine-point advantage on crime and public safety. Perhaps the best dynamic for Biden right now, though, is that voters across the ideological spectrum see this year's election mainly as a referendum on Trump's performance in office, whether they love or hate him. The president's overall job

approval rating has dropped to 39 percent, with 57 percent disapproving – and 48 percent of Americans strongly disapproving. The Biden campaign plans to step up outreach to disillusioned Republicans. The Associated Press reports that former Ohio governor John Kasich, a candidate for the GOP presidential nomination in 2016, is expected to speak at the Democratic National Convention on Biden's behalf next month. Trump has struggled to define his challenger, prompting him to change up his messaging and even his campaign team in recent weeks. Last Wednesday, he demoted campaign manager Brad Parscale to a digital-focused role and put Bill Stepien in charge. Trump has largely shifted from trying to cast the former vice president as "Sleepy Joe," with declining mental capacity, to portraying him as a far-left agent of chaos and destruction. White House senior adviser Stephen Miller has circulated dozens of bullet-pointed attacks on Biden that are at odds with reality and deeply ingrained public perceptions of Biden. "The author of many of Trump's most pugilistic public statements, Miller has raised concerns to other White House aides that the campaign's messaging has not been tough enough on Biden ... and a cadre of White House officials have begun working on campaign issues through their private email accounts and text message chains" Michael Scherer and Josh Dawsey report. "In the talking points he distributed, Biden's elevation to the White House was described as an event that would 'surrender America and its citizens to the violent left-wing mob,' 'import terrorists,' and 'allow left-wing fascists to destroy America.' ... (Biden launched his campaign with a video quoting the Declaration of Independence and has condemned the removal of statues that do not commemorate the Confederacy.)"

In a pre-taped interview for "Fox News Sunday," Trump claimed that Biden wants to defund the police. In fact, the Democratic candidate has said he disagrees with that idea and even proposed increasing funding to departments that meet certain standards. Trump promised to produce proof for his assertion, which the campaign also levels in attack ads. "The White House has never sent us evidence," anchor Chris Wallace said as he aired the interview, "because there is none."

UQ—Biden Win—AT Polls Are Innaccurate

2020 polls are predictive – they account for the over-sampling errors from 2016

Contreras 7/23 - staffwriter

(Brian Contreras JULY 23, 2020 Biden leads in the polls: Could they be missing something? <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-07-23/polling-took-hit-in-2016-now-facing-coronavirus>) IB

Beyond whatever uncertainty the pandemic adds, polls still have the hard job of estimating who is really going to vote. In hindsight, experts think a lot of the problems in 2016 involved state polls overrepresenting college graduates, who were disproportionately pro-Clinton. Charles Franklin, director of the Marquette Law School Poll in Wisconsin, said that the “vast majority” of pollsters now weight their results to make sure the share of college-educated voters in their polling sample matches the share in the population. But, said Kennedy, not all do.

2018 proves pollsters adjusted

Contreras 7/23 - staffwriter

(Brian Contreras JULY 23, 2020 Biden leads in the polls: Could they be missing something? <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-07-23/polling-took-hit-in-2016-now-facing-coronavirus>) IB

A final question that hovers over survey research is whether the errors of 2016 augured a permanent shift toward less accurate polling. In general, however, **pollsters remain cautiously optimistic.** In the 2018 midterms, polling proved highly accurate, Kennedy noted. **“My big takeaway from 2018 was that it demonstrated ... that fundamentally, polling is not broken,”** she said. Despite how things may have felt after 2016, “polls that are done carefully can still perform well.”

UQ—Biden Win—AT COVID Disrupts the Polling Data

COVID makes polls more accurate not less accurate – more people are home which creates a better sample and reflects mail-in balloting

Contreras 7/23 - staffwriter

(Brian Contreras JULY 23, 2020 Biden leads in the polls: Could they be missing something? <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-07-23/polling-took-hit-in-2016-now-facing-coronavirus>) IB

Ironically, the pandemic has also yielded benefits for polls. Marquette is seeing more people agree to participate in polls, Franklin said, attributing that to more people being at home when the phone rings. There's also indication that more men are responding than usual. And as pandemic conditions make mail-in ballots increasingly common, **polls might enjoy a bump in accuracy.** When the election nears, the fact that a higher-than-usual number of people already will have voted could reduce the risk that late-deciding voters swing the outcome.

UQ—Biden Win—AT October Surprise

No October Surprise – Early voting and mail in ballots mean people will vote before the surprise

Contreras 7/23 - staffwriter

(Brian Contreras JULY 23, 2020 Biden leads in the polls: Could they be missing something? <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-07-23/polling-took-hit-in-2016-now-facing-coronavirus>) IB

In 2016, late-deciding voters disproportionately broke to the right in key states. This time around, when “Trump is now a known commodity,” Kennedy said, there’s good reason to question whether another such a buzzer-beater pivot would occur. But **early voters could turn out to be consistently different from election-day voters.** “I don’t think we have good empirical tests about how much [early voting] matters, because we’ve never been in a situation like this, with such a big increase,” Franklin said. Pollsters will be watching “to see whether those who’ve already voted are in any ways different from those who have yet to make up their minds, or yet to vote in-person.”

UQ—Biden Win—AT UQ Overwhelms the Link—Landslide Key

Biden might be in the lead now but to get Trump out of office he will have to win by a landslide – if its close Trump will challenge the results

Freeland 7/17/20 (Johnathan, Guardian columnist, “Trump will cling to power to get him out Biden will have to win big,” The Guardian, 17 July 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jul/17/trump-biden-win-democrat-landslide>)

Of course, we learned four years ago that national polls don't matter – after all, Hillary Clinton led in those – and what really counts are the contests in the battleground states: the likes of Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan. Biden is handily ahead in all of those, too. Could those polls be wrong? One expert reckons Biden is so far in front that even if the polls are as wrong now as they were in 2016 he will still win.

More important, these numbers reflect something solid. Naturally, liberals have been appalled by Trump's behaviour since day one, but mere outrage and scandal have proved insufficient to sink his presidency. Now, though, he is associated with genuine catastrophe. More than 130,000 Americans are dead from coronavirus, with caseloads rising in 41 of 50 states. Trump's handling of this disaster has so obviously made it worse – whether playing down the threat, urging premature easing of lockdown or calling on Americans to inject themselves with bleach – that he has made the case for his own removal more powerfully than any rival. His one hope was a healthy economy, but that too now lies in ruins (though, troublingly, Trump still leads Biden by 12 points on economic competence). His racial dogwhistling is also costing him: surveys suggest that, outside his base, Americans recoil at Trump's widening of the country's most enduring divide. It means Trump's unpopularity is not ephemeral – the kind of thing that might be fixed by sacking a campaign manager, as the president did this week – but rather anchored in facts that will be hard to shift.

Given all that, surely the rational response is to look forward to Trump's imminent departure from office? To which the right answer is: not so fast. **To remove Trump, it will not be enough for Biden to win. He has to win big.**

By that, I don't mean that thanks to voter suppression – fewer polling places in majority-black neighbourhoods and the like – Democrats have to be several points ahead merely to draw level, though that is true. Nor do I mean that Biden can only overturn Trumpism by riding a wave so big that Democrats take back the Senate and therefore avoid being thwarted by Mitch McConnell for four gridlocked years, though that is also true. Or that Biden needs a wide enough margin to withstand the foreign hacking and disruption efforts in

Trump's favour that most monitors expect, having concluded that when Russian agents poked around voter registration databases in 2016, they were merely "casing the joint" for a more sustained offensive in 2020 – though that too is true.

No, what I have in mind is a threat more fundamental. **The danger is that Trump will lose – and refuse to go.**

He's already laid out his rationale. "Rigged 2020 election," he tweeted last month. "Millions of mail-in ballots will be printed by foreign countries, and others. It will be the scandal of our times!" Here's the scenario Trump is planning for. On the evening of 3 November, he loses the popular vote by a margin even greater than the 3 million votes by which Hillary beat him in 2016 – but the count of votes cast on the day puts him narrowly ahead in one or two key states. He promptly declares victory, claiming that the millions of votes that were cast as absentee ballots – by voters anxious to avoid polling stations because of Covid-19 – should be disqualified as fraudulent. He has a motive to do that, since mail-in votes often skew Democratic. And he has a precedent for it: in a tight senate race in Florida in 2018, Trump urged the state to stop counting the votes and go with the election night results, which favoured Republicans.

Let's say he makes that same move in the three midwestern battlegrounds in November. Republicans are in charge of the state legislatures in all three. Now here's where it gets nerdily arcane, but bear with me. Those Republican legislatures could refuse both to certify their state results and to send a slate of representatives to the electoral college, which has to meet by 14 December. Biden's lawyers would plead his case all the way to the supreme court, but that court likes to stay out of elections. It could plausibly instruct the electoral college to meet on 14 December, with or without the disputed states. If it meets without them, and neither Trump nor Biden can reach the 270 electoral college votes required to win, then the constitution throws the question to the House of Representatives. Democrats control that body, but here's the thing. Under the rules, the house would make its decision state-by-state, with one vote per state – so that tiny Republican Wyoming would have as much say as populous, Democratic California. By that count, Republican states would outvote Democratic ones by 26 to 24 – and Trump would remain president.

There are variations on that theme. Some imagine a standoff in which, say, Pennsylvania's Democratic governor certifies the state's vote for Biden, while the state's Republican assembly certifies it for Trump: the result is deadlock. Former senator Tim Wirth can picture Trump's pliant attorney general

ordering a bogus investigation, on grounds of national security, into foreign meddling, thereby giving Republicans an excuse not to ratify a Biden victory in their state. But it's just as easy to imagine a situation where, with next to no legal or technical justification, Trump simply stays put and refuses to leave – and Republicans stand by him. After all, they've tolerated his every other assault on the republic: why would they change now?

Granted, these are nightmare scenarios, but if these past four years have taught us anything, it's that nightmares can come true. **There's only one guaranteed defence against such a possibility, and that is for Biden to win a blowout victory.** Which is why efforts such as those by the Lincoln Project and Republican Voters Against Trump could be significant: they make it legitimate for conservatives, independents and, yes, lifelong Republicans to lend their vote to the Democratic candidate, just this once. It's also how Biden's weaknesses can become a strength: he is sufficiently inoffensive that millions of non-Democrats can back him, in a way they could not bring themselves to do for Hillary Clinton. It goes without saying that Democrats, whether of the left or centre, also have to turn out in colossal numbers, if not to elect Biden then to remove Trump.

Every vote will count this time because of the unique nature of this president. **Make no mistake, it will take a landslide to get Trump out.**

UQ—Biden Win—AT COVID Will Depress Voter Turnout

Polls are accurate – Even if COVID effects voting outcomes it will effect it across both parties

Contreras 7/23 - staffwriter

(Brian Contreras JULY 23, 2020 Biden leads in the polls: Could they be missing something? <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-07-23/polling-took-hit-in-2016-now-facing-coronavirus>) IB

This time around, Morris said, problems with polling accuracy could arise if the virus produces a systematic gap between the people whom pollsters believe to be likely voters and those who actually turn out. If a difference were to affect one party significantly more than the other — if Biden supporters disproportionately failed to vote because they were more worried about the virus, for example — polls that failed to take that into account would give inaccurate results. **Morris is skeptical that will happen.** “I think you kind of start to get into conspiracy-theory land if you’re going to say that the coronavirus is going to kill 30 million more Democrats than Republicans, or make them more afraid to vote,” he explained.

UQ—Biden Win—AT Economy Thumper

The economy wont be an issue by the election – it will bounce back

Nicholas 7/27 – staff writer at The Atlantic, where he covers the White House.

(Peter Nicholas 7/27/20 “Don’t Count Trump Out” <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/07/how-trump-could-win-reelection/612205/>) IB

1. The economy could come back just enough. Reckless though it was to reopen businesses while the virus raged, states that lifted stay-at-home restrictions gave the economy an unmistakable jolt. A record-setting total of 7.5 million jobs were added in May and June. The numbers might well cool off in the coming months, but Trump can spin what might turn out to be fleeting gains as a full-fledged recovery. “This looks like a very rapid rebound,” Gregory Daco, the chief economist at the consulting firm Oxford Economics, told me, referring to recent job numbers. “But we have to keep in mind that we’re still deep in the hole. We’ve only recouped about one-third of the jobs lost, and the second portion of the recovery phase is likely to be much slower.” To illustrate the point, Daco cited clothing sales, which dropped 90 percent from February to April. Since then, sales have nearly doubled, which may sound like reason to celebrate. But they’re still 70 percent below the peak, Daco told me. For Trump’s purposes, the broader context wouldn’t matter. He’d point to the progress and ignore the rest. And some may be inclined to believe him. Even as voters sour on Trump for other reasons, 50 percent still like the way he handles the economy, a new ABC News-Washington Post survey shows. “The president needs a glimmer of hope in the fall, and that will be enough on the economy,” a former senior White House official told me, speaking on the condition of anonymity in order to talk candidly about Trump’s reelection.

UQ—Biden Win—AT Covid Thumper

Covid and BLM are equally important but Trump can't turn the Covid situation around. The plan allows Trump to spin the CJR in his favor and increase his chances in the election.

Taylor, 7/3/20 (Chloe, News assistant at CSNBC, "Trump will 'pay a terrible price' in November's election over coronavirus and Black Lives Matter, professor predicts," CNBC, 3 July 2020, <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/07/03/trump-in-trouble-over-coronavirus-black-lives-matter-expert.html>)

President Donald Trump's response to the coronavirus crisis and widespread protests over racial injustice have landed him "in big trouble" ahead of November's election, according to one politics expert.

Speaking to CNBC's "Street Signs Europe" on Friday, Inderjeet Parmar, professor of International Politics at City University, said Trump had been given two political gifts — but had squandered both.

"The pandemic, deadly as it has turned out to be, was a chance for him to unite the country, to rise above the political factionalism, and effectively act as the president of the United States in a period of emergency," Parmar said.

"He didn't do it, and he's in big trouble because of that ... President Trump has made his bed, and I think in the end he's going to pay a terrible price, and that price is already being paid by a very large number of American people, both in terms of their health, and also in terms of the economy."

A spokesperson for the White House was not immediately available to comment when contacted by CNBC.

There have been more than 2.7 million confirmed cases of Covid-19 and 128,740 fatalities from the virus in the U.S., according to data compiled by Johns Hopkins University. The U.S. has recorded the highest number of infections and the most deaths due to the coronavirus in the world.

The nationwide protests sparked by the police killing of George Floyd had also seen Trump fail to offer "anything in regard to any kind of significant sympathy," Parmar added.

"I think what he's shown is when it comes to real emergencies, when you need real leadership, he actually doesn't have any of that kind of quality," he said. "He talks about the people but he doesn't appear to know the

people's interests lie in their economic wellbeing and their physical and personal safety.”

Parmar claimed that Trump's response to both crises would weigh heavily on his chances of reelection in November.

“Trump has done a great deal for candidate Biden, so Biden can almost sit in his armchair in his basement and reap the rewards of President Trump's total indifference to such a large set of problems in the United States,” he said.

Meanwhile, Parmar noted that Biden had been reaching out across the Democratic party and to opponents he had in the primaries.

“He is actually building bridges or moving a bit further to the left, and he's opened a space for the likes of Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren and Cortez and others, and I think their voices are going to be stronger in that administration,” he predicted.

Because of this, however, Parmar acknowledged that financial markets could well have something to worry about, as a Biden presidency was likely to lead to a greater focus on social programs.

“The broad neo-liberal market-oriented consensus has been shaken by the responses of government to the pandemic,” he told CNBC. “But I think the underlying philosophy of the market, I don't think that's been defeated, I think it's going to carry on. So I suspect a lot of people are still going to be very unhappy.”

CNBC's latest Change Research survey showed that Trump had slumped against Biden in polls, with support for Biden surging in several key battleground states.

Analysts at the Economist Intelligence Unit said in a report last month that while the presidential election would be closely fought, “the odds have now shifted firmly in Mr. Biden's favour.” The EIU cited several reasons for the shift in support, but **researchers emphasized the importance of how Trump had handled the Covid-19 outbreak and Black Lives Matter protests.**

In June, Eurasia Group's Jonathan Lieber told CNBC's “Street Signs Asia” that **Trump was “on the wrong side” of public opinion polls when it came to the Black Lives Matter movement, which was starting to**

seriously hurt the president's approval ratings in the run up to the elections.

UQ—Biden Win—AT Kanye

People wont vote for Kanye – they see the election as a referendum on Trump so votes for Kanye would effect both candidates equally

Fink 7/7 – staffwriter

(By Jenni Fink On 7/7/20 AT 2:01 PM EDT “If Kanye West Actually Runs for President, Will He Hurt Biden or Trump?” <https://www.newsweek.com/kanye-west-2020-campaign-president-white-house-slim-chances-electoral-college-1515954>) IB

Lara Brown, director of the Graduate School of Political Management at George Washington University, told Newsweek most people view the upcoming election as a referendum on President Donald Trump. The question at hand being: do you think Trump should have four more years or not? With those answering "no" casting their ballot for presumptive Democratic nominee Joe Biden in a head-to-head matchup. Most national polls currently place Biden ahead of Trump, but West would give them another choice and could siphon off support for Biden. However, many people might not be keen on voting for a third-party or independent candidate because they don't want to "waste their vote," Brown said. "I say that because when you look at 2016, most Americans believed Hillary Clinton would win the election so there was no cost to voting for a third party," Brown told Newsweek. At the time, some people voted for a third party to signal they weren't pleased with either of the candidates put forward by Democrats and Republicans, a "completely reasonable" justification, according to Brown. A similar reaction was a "big part" of Nader's support in 2000, Brown said. Four years later, Nader received less than one percent of the national vote because, Brown said, it was now a referendum on Bush. She predicted a similar outcome in November if West is a candidate. However, if he is able to get three or four percent of the vote, as Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson and the Green Party's Jill Stein did collectively in 2016, it's possible Trump could replicate his election victory. While West gives voters who aren't going to cast their ballot for Trump another option, it's possible he could hurt the president, as well. A YouGov/Huff Post poll taken in 2018 after West praised Trump found only 13 percent of Democrats had a favorable view of the rapper and 34 percent of Republicans did.

This is uniqueness for us – he will only siphon off non-establishment conservatives from Trump’s base who don’t approve of Trump’s stance on policing

Nguyen 7/23 – staffwriter

(Tina Nguyen 07/23/2020 08:30 AM EDT “Kanye quits Trump's reality show” <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/23/kanye-west-donald-trump-reality-show-379677>) IB

Kanye West’s quixotic presidential bid has been roundly dismissed as a publicity stunt. A caper.

Just Kanye being Kanye. But there’s no question it has already revealed something about American politics in 2020: The reality show President Donald Trump imported from the New York tabloids to the Oval Office is losing some of its stars. Just over 100 days from the November election, West, a one-time Trump supporter, is spinning up a whirlwind of attention with his own Trumpian display amid the conflagration of a life-altering pandemic and a historic resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement. He has questioned vaccines, demonized abortion, said Harriet Tubman “never actually freed the slaves,” proselytized for more religion in public life and proposed a radical albeit confusing restructuring of government. And for a certain brand of political wanderers – conservatives appalled by Trump’s authoritarian tendencies but turned off by Joe Biden’s decades in Washington, libertarians growing nihilistic about the state of the world – West’s display is working. To them, West is a postmodern outlet for their frustrations with society; one who won’t win, but is saying something at a national level that resonates. “I love the fact that he’s doing it, right?” said Zuby Udezue, a British musician, podcaster and artist with an influential conservative following in the U.S. – 300,000 followers on Twitter and frequently cited by libertarian and conservative figures like Joe Rogan, Tucker Carlson and Ann

Coulter. "I look at things like this on a more cultural level, and even a spiritual level to a degree, because I think that there's a lot of spiritual warfare going on," added Udezue, a fan of West's music since 2003, referring to West's religious evangelism. "And it might sound like mumbo jumbo to a lot of people who don't understand that language, but I think it's very real." West's political moment is interwoven with several factors. No one interviewed for this story, even those drawn to West, believes he poses a serious threat to Trump or Biden, the presumptive 2020 Democratic presidential nominee. They also expressed concern for West's ongoing mental health issues — West has said he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in 2017. West's wife, Kim Kardashian-West, issued a statement on Wednesday addressing the issue, calling West "brilliant but complicated" and asking the media for "compassion and empathy" during this period. She added: "Living with bipolar disorder does not diminish or invalidate his dreams and his creative ideas, no matter how big or unobtainable they may feel to some." Indeed, some of the ideas West has been promoting, his begrudging right-wing admirers say, ring true to them. "The independent minded nature of Kanye's messages, to the extent that you can discern his messages, is bound to attract libertarian support," said a conservative political operative with a decade of work in the Republican Party and libertarian-leaning views, although the person expressed skepticism about West as a candidate. "Libertarians are those who buck the status quo, are not interested in our two-party system and want new voices brought into the fold," the person added. "They're looking for political innovation, and some might argue that Kanye represents that." West's political confidants insist the musician's views are sincere, regardless of the stigma of mental illness. "Let 'Ye be 'Ye," said Ali Alexander, one of the few GOP operatives who both talks politics with West and has also met with Trump. West initially tweeted that he was running for president on July 4, generating the internet buzz and panoply of think pieces that only the rapper's intermittent bursts into the public spotlight can. West then filed a statement of candidacy with the Federal Election Commission, listing "BDY" — the Birthday Party — as his party affiliation. He later held a rally in South Carolina this past weekend but missed the state's deadline to submit paperwork to appear on the state's ballot. He did qualify to appear on the ballot in Oklahoma. No one can truly place West's scattershot political views in a comfortable place on the ideological spectrum, though West said recently that if Trump were not the GOP nominee, he would run as a Republican. West is pro-Black Lives Matter, but called assumptions that he should lean Democratic "a form of racism and white supremacy." He is pro-LGBTQ rights, but said Planned Parenthood was "placed inside cities by white supremacists to do the Devil's work." Hovering over all of it is his intense Christianity. West also offers effusive praise for China, a stance anathema to current Republican orthodoxy, and said Black History Month is "torture porn," a view that left many aghast. Over the past several days, West's own seriousness in his political endeavor has been thrown into doubt. His campaign apparatus is nonexistent, and he himself has said he doesn't want to put together a policy platform: "I don't know if I would use the word 'policy' for the way I would approach things." West's time in the political spotlight traces back to his 2005 declaration on live TV: "George Bush doesn't care about Black people." While the proclamation won him liberal praise at the time, West's reputation has been marked by his flirtation with Trumpism in 2018 and right-wing ideology. He started tweeting his approval of the president and of controversial conservative pundit Candace Owens, and made an appearance in the Oval Office, where he wore a MAGA hat as he spoke to a captive audience, Trump included, for a full, freewheeling hour. Trump himself seems unsure about West, previously thanking him after West claimed the two shared "dragon energy," then later dismissing a potential 2020 challenge from West. "If he did it, he would have to view this as a trial run for what's going to happen in four years," Trump told reporters earlier this month. West's views, the conservative operative said, are hardly going to siphon liberal support from Biden. But West's views are likely to attract some nonestablishment Trump fans who were once key in generating cultural chatter around the future president but have now soured on him. "He is just not respecting the rules of political correctness," the operative said. "[And] from what you can discern, there's strong themes of Christian messaging and bringing God back into our schools. And I don't think that all is gonna play well on the left." Take, for instance, West's controversial comments about famed abolitionist Harriet Tubman at his South Carolina event, which featured West giving an impromptu speech to a few hundred attendees. Udezue said liberals were decontextualizing West's conservative message, even as the remarks caused some people in the room to groan and walk out. "Actually, if you listen to the whole context, and what he's trying to say about the importance of family and property and passing on wealth to future generations, and valuing life and taking care of your children, all these things," Udezue said. "This is what people need to hear. These are actual values that lead to individuals and communities becoming successful. But people just get stuck on the stupid part." Kmele Foster, host of the libertarian-leaning podcast "The Fifth Column" and a professed West fan, said he could understand a conservative's attraction to West as a leader — increasingly religious and standing in opposition to the authoritarian Trump. Foster also emphasized that his first concern was for West's mental health. It's hard to imagine President Kanye dispatching federal law enforcement officers to go and try to quell the concern that is manifesting itself off in the streets of Portland," Foster said, referencing Trump's recent decision to send unmarked officers to Portland, Ore., where videos showed them detaining protesters in unmarked cars. "President Kanye flies in and he gets into the street himself in an appeal to people," Foster added. "He's giving a Kanye speech. And at a minimum, it mystifies everyone on all sides. But maybe it brings people together and calms the storm. And maybe he puts on a show? Who knows." In some ways, Foster said, Kanye's disavowal of any policy platform plays into "the libertarian conception of the

presidency is chief administrator. It's not supposed to be a guy who has a tremendous amount of unilateral authority. He's kind of constrained in important ways. And that's not how it is. But that's certainly the ideal." Ultimately, conservatives and libertarians acknowledge that the surreal concept of a President Yeezy is most likely a pipe dream. But in an already surreal world — where a pandemic has seized entire countries and devastated industries, political parties fight over wearing masks and Donald Trump is already president — it's a pipe dream that can almost, just almost, exist. "There are people right now, myself included, who are just politically homeless," said the operative. "And they're just interested in anything that's not this."

--- Link ---

L – Death Penalty

Momentum now is in favor of abolishing the death penalty

Death Penalty Information Center No Date (Death Penalty Information Center; No Date; "National Polls and Studies"; <https://deathpenaltyinfo.org/facts-and-research/public-opinion-polls/national-polls-and-studies>; Accessed: 6-30-2020 //GBS Rudolph)

2020 Gallup Values & Beliefs Poll—**Record-Low Percentage of Americans Now Find Death Penalty Morally Acceptable**. The May 2020 Gallup Values and Beliefs poll, released on June 23, 2020, found that the percentage of Americans who consider the death penalty to be morally acceptable has fallen to a record-low. According to Gallup, 54% of U.S. adults said the death penalty is morally acceptable, a six-percentage-point decline over the course of the last year and the lowest in the 20-year history of the poll. The results are 17 percentage points below the 71% of respondents who said in 2006 that the death penalty was morally acceptable. The percentage of Americans who said the death penalty is morally wrong reached a record high at 40%. Gallup also measured views on the moral acceptability of the death penalty by political ideology. 56% of those who self-identified as moderates and 37% of liberals said they consider the death penalty to be morally acceptable, both were the lowest recorded since the poll began in 2001. **67% of conservatives said the death penalty is morally acceptable**. Belief in the moral acceptability of capital punishment was down significantly among all ideological groups since its 21st century high point in 79% of conservatives, 68% of moderates, and 59% of liberals endorsed the moral acceptability of capital punishment. 2019 Gallup Poll—**A Record 60% of Americans Prefer Life Sentence to Capital Punishment**. A record high 60% percent of Americans now say life without possibility of parole is a “better penalty for murder” than the death penalty. 36% favored the death penalty. It was the first time since Gallup began asking the question in 1985 that a majority of Americans chose the life-sentencing option. The response reflected a 15-percentage-point shift in American’s views towards capital punishment in just five years, which Gallup Senior Editor Dr. Jeffrey Jones, who conducted the survey, called “a pretty dramatic shift in opinion.” In his analysis of the poll results, Jones wrote, “all key subgroups show increased preferences for life imprisonment[, including] increases of 19 points among Democrats, 16 points among independents, and 10 points among Republicans.” In 2014, the last time Gallup asked the question, 50% said the death penalty was the better approach to punishing murder, while 45% preferred life in prison. For the second straight year, 56% of respondents told Gallup they were “in favor of the death penalty for a person convicted of murder,” the second lowest level of support for the death penalty in 47 years. 42% of respondents said they opposed the death penalty, a record high since the Supreme Court declared existing death penalty statutes unconstitutional in 1972 and the highest overall since May 1966.

L—Courts

Trump weaponizes the courts to bring voters to the polls – liberal court policies give him leverage

Flegenheimer 20 – reporter covering national politics for the New York Times (Matt; “Trump Is Running on the Courts Again. Should Biden Do the Same?”; 6/29/20; <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/29/us/politics/supreme-court-trump-biden.html>; accessed 6/30/20) dmc

And four years after the battle over a court vacancy helped deliver Mr. Trump to the White House, the president hopes to keep his job by playing the hits: He has pledged to produce an **updated roster** of would-be justices to galvanize the right before November, warning that his Democratic opponent, Joseph R. **Biden** Jr., would nominate “a **radical lefty**” as a slate of major cases returns the judiciary to the political fore. “Based on decisions being rendered now, **this list is more important than ever before**,” Mr. Trump wrote on Twitter. “**VOTE 2020!**” That message arrived well before the court’s latest ruling to disappoint conservatives on Monday: a 5-4 decision striking down a law restricting abortions in Louisiana. By their own account, Democrats have long found themselves **outmaneuvered** in electoral fights over the courts. Exit polls from 2016 showed Mr. Trump winning by double digits among those who **called the Supreme Court the “most important factor” in their vote**. Most memorably, Mr. Trump made the novel choice to publish a list of prospective nominees, shaped by leaders from conservative groups like the Federalist Society, supplying specificity (at least on this subject) from a candidate prone to ideological shape-shifting. “It gave **certainty** to people who didn’t know the **president** — and I was one of them,” said Penny Nance, the chief executive of Concerned Women for America, a conservative Christian group. “It was probably the **No. 1 issue** when we looked at the polling of what brought conservatives to the voting booth in 2016. I think it will be a **top-of-mind issue**, certainly, in 2020.” Trailing in the polls amid overlapping national crises that he has strained to corral, Mr. Trump seems even more likely to place the **courts**, an area of unambiguous conservative triumph, at the **center of his case** for re-election.

L—Police Reform

Police reform is massively popular – its enough to generate support

McCaskill 2020 – national political reporter covering the 2020 presidential race.

(NOLAN D. MCCASKILL 07/14/2020 “Americans agree on police reforms that have divided Washington, new poll shows” <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/07/14/americans-agree-police-reforms-360659>) IB

Congress couldn't agree on a bipartisan set of police reforms, but Americans across the political spectrum can. New polling from the University of Maryland School of Public Policy shows a majority of voters support 10 key policies proposed by competing House and Senate bills that Congress failed to advance last month. With the 2020 election bearing down, lawmakers are not expected to revisit the issue this fall, but a strong national consensus could create a blueprint for congressional action in the years ahead. The in-depth national survey of more than 3,000 registered voters included a “policymaking simulation,” in which participants were briefed on the policy options before being asked to evaluate arguments for and against the proposals and make a final recommendation. The most popular proposals among those surveyed included requirements for all police officers to wear body cameras and activate them when responding to a call or interacting with a suspect. Respondents also expressed broad support for a requirement for officers to intervene when another officer is using excessive force, as well as the creation of a national database of police misconduct that all law enforcement agencies would submit information to. While both the House and Senate bills addressed many of the same issues, most of the proposals the survey asked about were drawn from the House-passed George Floyd Justice in Policing Act because, as the pollsters noted, the Senate's JUSTICE Act didn't make many of its measures mandatory. Senate Democrats blocked a vote on the Republican-backed legislation last month after declaring it was “not salvageable” and demanding bipartisan negotiations. Nearly 90 percent of respondents supported body cameras, including 85 percent of Republicans, 86 percent of independents and 94 percent of Democrats. Eighty-two percent of respondents supported the duty to intervene (71 percent of Republicans, 78 percent of independents and 94 percent of Democrats), and 81 percent favored a national registry of police misconduct (70 percent of Republicans, 77 percent of independents and 92 percent of Democrats). At least 8 in 10 Democrats supported every proposal surveyed, and a majority of Republicans backed six of them, including a ban on chokeholds and other neck restraints (55 percent), implicit racial bias training (53 percent) and a policy to hire an independent prosecutor to investigate or charge a law enforcement officer for using deadly force (52 percent). The remaining proposals, which at least 6 in 10 registered voters supported, are de-escalation and use of force as a last resort (69 percent); banning no-knock warrants (65 percent); requiring law enforcement agencies to get approval from local government before requesting military equipment (64 percent); and amending qualified immunity (63 percent). The survey of 3,226 registered voters was conducted online July 2-9. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points.

L—Police Reform

The plan decimates momentum for democrats – it will be spun as them accepting smaller, piecemeal reforms and gives Trump political coverage for pushing against previous bills

Illis 2020 – staffwriter

(BY MIKE LILLIS - 07/18/20 12:20 PM EDT “Democrats set to hold out for big police reform”
<https://thehill.com/homenews/house/507915-democrats-set-to-hold-out-for-big-police-reform>)
IB

A growing number of Democrats say they're ready to wait until next year to overhaul the criminal justice system. While party leaders had hoped to use a national outcry for racial justice to enact sweeping police reforms before November, their legislation has hit a wall in the Republican-controlled Senate, where GOP leaders are backing more narrow changes. The impasse has left Democrats with a choice: accept a piecemeal approach, featuring lesser reforms that both sides support; or kick the debate into 2021, when Democrats are hoping to win control of both the Senate and White House — and have much more power to dictate the terms of the bill. In the eyes of more and more Democrats, the decision is a no-brainer. "Rather than coming up with a piece of the police reform act ... we should really push this over until after the election and move something that is much more powerful," said Rep. Bobby Rush (D-Ill.). "We don't want to make a mockery of this moment," he added. "We don't want to see something passed into law that is weak, watered down and whitewashed."

Publicly, Democratic leaders insist there's still time to reach an elusive deal. And leading voices in the caucus have staged weekly press calls during the long July Fourth recess in an effort both to bring Republicans behind the stronger reforms — and to highlight their refusal to do so. "We're steadfast in not allowing the Senate to dissect the bill," said Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas). "It may be that we go into 2021, but I'm not prepared that say that that's our strategy." Yet, Rep. Karen Bass (D-Calif.), the head of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and lead sponsor of the Democrats' reform bill, said this week that she is not currently negotiating with Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.), who drafted the GOP proposal. And a number of rank-and-file Democrats said they see little sign of breaking the stalemate this year, particularly as Congress scrambles to contain the fast-spreading coronavirus crisis. "There is not enough time to fix it this year," said Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.). "There's an understanding well beyond me that you don't need to get everything done this year in the midst of a pandemic when you're not getting very much done anyway." That message belies the urgency of just a few weeks ago, when Democrats were hoping to seize the momentum generated by the massive protests that followed the killing of George Floyd, an unarmed African American man, in the custody of Minneapolis police on May 25. Caught on video, the tragedy prompted mass demonstrations in cities and towns nationwide; prompted a national reckoning with America's racist history; and triggered a swift shift in public opinion toward racial disparities in the criminal justice system. Tapping that energy, House Democrats moved quickly to pass the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act on June 25. Crafted by Bass and other CBC leaders, the legislation takes aggressive steps to rein in racial profiling and police brutality by banning police chokeholds; creating a national registry of police misconduct; and making it easier to prosecute and sue individual officers in cases of alleged abuse. "We are in a moment now that I believe has developed into a movement," Bass said Thursday in an interview with the National Press Club. Republicans have rejected the Democrats' approach, saying it goes too far to federalize state and local law enforcement. The Scott bill adopts a softer touch, providing new funding for race-based police studies and federal incentives for voluntary local reforms — but without the prohibitions and mandates of the Bass bill. Scott's office did not respond to a request for comment. Both sides, by digging in, have taken a political gamble. Republicans risk a backlash at the polls in November for resisting popular reform legislation. Democrats risk the loss of momentum if the nation's attention has turned to other issues by 2021, Democratic president or none. Yet Democrats rejected the idea that the public push for police reform would wane. And with polls showing former Vice President Joe Biden leading President Trump in key battleground states, many are predicting they'll have better luck waiting to return to police reform next year. Battle looms over Biden health care plan if Democrats win big Longest-serving Illinois governor, James Thompson, dies at 84 Rep. Dan Kildee (D-Mich.) said that, given the historic moment, it would be "harmful to the cause" if Democrats accepted a narrower version of their favored reforms. He compared Scott's bill to "a greeting card" in lieu of substantial changes. And Rush warned that passing portions of police reform now would backfire, acting to diminish the appetite to return to the issue next year. "If we settle for a little bit now," Rush said, "a little bit is all that we're going to get."

L—Defunding the Police

Defunding the police is massively popular when it is tied to shifting the funds to other social services

North 2020 – writer, editor and reporter who is currently a senior reporter at Vox specializing in covering gender-related issues

(By Anna North Jun 23, 2020 “Do Americans support defunding police? It depends how you ask the question.” <https://www.vox.com/2020/6/23/21299118/defunding-the-police-minneapolis-budget-george-floyd>) IB

It’s undeniable that the protests that have swept the country in the month since George Floyd’s killing at the hands of police have changed Americans’ attitudes. We know that 76 percent of Americans say racism is a big problem now, up from just 51 percent in 2015. We know that white Americans, in particular, are talking and reading about racism at an unprecedented level. But there’s been a debate as to how much Americans really support systemic change, especially when it comes to the police. In recent weeks, calls for defunding police departments have gotten more public attention. Specifics of those calls vary, but in general, defunding police means shifting money from policing toward other priorities like mental health care and housing assistance. The goal, for advocates, is to replace an institution with a long history of violence against Black Americans and other people of color with an array of solutions designed to meet all people’s needs and actually keep them safe. “We need to scrutinize our state and local budgets, educate ourselves about what police do versus what we need to be and feel safe, and realign the budget and our social programs to better serve our public safety needs,” Georgetown University law professor Christy Lopez told Vox’s Sean Illing. While calls to defund police forces have gotten a lot of coverage in recent weeks, they’ve also been met with skepticism and even confusion, with some wondering whether the American public — especially white Americans — will ever get on board with the idea. And polling up until now has shown that majorities of Americans oppose the idea of defunding the police. However, a new poll conducted by the research firm PerryUndem shows that when it comes to public opinion, the way people talk about police funding may matter. The poll, conducted among 1,115 adults from June 15 to 17, didn’t ask if people supported or opposed defunding police departments. But it did ask how they felt about redirecting some taxpayer funds to other agencies, so that they, instead of police, could respond to some emergencies. And respondents were receptive: For example, 72 percent of respondents said they supported reallocating some police funding to help mental health experts, rather than armed officers, respond to mental health emergencies. Some of the change may simply have to do with time — among white Americans in particular, there’s been a steep learning curve in recent weeks when it comes to police violence and proposals to eliminate it. Americans have watched as Minneapolis, Minnesota, where George Floyd was killed, announced plans to dismantle its police department, and other cities like Los Angeles announced funding cuts to police. The concept of defunding, as well as the language around it, has been debated in the New York Times, the Washington Post, and elsewhere. “People’s understanding is evolving literally every day,” Tresa Undem, a partner at PerryUndem, told Vox. But she said, “when there’s very little knowledge” about a concept, “that’s when question wording really has an effect on responses.” Defunding the police isn’t a new concept to the many activists who have been advocating for it for decades. But it is new to millions of Americans who have been inspired by the recent protests to pay more attention to systemic racism and police brutality. And the PerryUndem polling suggests that, although the idea of defunding the police has been seen as unpopular, some of its component ideas actually attract widespread support.

Framing matters – the public overwhelmingly supports defunding when it is tied to reallocation

North 2020 – writer, editor and reporter who is currently a senior reporter at Vox specializing in covering gender-related issues

(By Anna North Jun 23, 2020 “Do Americans support defunding police? It depends how you ask the question.” <https://www.vox.com/2020/6/23/21299118/defunding-the-police-minneapolis-budget-george-floyd>) IB

When it comes to support for police funding cuts, how you frame the issue matters Attitudes toward the police have shifted considerably in recent months, especially among white Americans. For example, in 2016, just 25 percent of white Americans said that the police were more likely to use excessive force on Black suspects. After this year’s protests began, that figure jumped to 49 percent. But there have been a lot of questions about how far those attitude changes go. Majorities of Americans support reforms like banning chokeholds, for example, but many activists say those reforms don’t go far enough, since many departments have already adopted them and violence continues. Instead, many organizers around the country — along with some elected officials — are calling for defunding the police, dismantling police departments, and exploring other ways to keep communities safe. The idea of defunding the police hasn’t gotten as much support in recent polls as other changes; for example, just 27 percent of Americans supported it in a HuffPost/YouGov poll conducted June 8-10. Even when pollsters have asked about cutting funding to police and redirecting it to social services, many Americans balk. In an ABC/Ipsos poll conducted June 10-11, 60 percent of Americans opposed shifting funding from police departments to mental health, housing, and education programs, while just 39 percent supported such a plan. But the PerryUdem researchers asked the question a little differently: “Right now,” their survey read, “taxpayer dollars for police departments go to all kinds of things police officers are responsible for — from writing up traffic accident reports for insurance companies to resolving disputes between neighbors to investigating murders.” Respondents were then asked if they supported having some of those taxpayer dollars — and the responsibility that goes along with them — directed elsewhere instead. Most said yes. In addition to the 72 percent who said they supported redirecting money from police departments to pay for mental health experts, 70 percent said they would support having taxpayer dollars reallocated to “pay for a health care professional to go to a medical emergency, instead of an armed police officer.” And 66 percent said they supported reallocating funds to “pay for a social worker to respond to a call about a homeless person who is loitering, instead of an armed police officer.” The poll also asked Americans if they would support an option short of full defunding, in which “police could focus on crimes like burglary and murder, and other service providers could focus on emergency calls about addiction, mental illness, and homelessness.” A full 61 percent of respondents supported this option, and just 16 percent opposed it (22 percent said they were unsure). The differences between the PerryUdem results and previous polling are especially striking among white respondents. Black Americans tend to support police defunding at higher rates than other groups — in the ABC poll, for example, 57 percent of Black respondents supported defunding, compared with just 26 percent of white respondents. But in the PerryUdem poll, a full 67 percent of white respondents supported redirecting funds to send a mental health professional to a mental health emergency, and 64 percent supported reallocating money to send a social worker to a call involving a homeless person (87 percent and 71 percent of Black respondents, respectively, supported these changes). Some of the differences between the PerryUdem poll and others likely have to do with language. The phrase “defunding the police” has been unpopular in many polls, and the concept of reallocating funding, while more popular, still hasn’t always gotten the support that PerryUdem saw. But when ABC/Ipsos asked about reallocation, the question was framed more generally, in terms of programs, and emphasized the loss to police: “Do you support or oppose

reducing the budget of the police department in your community, even if that means fewer police officers, if the money is shifted to programs related to mental health, housing, and education?” PerryUdem, by contrast, framed the question specifically around who would respond to certain emergencies. Udem believes this matters. “When something is brand new,” like public understanding of police defunding, she said, “the more descriptive the better.” The PerryUdem poll isn’t the only one in recent weeks to find support for shifting at least some police funding. A Reuters/Ipsos poll conducted June 9-10 found that among people who were familiar with proposals to move police funding into better officer training, anti-homelessness programs, mental health services, and other initiatives, 76 percent supported them. And in general, the debate around how to reform, change, or replace police departments in America is still being defined. In the Reuters/Ipsos poll, 51 percent of respondents said they were very or somewhat familiar with proposals to shift police funding — a majority, but a slim one, with lots of room for learning. Perhaps this is what is most telling about these polls: Many Americans, especially white people, seem to be open to learning and changing their beliefs. In the PerryUdem poll, for example, 52 percent of white respondents said they want to learn about how laws and systems in America may be racist. And 64 percent said they want to learn which police reforms have worked or not worked. And in the past month, they seem to have taken their quest for education seriously, at least by some measures. Books about anti-racism dominate bestseller lists (though some have pointed out the limits of reading alone), and protest organizers are reporting a large number of white people getting involved in demonstrations, many for the first time. All this suggests that while the phrase “defund the police” may poll poorly now, the PerryUdem data is a reminder that none of this is fixed. In fact, the country may be entering a rare period of open-mindedness on issues of racism and policing, in which people’s opinions and allegiances could be evolving — and they may be willing to think seriously about big changes they would have dismissed just a few weeks ago.

L—Young PoC

CJR is a win for trump – Biden either goes to far too the left, or loses key black voters

Loiaconi 6/17 (Stephen Loiaconi, “Biden faces pressure to support more aggressive policing reforms as protests continue,” Bakers Field Now, June 17, 2020, <https://bakersfieldnow.com/news/connect-to-congress/biden-faces-pressure-to-support-more-aggressive-policing-reforms-as-protests-continue>, WC)

WASHINGTON (Sinclair Broadcast Group) — As nationwide protests over the treatment of African Americans by law enforcement enter their fourth week, former Vice President Joe Biden is facing new pressure from the left to embrace a more **progressive approach** to policing reform to bolster enthusiasm for his candidacy among black voters.

More than 50 progressive groups signed a letter to Biden’s campaign last week calling on the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee to back more aggressive reforms. Experts say the activists are not wrong that the former vice president’s current strategy on policing is relatively modest, but liberal disappointment in his agenda might not matter much as long as the alternative is President Donald Trump.

“Progressives have nowhere else to go come November,” said Thomas Whalen, a political historian at Boston University. “Granted, they could stay home and sit out the election, but I think they are now politically savvy enough to know that that the reelection of Donald Trump would be far worse for their cause than Joe Biden going to the White House.”

The letter warned Biden the “return to normalcy” pitch that helped win him the Democratic nomination might not resonate with black voters who view “normalcy” as a status quo of violence and discrimination. It applauded some aspects of Biden’s policing reform proposal like a federal ban on chokeholds but concluded his approach is “far from sufficient.”

Instead, the groups urged Biden to adopt the platform of the Movement for Black Lives, which includes divestment from police departments, reparations for past harms against black communities, and economic justice. They also specifically questioned Biden’s commitment to invest \$300 million in the Community Oriented Policing Services, insisting that program has “directly contributed to the increased size and scope of policing in cities across the country.”

“We ask that you revise your platform to ensure that the federal government permanently ends and ceases any further appropriation of funding to local law enforcement in any form, whether it be money for trainings, equipment, hiring, re-hiring, overtime, etc.” the letter stated.

The activists argued Biden has a moral responsibility to respond to this moment, both as the presumptive Democratic nominee and as a lifelong legislator who advanced tough-on-crime policies in the past. Biden has acknowledged black voters may be skeptical of his role in passing the 1994 crime bill and recently said questions about his record are “legitimate.”

“As a Senator, you not only supported but in many cases authored and championed laws that expanded mass incarceration, increased police powers, and exacerbated racial disparities in

surveillance and sentencing. These laws broke apart Black communities and robbed many young Black people of a future,” the letter stated.

Progressive commentator Jason Nichols sees little reason for Biden to fear not forging an aggressive enough path on policing will cost him black votes, even if he agrees with activists that the former vice president's plan is too timid to make much substantive difference. He expects Biden will take enough symbolic steps—like meeting with black community leaders and possibly selecting an African American woman as his running mate—to appease black voters who are disgusted with Trump.

“If we’re looking at real change, what he’s proposing is just not enough,” Nichols said. “It’s really not going to make serious change. One of the problems with liberal politicians is that they want to do just enough not to offend anybody, and you never make change that way I think someone needs to tell Joe Biden sometimes it’s not just about being elected or being better than the other guy. It’s about making lasting change.”

Biden has so far resisted the push from the left to defund police departments, insisting law enforcement plays an important role in society even if significant changes are needed. Instead, he favors giving the Department of Justice more power to conduct oversight and force departments to improve their practices.

“While I do not believe federal dollars should go to police departments violating people’s rights or turning to violence as the first resort, I do not support defunding police,” Biden wrote in a USA Today op-ed last week. “The better answer is to give police departments the resources they need to implement meaningful reforms, and to condition other federal dollars on completing those reforms.”

That stance places Biden in line with most of the American public, but polls show a majority of black voters and Democrats support more extreme measures like cutting funding for law enforcement. An ABC News/Ipsos survey released last week found 64% of Americans oppose “defunding the police,” but 57% of black Americans and 55% of Democrats support it.

In recent weeks, Biden has explicitly recognized systemic racism and laid out a number of reforms intended to combat it. He has committed to establishing a national police oversight commission within 100 days of taking office, backed banning chokeholds, opposed the militarization of local police forces, and called for national use-of-force standards.

Although Biden’s vision for policing and criminal justice reform falls far short of what many progressive activists would like to see from a president, it is much closer than anything his opponent has endorsed. President Trump signed an executive order on policing Tuesday that would incentivize better practices by law enforcement agencies, but it does not mandate any changes and the president delivered an aggressive defense of police officers in the process.

“Americans want law and order. They demand law and order,” Trump said at the signing. “They may not say it, they may not be talking about it, but that's what they want. Some of them don't even know that's what they want, but that's what they want. And they understand that when you remove the police, you hurt those who have the least, the most.”

The Trump campaign promptly claimed the president “did more in 40 minutes than Joe Biden did in 40 years” to advance safe policing, but progressives and civil rights groups have largely dismissed the executive order as toothless.

“The executive order that President Trump signed today takes reform ideas currently under consideration by the House of Representatives and waters them down to make them virtually meaningless,” Ed Chung, vice president for Criminal Justice Reform at the Center for American Progress, said in a statement. “Police departments already have access to local, state, and federal funds to improve their policies and reform their culture, but those incentives have not resulted in meaningful change.”

According to Nichols, the executive order is unlikely to impress African Americans who are serious about reform, but he does not believe that was the goal. Like other Trump talking points on race, he views it as an attempt to mollify white voters troubled by other behavior they see as racist.

“He does that to make suburban white voters comfortable with him,” he said. “They’re uncomfortable with the idea of voting for someone who seems outwardly racist.”

While the Trump campaign has attempted to cast blame on Biden for a lack of significant reform in the past, it has also seized upon every opportunity to portray the former vice president as radically out-of-step with the American people on current reforms. Despite Biden’s stated opposition to “defunding the police,” Trump has run ads and issued numerous statements tying him to the movement.

Recent polls show Biden’s lead over President Trump is growing amid disappointment with Trump’s response to the coronavirus outbreak and the protest, but November’s election is still widely expected to be extremely close. Biden cannot afford to take black voters for granted—a concern he has publicly acknowledged—but alienating moderate white voters who oppose drastic reforms to public safety systems could cost him the presidency as well.

CJR is a win – it lets Trump reduce turnout for young people of color – they’re the key voting blocs in swing states

Schneider and Barron-Lopez 6/5 (ELENA SCHNEIDER and LAURA BARRÓN-LÓPEZ, “How young black voters could break Biden — and why Democrats are worried,” Politico, June 5, 2020, <https://www.politico.com/news/2020/06/05/black-voters-biden-301850>, WC)

In late January, Black Lives Matter commissioned eight focus groups of young black voters in swing states to drill down on a problem for Democrats since Barack Obama left office: why they weren’t excited to vote. One black man from Philadelphia told a pollster that his mother and grandfather had voted over the years, and “all of them got nothing. So why should I participate in the same process?”

The focus groups were conducted before unrest swept the country in response to the killing of George Floyd at the hands of police. It also preceded the outbreak of a pandemic that’s ravaged the country and an economic downturn that’s left more than 40 million unemployed.

At the center of all three crises are black Americans.

In response, Democrats have urged African Americans to channel their frustrations into voting. But for younger black voters, many of whom are protesting in dozens of American cities, **that requires trust in a system** that they believe has done little for them or their families. **Joe Biden is struggling to connect with young voters**, particularly those of color, according to public and private polling — a serious problem for the former vice president that started during the presidential primary.

This week's demonstrations are an **inflection point** for the Democratic Party that could engage these voters or further alienate them from the political process, according to more than a dozen Democratic pollsters, strategists, organizers and lawmakers. **The difference-maker for Democrats in November**, they said, isn't whether President Donald Trump will peel off a small proportion of black men as he's trying to do — but whether Biden can persuade young black voters in battleground states not to sit out the election.

"This is a moment where people are disillusioned in institutions," said Branden Snyder, executive director of Detroit Action, a grassroots organization that works to mobilize black and brown voters from economically marginalized communities. "I'm worried that a lot of our first-time voters, and a lot of them are young voters, are going ... to completely opt out of the system."

Cornell Belcher, a Democratic pollster who worked on Obama's campaigns, called the protests an "opportunity to reconnect and reengage this cynical and disillusioned segment of the electorate." But he warned that for Democrats, young black men "were the most problematic" for the party, since that group's participation dropped the most from 2012 to 2016.

"But there's also ample opportunity for Democrats to [screw] this up," Belcher added.

Democratic margins among African Americans dropped 3 percentage points from 2016 to 2018, according to data from Democratic data firm Catalist. The slip sparked some speculation among Democrats that Trump and the GOP might be gaining traction among nonwhite voters. But Catalist as well as several Democratic pollsters said the decline wasn't surprising because midterm electorates tend to tilt conservative, and maintained that support for Democrats among black voters has remained steady.

Biden will no doubt win a large majority of black voters, at least 9 in 10 of whom have voted for Democrats in recent elections. Democratic pollsters said the party should worry less about Trump winning over black men and more about those who are ambivalent about Biden and the party.

The must-win swing voters for Democrats, said Nse Ufot, executive director of New Georgia Project, "are people who swing between not voting and voting, not necessarily between parties." Ufot's group registers and mobilizes young black voters in Georgia, a state Democrats think they could make competitive.

Trump at times does emphasize issues of importance to black men, including with his Super Bowl ad on criminal justice reform and the economy, said Justin Myers, CEO of the progressive group For Our Future. But Myers called the president's outreach "lip service" aimed at "trying to suppress the vote" of black men.

Even as Trump's campaign tries to court black men, the president casts black people as outside his base and outside of his movement: "MAGA loves the black people," Trump said Saturday on his way to the SpaceX launch in Florida.

A Monmouth University poll released this week found that Biden won voters under 35 by 25 percentage points. But only a third of young voters viewed the presumptive nominee favorably, versus 59 percent who viewed him unfavorably. Trump's favorability among young voters is worse — two-thirds of them have a negative view of him. Wall Street Journal/NBC News polling has also found that Biden has less support among black men under 50 (70 percent) than among black women (92 percent).

"They don't want Trump to win, but the question is: Can you convince them that they want Biden to win? That difference — between not wanting Trump and wanting Biden — that's the difference we're seeking for turning out thousands of votes in states like Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin," said Josh Ulibarri, a Democratic pollster.

To win over young African Americans, Biden might need to acknowledge his past support for strict police tactics and a criminal justice system that's long discriminated against minorities, said black organizers and Democratic operatives in swing states.

Biden's record — including collaborating with segregationists in the Senate and sponsoring the 1994 federal crime bill — emerged as a stumbling block during the primaries. Bernie Sanders, not Biden, won swaths of young voters and "there are subsets of the younger population that ... continue to be a challenge" for Biden, said Ben Tulchin, who worked as Sanders' main pollster.

Young people who did not back Biden in the primary "are the same ones who are protesting in the streets right now, who hold his political record as responsible for the pain they are feeling right now," said Terrance Woodbury, a Democratic pollster who conducted the focus groups for Black Lives Matter earlier this year. "There is some atonement that needs to happen there."

L—Young PoC key

Young people of color key – they determine battleground states

Roarty 5/2 (ALEX ROARTY, McClatchy Washington Bureau, “Why Dems are worried these voters of color may drift to Trump,” Pittsburg Post-Gazette, May 2, 2020, <https://www.post-gazette.com/news/insight/2020/05/03/Why-Democrats-are-worried-about-these-voters-of-color-drifting-to-Trump-in-2020/stories/202005030037>, WC

An overlooked voting bloc is emerging as a potential problem for Democrats: young men of color.

Male African American and Latino voters — particularly those under age 35 — are showing a surprising openness to President Donald Trump’s re-election bid, according to interviews with leading Democratic and Republican strategists and a review of polling data.

Driven by a once-strong economy and a greater acceptance of the president’s behavior, their interest is significant enough to alarm Democrats that the overwhelming support they traditionally count on from this group could be diminished in November, **with potentially serious consequences in a tight election.**

Critically, many Democrats who have done research on this voter group say the concern runs deeper than young minorities simply not turning out in the upcoming election — an issue that plagued Hillary Clinton in 2016 — but casting their ballots for Mr. Trump.

“Democrats need to take this seriously,” said Michelle Mayorga, a New Mexico-based pollster who has conducted extensive focus groups with Latino voters. “Democrats can’t take the Hispanic vote for granted.”

Even Republicans who are optimistic about making inroads with these voters caution that a willingness to support Mr. Trump in the spring doesn’t necessarily mean they’ll vote for him in the fall, not after a long campaign in which a well-funded Democratic operation could persuade them to rejoin the party.

Republicans are also quick to concede that the coronavirus pandemic has unsettled everything about the 2020 election, including the attitudes of young voters of color, and that even in a best-case scenario for the GOP, the overall improvements they’d make with them would likely be measured in the low single-digits.

But even small gains can have big consequences in battleground states like Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, each of which has a sizable black electorate.

“You’ve seen, especially among men, that there are some demographic splits for President Trump that are more along gender lines than racial lines,” said Mike Shields, a former chief of staff to the Republican National Committee. “There is an opportunity for him to grow his vote.”

The data talks

The observations from strategists are matched by public polling data. A survey in April from the Pew Research Center found concentrations of undecided voters were highest among African Americans, Hispanics and young people. Data gathered last year by a handful of leading

Democratic polling firms found the margin of support for the party was nearly twice as high among young female Puerto Ricans as young male Puerto Ricans in Florida.

A new study from the Institute of Politics at Harvard University found that many young and male minorities belong to a group it called the “multicultural middle,” where approval of Mr. Trump ran far higher than most other young voters.

In the Harvard survey, Mr. Trump trailed likely Democratic challenger Joe Biden with “multicultural middle” voters 36% to 51%. By comparison, Mr. Trump won just 21% of all nonwhite voters in 2016, according to exit polls.

Black voters are key

Easy 6/16 (JONATHAN EASLEY, “Liberal groups press Biden to adopt progressive policies on police reform,” The Hill, June 16, 2020, <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/502943-liberal-groups-press-biden-to-adopt-progressive-policies-on-police-reform>, WC)

About 50 liberal groups have signed on to a letter warning presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe **Biden that he could lose the November election to President Trump if he doesn’t adopt more progressive policing policies.**

The letter, which is signed by leading national progressive groups, including the Working Families Party, Our Revolution and Black Voters Matter, urges Biden to adopt a 21-page policy proposal released by The Movement for Black Lives to promote reducing incarceration and scaling back police forces across the country.

The groups are also asking Biden to drop his recent proposal to add \$300 million in funding for the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, which would hire and train additional police officers to patrol within the communities where they live.

“We make these demands first and foremost because we seek justice for George Floyd and Breonna Taylor — as well as all the other Black lives lost — and policies like these are what justice looks like in practice,” the letter says.

“But we also make them with an eye toward the November election. ... **You cannot win the election without the enthusiastic support of Black voters, and how you act in this moment of crisis will play a big role in determining how Black voters — and all voters concerned with racial justice** — respond to your candidacy. A ‘return to normalcy’ will not suffice,” they wrote.

The progressive groups were scathing in their assessment of Biden’s record on criminal justice issues.

“In the course of your political career, you have designed and endorsed policies that have significantly exacerbated these problems,” the letter states.

“As a Senator, you not only supported, but in many cases authored and championed laws that expanded mass incarceration, increased police powers, and exacerbated racial disparities in surveillance and sentencing. These laws ... are a part of the history that has led us to this moment, and their ongoing fallout has contributed to the outpourings of grief and anger we are seeing today,” they wrote.

During the Democratic presidential primary, Biden's rivals attacked his past record and rhetoric on race in an effort to cast him as out of step with the times

L—Trump Will Take Credit

Trump will take credit for the plan to expand his support

Tanner 19 – senior fellow at the Cato Institute

(Michael D. Tanner, “Justice Reform: A Surprisingly Hot Topic”, CATO, May 29th 2019, <https://www.cato.org/publications/commentary/justice-reform-surprisingly-hot-topic>)

While we should expect the upcoming presidential campaign to focus on traditional issues of the economy, taxes, foreign policy, trade, and immigration — as well as the elephant in the room that is Donald Trump — criminal-justice reform has become a surprisingly hot topic on the campaign trail. At one point, every presidential candidate pretended he was running for sheriff. “Tough on crime” was considered the ultimate badge of honor — in both parties. Bill Clinton even rushed home during his campaign to execute a mentally disabled murderer. **Times have clearly changed.** This is in part due to the growing evidence of racial and class inequities within the criminal-justice system. Studies also show that failures within our criminal-justice system contribute to poverty and dependence. A recent YouGov poll conducted on behalf of the Cato Institute found that 22 percent of the unemployed and 23 percent of people on welfare had been unable to find a job because of a criminal record. Scholars at Villanova have concluded that mass incarceration increases the U.S. poverty rate by as much as 20 percent. It has also become clear that overcriminalization and mass incarceration have not necessarily made us safer. Support for criminal-justice reform now cuts across party lines. But there is also a large degree of politics behind the sudden importance of criminal-justice reform on the campaign trail. Most important, Democratic front runner Joe Biden is perceived as being vulnerable on the issue. Biden’s supported and partially wrote the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, which led to an increase in incarceration — especially among African Americans. He also supported and sponsored several pieces of legislation that enhanced sentencing for drug-related crimes, once again contributing to the mass incarceration of minorities. Even President Trump has taken the opportunity to tweak Biden on the issue, tweeting, “Anyone associated with the 1994 Crime Bill will not have a chance of being elected. In particular, African Americans will not be able [sic] to vote for you. I, on the other hand, was responsible for Criminal Justice Reform, which had tremendous support, and helped fix the bad 1994 Bill!” And in a second tweet, Trump noted that “Super Predator was the term associated with the 1994 Crime Bill that Sleepy Joe Biden was so heavily involved in passing. That was a dark period in American History, but has Sleepy Joe apologized? No!” Trump is not exactly the best messenger on this front, given his at least implied support for police abuses. But he is correct that he signed the FIRST STEP Act, the first important federal prison and criminal-justice reform in many years. As a policy, it was modest stuff, but it symbolically highlighted the changing politics of the issue. Biden is not the only one with vulnerabilities on criminal justice. During her time as a prosecutor, Kamala Harris vigorously enforced California’s three-strikes law, actively pursued drug users and sex workers, and even prosecuted the parents of truant children. She was also an outspoken supporter of asset forfeiture and the use of solitary confinement in prisons. She backed capital punishment and resisted calls to investigate some police shootings. So far, she has responded by apologizing for her past positions, now saying, “Too many black and brown Americans are locked up. From mass incarceration to cash bail to policing, our criminal-justice system needs drastic repair.” She has also sponsored the Equal Defense Act, which increases funding for public defenders. Still, criminal-justice activists have remained critical, complaining that she has ducked specific reform proposals. Other Democrats also have hurdles to overcome. Bernie Sanders, for instance, voted for the 1994 crime bill, although he had a much lower profile than Biden. And, like Harris, Senator Amy Klobuchar also has a background as a prosecutor. Her low poll standing has kept it from becoming an issue yet, but she may eventually face some tough questions about her actions in that office. Even South Bend mayor Pete Buttigieg has faced scrutiny over his handling of police-abuse complaints during his tenure as mayor. On the other hand, candidates such as Cory Booker, Elizabeth Warren, and Beto O’Rourke are better positioned on the issue. Booker, in particular, has championed justice reform. He has introduced the Next Step Act, which would expand upon the FIRST STEP Act. Booker is also calling for cutting minimum drug sentencing in half, legalizing marijuana, removing barriers to entry in the job market for those with felony records, and reinstating the right of felons to vote in federal elections. Beto pushed for criminal-justice reform during his Texas Senate campaign and has reiterated his support during his presidential campaign. During his Texas campaign, he stated that he would like Texas to lead the way on criminal-justice reform. He supports ending cash bail at the state level, making for-profit prisons illegal, ending mandatory-minimum sentencing for nonviolent drug offenses, and legalizing marijuana. Warren has been far less specific, mostly limiting herself to rhetoric about the “racist” criminal-justice system. For a candidate whose claim to fame is “I have a plan for that,” she is remarkably vague on this issue. Still, she carries far less past baggage than others, leaving her an opening. With more than two dozen candidates in the Democratic primary and a general election that is looking extremely close, even secondary issues could play an outsized role in deciding the outcome. Keep your eyes on criminal-justice reform.

L—Magnifier—Trump Campaigning

Trump will use his platform to continually call attention to the plan – he will spin it as a victory

Nicholas 7/27 – staff writer at The Atlantic, where he covers the White House.

(Peter Nicholas 7/27/20 “Don’t Count Trump Out” <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/07/how-trump-could-win-reelection/612205/>) IB

3. Trump can campaign all day long. If they choose, presidents can exploit the office for reelection purposes with brutal efficiency. They can push policies that matter most to prized constituencies, and fly to swing states for campaign stops masquerading as official visits. Trump can no longer hold rallies whenever and wherever he wants, but even during a pandemic, he can capitalize on his surroundings in ways that a challenger can’t. “Most presidents want to be reelected, and so they take full advantage of all those benefits of incumbency,” Barbara Perry, the presidential-studies director at the University of Virginia’s Miller Center, told me. A president’s sheer ubiquity is enough to reinforce his grip on the office. “For all of his foolishness and craziness, Trump is there. He’s there 24/7. That’s a huge advantage.” Aaron David Miller, the author of a book on the presidency called *The End of Greatness*, told me. Amid signs that he’s losing ground with seniors, Trump appeared in the Rose Garden in the spring to announce a plan that caps the amount of money they pay for insulin. Two minutes into his speech, he began belittling his opponent: “Sleepy Joe can’t do this, that I can tell you.” Toward the end, the White House aired a video showing a 68-year-old man with diabetes thanking Trump for cutting his expenses. Last week, Trump showed up in the Rose Garden again, ostensibly to talk about Hong Kong, but instead spent most of a free-associative hour lampooning Biden. A “Rose Garden” strategy used to mean that a sitting president would plant himself in the White House and devote himself to governing. Trump is more literal: He’s turned this historic outdoor space into a campaign stage. This week, Trump resurrected the daily coronavirus task-force briefings that he’d dropped a couple of months ago. They give him a captive national TV audience at a moment when he can’t easily hold his beloved rallies. Read: *The real point of Trump’s coronavirus press conferences* A former White House official told me that some aides were “dead set against” the briefings in the spring. “We were stunned that he was out there doing it,” this person told me. “We lost that battle. There were a group of us in the West Wing who said, ‘He needs to be the commander in chief. He doesn’t need to be the head of the coronavirus task force.’” But to Trump, the briefings are irresistible. “Suggesting the president go on TV is like pushing against an open door,” the former official said.

--- Impact – Mechanics ---

!—Turns Case—Structural Violence

Trump reelection cements racist, sexist, anti-queer policies and rulings – he will create lasting precedent thru supreme court appointments.

Cole 20 (David Cole, the national legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union, “Can Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Survive a Second Trump Term?” Washinton Monthly, Spring, 2020, <https://washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/april-may-june-2020/can-civil-rights-and-civil-liberties-survive-a-second-trump-term/>, WC)

Can civil rights and civil liberties withstand a second term of President Donald Trump? They have already taken a major hit. Playing to his base, Trump has unremittingly targeted the most vulnerable among us. His anti-immigrant measures began with the Muslim ban, which he recently expanded to bar immigrants from three more predominantly Muslim countries and three countries with large Muslim minorities. He has separated families, detained individuals who posed no threat to others or risk of flight, sought to deny asylum on grounds that were directly contrary to statute, and attempted to rescind protected status for the Dreamers.

On reproductive freedom, he promised to overturn Roe v. Wade, and has appointed judges with that goal in mind. He barred federally funded Title X family planning clinics from advising pregnant women about their rights to abortion, blocked undocumented teens in federal custody from accessing abortion, and gave a green light for employers to deny insurance coverage for contraception to their female employees.

He has sought to reverse nearly every advance that the LGBTQ community made under President Obama. He barred transgender individuals from serving in the military. He rescinded guidance requiring schools that receive federal funding to allow transgender students to use facilities that correspond to their gender identity. And his administration argued in the Supreme Court that a bakery had a First Amendment right to discriminate against a gay couple who sought to purchase a wedding cake, and that federal law does not bar employers from firing their workers for being gay or transgender.

He praised white supremacists in Charlottesville as “very fine people,” and referred to African countries as “shitholes.” His Justice Department sought to back off from consent decrees requiring police to treat their citizens with equal respect and dignity. And he reversed a rule requiring local governments to avoid housing plans that have a disparate impact on minority communities.

At the same time, he has appointed an unprecedented number of federal judges, most of them handpicked by the Federalist Society for their conservative ideological commitments.

You get the point.

But there’s hope. With the exception of his judicial appointments, **most of what Trump has done can be undone**. All of his initiatives targeting immigrants, restricting reproductive freedom, and countering racial and LGBTQ equality were accomplished through unilateral executive action. As a result, they can all be reversed through unilateral executive action. This doesn’t diminish the harms these actions have already inflicted on hundreds of thousands of people, but it does mean that the damage can be cut short. If he is defeated.

But if Trump manages to win, then what? The next president will almost certainly have the opportunity to appoint one or more Supreme Court justices. The Court is already more conservative than it has been in nearly a century. If Trump gets to replace a liberal justice and create a 6–3 conservative-liberal split, the number of 5–4 decisions splitting in a liberal way, already relatively rare, will likely be erased altogether. We would then need not one but two “swing” justices to swing in the progressive direction for the liberal view to prevail.

What might this mean? **Roe v. Wade could be overturned, affirmative action ended, and progress on LGBTQ rights ground to a halt.** The Court would be even more solidly pro-business, anti-labor, and anti-consumer than it currently is. And we would likely see a radical expansion of gun rights, property rights, and religious rights—including the right to invoke religion to discriminate against others. Criminal defendants and immigrants, who haven’t fared well in the Court for decades, would do even worse, and government officials would be given a green light to further strip them of meaningful constitutional protections.

The Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division would remain moribund for another four years, further enabling voter suppression and police abuse across the country. An AWOL Civil Rights Division would have political repercussions far beyond 2024. The 2020 census results will kick off nationwide redistricting, and without a vigilant Justice Department overseeing the process and intervening where appropriate, the Republicans will seek to build in ten-year advantages in the district maps they draw.

More generally, if Trump wins reelection he’s likely to believe that xenophobia worked, and that will then prompt him to try to implement even more virulent and aggressive measures against immigrants, especially those of color. Particularly if there is a terrorist attack that implicates ISIS or al-Qaeda, the Trump administration’s response will likely make George W. Bush’s brutal “war on terror” tactics look humane.

Framing—Extinction First

Extinction first – it's key to value to life and potential for future life – prereq to social progress

Cerutti 14 - Professor of Political Philosophy emeritus at the University of Florence and Adjunct Professor at the Scuola superiore Sant'Anna, Pisa. In the last fifteen years, Cerutti has been a Visiting Professor at Harvard, the Université de Paris 8, the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, the London School of Economics and Political Science, (China Foreign Affairs University), Beijing, and Stanford University in Florence. Beyond the publications quoted in this article, Cerutti has written widely on the political identity of the Europeans and the legitimacy of the European Union (last publication: *Debating Political Identity and Legitimacy in the European Union*, ed. with S. Lucarelli and V. Schmidt, Routledge: London 2011). Also, his MOOC 'Political Philosophy: An Introduction' is accessible on the platform <iversity.org>.

(Furio "Humankind's First Fundamental Right: Survival," Constellations)

This article's main thesis is that, **given the existence of at least two global threats**, nuclear weapons and climate change, **which endanger the life of humankind as a civilized species, its right to survive should be asserted as its first fundamental right.** The sense of **this assertion is not just philosophical but legal as well.** To substantiate this thesis, I shall go through six argumentative steps:^{¶1} 1. Why begin with global threats. ^{¶2} 2. Why survival is the leading category in this field, and ^{¶3} how it interplays with justice. ^{¶3} 3. What interest humankind has in its survival, and why ^{¶4} it should be protected as a right. ^{¶4} 4. Why regard "humankind" rather than "all individuals" as a possible actor. ^{¶5} 5. Why speak of a fundamental rather than human right, and how to constitutionalize this right. ^{¶6} 6. How two developments in international law after 1945 can contribute to support the argument I have ^{¶7} been sketching. ^{¶8} ¶¶ 1. If philosophical thinking starts with being amazed at something in the world (Plato's θαυμάζειν), my interest in the present matter² was first stimulated by the pre-philosophical amazement I always felt in seeing that in the now enormous human rights discourse (both in politics and academia) so much care is dedicated to the single individuals, and so wide-ranging designs of a cosmopolis to come are based on their rights. Yet **nobody seems to take note that the life of all present and future individuals could be annihilated** by a nuclear war or up-set by catastrophic developments of climate change. **It is like insisting on first debating the rights of a ship's third-class passengers instead of taking action in the light of the fact that the ship is already taking in seawater from a leak** (climate change is already happening) and also risks to hit a mine that is floating around and would send it along with all passengers and crew straight to the ocean depths (by thinking and acting timely, leaks can be filled, mines detected and swept away, all actions that would put the care for third-class passengers ^{¶8} on a firmer ground). **These dangers are philosophically significant because they tell something about human beings**, the only ones who have become able to destroy their own race, as well as about modernity: the possibility of self-destruction sets an end to this era, opens a new one, which can only vaguely be termed post-modern,⁴ and requires an updated rewriting of the *Dialectics of the Enlightenment*. It is also politically significant as it challenges present politics to restructure itself by extending its attention to the far future, something which is not possible within the boundaries of modern politics because of its narrow time structure.⁵ In a more precise language, I term **challenges like nuclear weapons and climate change** global (in a very specific sense) because they are lethal and planet-wide, **can hit approximately everybody on earth and they would destroy human civilization** (not a set of values, but the set of material and cultural tools (agriculture, communications, transportation and trade) that allow unspecialized animals like the humans to survive and to thrive. ^{¶9} It is clear that my thesis presupposes a revised scale of relevance among the issues requiring and stimulating theoretical investigations: in my philosophical view global threats have a greater relevance and are intellectually more challenging than the issues suggested by the media's headlines (present wars, terrorism, group and minority rights in the US, multiculturalism in Canada or Australia, immigrants in Europe, or, more recently, the crisis of the global economic system). As a reflection upon the deeper *longue durée* determinants of humanity's fate, political philosophy should not necessarily espouse the agenda suggested by current politics and journalism and, instead, seek its own independent assessment of the state of the world as part of its business; this is a critical attitude that cannot be implemented without a philosophical view on history (not to be confused with a revival of the "grand narratives"). Besides, **the shifting of Theory to pure normativity has favored the emergence not just of worldviews based on the predominance of Sollen, but also of an exclusive attention on intersubjectivity** and its troubles; **as if challenges to politics and civilization caused by systemic imperatives such as the nuclear threat and climate change were beyond the grasp of critical inquiry**. What I am attempting in this article is to address an issue such as human rights that is typical of **the self-centered normative approach** mentioned and to show how it **should be restructured to address the challenges for humankind's survival**. ^{¶10} In this attempt I am driven by the intent to debunk the layer of denial (or repression in psychoanalytical sense) that, more intensely after the end of the Cold War, has removed the nuclear threat from the philosophical reflection on modernity and has later prevented climate change from entering the main agenda of Critical Theory. There is also an epistemological aspect in this: a critical *Zeitdiagnose*, or an informed assessment of where history has taken us to in our post-modern times is not possible without first taking what hard science has to say about the threats for humankind very seriously.⁷ With rare exceptions, **critical theorists seem to be reluctant to address the philosophical issues raised by global challenges, not to mention their complete denial** beginning with Horkheimer and Adorno in the Fifties and Sixties (when Mutual Assured Destruction became a real possibility) **of the meaning of nuclear weapons. It is as if Critical Theory**, despite its claim to be a general assessment of our civilization, **had accepted a tacit division of labor in which its competence is restricted to social justice** (in continuation of its original being rooted in the Marxian critique of political economy) **and the "damaged" subjectivity**. The rest of the real world is left to a purely Hobbesian (and later Luhmannian) reading, or to the perception of side-figures such as Karl Jaspers or Günther Anders. ^{¶11} A last epistemological remark: **starting from problems and threats that, however socially generated, come up as physical events and are accounted for by hard science has the advantage that philosophy can work on them without**

first engaging in a complicate and doubt- ful theorizing about how the world should be reshaped

according to a general normative theory. This ad hoc theorizing shows the ability or inability of a philosoph- ical view to come to terms with problems that are of paramount importance to everybody, not just to the prac- titioners of

Schulphilosophie. ¶ 2. I have explained elsewhere why survival rather than justice is the leading category of a philosophy of global threats. **The now thriving literature on justice and climate**

change misses the point that before we look for ways to establish justice between generations, **we have to motivate our interest in** their

existence and wellbeing, or rather in the existence and wellbeing of humankind.10 While survival of humankind is what best defines our problematic situation, when it comes to the normative aspect I believe that **we should**

assume responsibility for future generations

rather than do justice to them; talking responsibility I move from its most elementary ¶ manifestation, the responsibility parents take on for their children. Justice as fairness comes in when we have to fight back "generational nepotism:" it is wrong for any generation to spoil the environment without regard to the consequences in the future, far that it may be, that is not just out of respect for those that may harm our children and children's children. Out of elementary fairness, as expressed in the Golden Rule, we cannot deny parents of the, say, twenty-fifth century the chance to bear and educate their children in decent conditions. ¶ Now, survival is a Hobbesian category, as such it sounds like an anathema to critical thinking, just as most categories stemming from the tradition of politi- cal realism do. Since under global threats present and future humankind is really endangered in its survival, it is however hard to see the rationale of denying the fact because the name comes from the enemy's vocabu- lary. More importantly, there is an essential difference: Hobbes' survival regards the individual and is there- fore self-centered and adversarial (in common parlance, mors tua vita mea), while humankind's survival as a moral and political goal is by its own definition an uni- versalistic feature. More on this later. ¶ A much talked-about issue in this context is the so- called identity problem, which I am however inclined to dismiss. If it means the doubtfulness of any engagement in favor of future generations because we do not know if they will exist (we could decide to stop procreating), the problem is surrounded by an air of futility: there is no imaginable decision process that could effectively lead to a total procreation stop. On the other hand, if only a few humans were alive in the far future, this would be enough of a reason for our engagement. Of course future humanity could never be born because meanwhile the planet may have been burnt out by an asteroid (natural precariousness of human life) or an all-out nuclear war (man-made precariousness). Neither type of precarious- ness can however be a reason not to endorse the interest of future generations in survival, because reducing that precariousness is exactly the engagement's telos. The other aspect of the identity problem — the non-identity of posterity's values and preferences with our own, or their indeterminacy — is not relevant to our case, be- cause the goal for whose attainment we are called to save or sacrifice something for their survival has to do with their sheer survival (in an indispensably civilized framework, as explained above) rather than with our own and the posterity's moral configuration; in other words, there is no paternalistic attitude in it. ¶ In a fairly different meaning, closer to social rather than moral (analytical) theory, identity comes up in an- other sense. Assuming responsibility for (or, for that matter, being fair to) future generations is not just an altruistic attitude. Not in the sense that we can do well so by acting on egoistic grounds: were this the ¶ main reason to take action, we were justified to limit our effort to the less costly adaptation policies instead of funding the restructuring of the economy necessary for mitigation, the only way-out from global warming for generations of the far future. To be true, addressing the limitation of global warming or the neutralization of nuclear weapons requires wide-ranging undertakings that can be justified only on grounds of a moral attitude towards future generations rather than of our enlight- ened self-interest. But **doing what we can for the survival of humankind can give ourselves reassurance**

that our individual life (also seen in the context of our gen- eration's) **is meaningful** beyond the limits of our own existence on earth, **because doing so helps us shed our isolation as single individuals or single generation and become partners in a wider transgenerational covenant of solidarity.** ¶ 3. That the interest to live and to raise children in de- cent conditions we attribute to future generations ought to be translated into a right is not self-

evident. It is not simply that we should abstain from transforming every reasonable claim into a right, and instead reserve this category for the essentials that make the associated life of individuals in the polity possible and acceptable ac- cording to each evolutionary stage.11 More importantly, doubts may also arise as to whether it is wise to translate any goal of social and political struggles into a right, that is to "juridify" it instead of focusing on the underlying conflict dynamics and the participation of the conflict- ing parties. In general I share this preoccupation, and have misgivings at any inflationary expansion of the hu- man rights catalogue. On the other hand, moral rights that do not translate into legal rights12 are politically pointless or at least much less significant than the rights enshrined in a legal order. Also, our case is different, and the issues we are confronted with are more radi- cal than the worries with "juridification": this is all the truer, since the establishment of a right to survival for humankind would require a long and fierce political and intellectual battle in the first place. ¶ First of all, does the right of humanity to survival qualify as a (basic or human) right? Before we proceed, let us note that humankind's survival is not a good like civil liberties, which is completely at the disposal of human beings; instead, it can depend on the orbits of asteroids and other NEOs.13 The "right of humankind to survival" should therefore be read as a short for "the right of humankind, including future people, to have all previous generations doing their best to ensure their sur- vival and protect them from man-made threats." In this version, we are clearly afar from the confusion between rights and goals criticized by Dworkin14 (§3.1 in the chapter on Difficult cases), the causation of the good at stake (survival) being elusive, or not completely nor (in the case of climate change) undoubtedly human; also ¶ the content of the right is not a physical state, but rather the behavior influencing it. In a manifest way, this also identifies the right's indispensable correlate, that is the duty of the relevant actors (individuals and institutions) to refrain from behaviors that are likely to cause harm to that good. ¶ Whether or not this claim can translate into a right should be investigated from two points of view, those of its structure (a) and its bearer (b). ¶ a. As for structure, three of Feinberg's15 four crite- ria for being a right are already met (to have a content, a holder and an addressee). The fourth, the 'source of validation,' gradually emerges from the argument I am unfolding. Frydman and Haascher also list four condi- tions, of which three are already present (titulature, object, opposability) — even if more remains to be said about the first one; while the fourth condition (sanction) shall be discussed below in the framework of the constitu- tionalization problem.16 Finally, let us look at the stan- dard distinction of negative and positive rights, which Shue rightly believes to be substantially untenable. This is also true in our case, because the "behavior" of in- dividuals and institutions, which humanity is entitled to expect, according to the new right, can be imple- mented either by abstaining in single cases from using or possessing nuclear weapons and emitting excessive GHGs or by establishing new institutions (a global En- vironmental Protection Agency, say) and strategies (for example, technology transfer from advanced to develop- ing countries to help the latter rein in global warming). What would be acknowledged would be the right, not the policies that according to time and circumstances are devised for its realization. ¶ Does this new right share with the other fundamental or human rights the need to be founded in a conception of the human, such as those focused by Donnelly on dignity, by Meyers on moral agency and by Frydman and Haascher on autonomy?17 Not properly, or not di- rectly. Humanity's right to survival is a meta-right rather than being the first right and sharing the same founda- tion with the others.18 Therefore, its foundation is for- mal rather than rooted in a substantive view of what is human: **acknowledging this right**

is the pre-condition for making all other rights possible

It is their Bedingung der Möglichkeit, to put it as Kant might have done. Not only in the trivial but sturdy

physical sense that **human rights can only apply to a living humankind, but not to a "republic of insects and**

grass" (Jonathan Schell on the state of the earth after a large nuclear war19). **The meta-right as a pre-condition has** rather **to be un- derstood in**

the moral sense: no foundation of morality or legality (except in a totally positivistic view of the latter) **makes sense if it cannot rely**

on the respect of the fundamental rights of those (poor populations al- ready affected by global warming, future generations ¶ as victims of nuclear war or extreme climate

change) **harmed by our acts and omissions**. Here I mean moral- ity at large, regardless of its being based on a conception of the right or the good. In other words, the two **global**

challenges, which have received so little attention in the mainstream philosophy of the last

decades, have indeed philosophical implications capable of undermining the business-as- **usual attitude**

in moral and political theory.

; I mean the attitude to think of the foundations of moral- ity and polity as if the man-made (modern) world in which they operate had not been substantially altered by humankind's

newly achieved capability to destroy itself and/or the planet. ¶ Let us make a further step on the road that leads to uncouple, as far as it goes, the foundation of a new right of paramount importance from a substantive conception of the human — an effort aimed at protecting it from the uncertain or frail fate of such conceptions. On the one hand, as a meta-right to individual-only human rights, the right to survival does not imply a choice among substantive values; this right does not refer to a partic- ular conception of what is good for future generations, as it only wants to ensure for them their existential condi- tions that are an indispensable basis for their members to pursue whatever idea of the good, of liberty and self- realization they may choose. On the other hand, survival is indeed referred not to the mere biological fact, but to the survival of humankind in decent, civilized condi- tions, taking civilization in the meaning explained in §1. Alone, as I explained above, this qualification is not an added axiological component (civilization as a sys- tem of values), as it rather relies on the analytical view that some technical and cultural features of civilization are essential to the life of human species. ¶ There is a last aspect to be examined with regard to the structure or nature of this right: its emergence not from a shift in the doctrine of human rights, but as a response to a new situation in world history, in which survival goods (a livable atmosphere in the first place) that were so far tacitly taken for granted turn out to be no longer guaranteed, but more and more endangered. As such, this new right reconnects to what we know about individual human rights, that is that they come up as a response to "perceived threats" and build an "evolving whole".20 ¶ b. Let us now come to the question of the right's bearer: it is humankind, defined as the generality of the living individuals along with those who will be born. There are three possible objections to this proposition. ¶ First, it seems to be self-evident that the notion of a human right for the so defined humankind cannot be subject to the classical liberal objection that bearers of such rights are individuals, not groups.21 Humankind is not an exclusive and self-contained group opposed to others (at least until we do not have our first contact with ¶ dwellers of other regions of the universe), nor is it meant here to represent particular sets of values. Between the two meanings of "humanity" — as species (Arbegriff) and as regulative notion of a community cemented by shared values and goals (Zielbegriff)22 — I am referring to the first one; it is now becoming philosophically sig- nificant because not even its biological existence can be taken for granted under man-made threats. Humankind is not a hypostasis detached from the individuals, as in the case of 'the community' or 'das Volk', as it rather means the totality of the living individuals of any given generation including (a) their potential to generate fur- ther human beings and generations and (b) their knowl- edge that the latter will exist and probably suffer. This reflexive notion of humankind raises a problem, but remains open to different ethical choices: indifference towards future generations, responsibility for them, and obligations assumed in their favor. ¶ 4. A second question is: why should we speak of humankind instead of limiting ourselves to the more sober expression "all present and future individuals"? There is first a lexicological advantage, in as much as we thus use one word instead of connecting two by an "and." This better conveys the sense that the bond of solidarity based on the responsibility for the elementary living conditions of posterity makes present and future individuals one community — in this sole, thin sense in- deed, which does not try to conceal the deep fractures existing between contemporaries within the present and the successive generations of this community. The very inclusion of future people into humankind is not an act of inclusive kindness towards them, but is rather made compelling by the lethal threats that past and present people have projected into the life of posterity, in an amount unprecedented in history. Lastly, introducing humankind as a bearer of rights highlights that the right of the individuals to be alive and free can be enjoyed only in the middle of a larger community, which makes the claim of human rights possible and helps to im- plement them. In times of economic globalization and global threats, we have come to know that this com- munity is the whole humankind, not just nations. All this however does not alter the truth that who is entitled to vindicate the right to survival is not humanity as a hypostasis, but every individual either living or not yet born — very much like what happens with individual human rights, whose constitutional formulation makes them enjoyable for every citizen who will in the future be born under the same Constitution. ¶ Third comes the standard objection: it does not make sense to endorse obligation towards future people, since, if men and women agree to stop reproduction, those people might never be born. I have already dismissed this as a futile mental experiment. It could further be argued, though, that future generations might turn out ¶ to have moral standards totally different from ours. Yet, the possibility that posterity will be not amenable to our moral world is not huge enough to release us from any responsibility towards them. We can still under- stand, and to an extent share, the moral problems raised by the Bible or the Greek classical tragedy of millen- nia ago and should not easily assume that our fellow humans of the year 3000, dwellers of a planet spoiled by global warming, will be morally so hugely different from us. ¶ Finally, let me anticipate here one of the legal con- siderations that will be developed later on. Any right- establishing text (but I am now referring to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UDHR 1948) works with the basic formula "everyone has the right to etc."23 The validity of the claims is limited only by the spatial ex- tension of the law: a right established by the French Constitution may be thought to be valid universally, but is legally protected only on French territory, while the rights mentioned in the UDHR apply by definition to the entire world where humans live. This can be dubbed spa- tial universalism, while establishing a right of present and future humanity to survive is tantamount to adding a time universalism. In other words, this makes explicit that the right of everyone to a just international order (UDHR 1948, Art. 28; more below) also holds for the 'everyones' of the year 3000. This may have always been tacitly intended by the law, the only time limit ly- ing in the possibility that the law is at some point in the future dismissed by another law canceling or expand- ing those rights. In a present like ours, in which it has become known that the future is no longer guaranteed to be essentially homogeneous (with no radical change in the physical and anthropological life conditions) to the present and the past, it has become necessary to openly establish a linkage between our obligations and the rights of future generations, as far as existential issues are concerned; a link that will likewise apply to them as soon as they become the present generation. ¶ So far, I have clarified the moral and, to a lesser extent, legal reasons for introducing the notion of hu- mankind as right bearer. I will now stress, as far as the hu- mankind discourse in this article remains political rather than moral. ¶ It is not necessary here to rerun the history of the humankind/humanity notion; it is enough to remember that its denial has been a stronghold in the battle of value nihilists (Nietzsche) and realist thinkers (Oswald Spen- gler, who dismissed it as a "zoological notion," and more extensively Carl Schmitt in Schmitt 1976,

particularly §6). As self-contained units (such as the Westphalian system states) were deemed to be the only sustainable and legitimate polities, any reference to humanity was seen as toothless or manipulative, as a noble universalistic alibi for particularistic interests.²⁴ Setting aside this sort of criticism, which mistakes the ideological use of the term for its very substance, we know that humanity, as a good-will aspiration of philosophers, poets and religious men, could not be regarded as a political notion because only non-voluntaristic communities can be regarded as political. They alone allow for binding and effective decisions, whereas any partner can at any time and according to its convenience withdraw from membership in "humanity" or other large associations based on just good will.[¶] This can now be expected to change, because **planetary lethal threats such as nuclear war or disastrous climate**

change have the potential strength to forge all relevant political actors into one community^{not}

unlike Hobbes' individuals, **who received the push to unite from the threats to their life and limbs**^{first} **because**

they are all put in danger, and^{second} **because they have to act jointly**^{if they really want to fight back those dangers.} **This is a**

possibility, not an^{actual and} **inevitable process**^{as there are enough counter-forces that impede those 'Hobbesian' threats to fully make hu-mankind one political community: fear, the protecting}

passion, does no longer work as smoothly as in Hobbes' model of Leviathan.²⁵ Nor is the potential contained in global challenges supposed to generate a world state as its only outcome: practicing survival policies, whoever the actors may be, is more important than a uni-fed state-like structure in charge of doing so. Nonetheless **all this is enough to use 'humankind' in a political sense**^{as something that is a potential}

constituency rather than a fragmented multiplicity of individuals and states.[¶] 5. Why a fundamental rather than a human right? The distinction between human and fundamental is not univocally worked out in the literature.²⁶ In the vocabulary I am using here, human rights are seen as a philosophical concept and a moral (deontological) precept, while fundamental rights are those positively acknowledged in a legal order, entrusted to political and institutional processes for their implementation, and claimable in courts – this last feature being more problematic. Putting on humankind's survival the label of a fundamental right avoids leaving it in a philosophical limbo as a regulative idea,²⁷ and gives it a better defined political and legal nature; this is more adequate to the characteristic of survival as something endangered by political decisions (or the lack thereof) and requesting a political solution by a given deadline (the next few years if we want to try to keep the temperature increase expected by 2100 under two degrees).[¶] If humankind's survival is acknowledged as a fundamental right, it follows that it should be constitutionalized, that is inserted in new and old (and aptly modified) Constitutions as well as in a new version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; as such, it could be referred to as highest guidance in international treaties aimed at implementing it – rather than being enshrined in a specific 'survival' treaty. In constitutional law, a development in this sense is already taking place, in as much as either the rights of future generations to a safe environment or our responsibility towards them in this regard or the imperative to preserve the environment (without mention of the future generations, but implicitly to their benefit) have been affirmed in constitutional amendments of the last two decades in countries such as Germany, France, Switzerland, but also Burkina Faso and Burundi. Having rights or being protected by the legally defined responsibility of the previous generations is however not the same thing, and with regard to humankind's survival I would point at its stronger formulation as a right: it is more binding, while the objections against ending future generations with rights can be easily argued against. Just because it is conceived in favor of those who cannot yet uphold their interest, this right should be protected against cancellation by a sort of Ewigkeitsklausel as in Art. 79.3 of the German Grundgesetz.²⁸ A right to survival is more specific and more stringent than the right to a safe environment because it derives from lethal and global challenges that affect the very core of the polity, protection, rather than from a generic care for a balanced relationship to nature or from a diffuse feeling of benevolence for the posterity.[¶] In national or regional Constitutions, the acknowledgment of this right could be accompanied by the establishment of corresponding institutions, promoting the implementation of the new right; it could be for example an ombudsman²⁹ for future generation as a (countermajoritarian)³⁰ authority protecting their interests against damages resulting from new legislation, and endowed with the power to send it back to the legislative rather than to veto it straight away.³¹ Not to be underestimated are the difficulties that would arise in striking a very delicate balance on two levels: in general between the interests of present and future generations,³² but also between parliaments or executives, which act under the pressure of their constituencies, and the members of the ombudsman authority, who remain nonetheless contemporaries of the former rather than being appointed by the latter – for all too natural reasons.[¶] The same difficulty would affect the national courts in which the new fundamental right, as jus cogens principle, should be made claimable at the initiative of institutions such as the ombudsman or of advocacy groups representing a significant number of citizens in a referendum-like counting procedure. In international courts,³³ the interest of future generations should be represented by an ombudsman to be established at the UN as well as at regional associations of states such as the EU or Mercosur. A point however that remains open to further discussion has been raised in the debate on socio-economic or solidarity rights, which may have some affinity with the right to survival: theoretically, Frank Michelman has made clear that the status of a norm as constitutional law ought not to be conflated with the question of its availability for judicial enforcement.³⁴ In practice, conflicts are easily possible between the courts sentencing on the states' failure to implement those rights and "the vain or overbearing nature of these sentences" on a matter that is political rather than judicial.³⁵ This is true in our case as well: the attainment of a new international order without national possession of nuclear arms or a carbon-free reordering of the world economy are goals for policy-making, not something that can be attained in courts. In this framework, however, courts are not jobless: sentencing the nuclear-armed states for their failure in implementing art.VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT),³⁶ or the US of the Bush years for withdrawing from the Kyoto Protocol and failing to cut emissions is a typical judicial matter, as the two cases would regard the break of treaty obligations or the failure to cease doing something harmful, not to bring about something good.³⁷ ¶ Finally, two more fundamental objections could be raised against the idea of a legal protection of the interest of future generations. It could be argued that what would be represented (in a time-universalistic mode) is not the interest of future generations, but rather the interest of a particular fraction of the present ones, disguising itself as standard bearer of those people to come. On the one hand this should be taken into account as critical point of view in the public debate on those interests. On the other hand, this criticism, strictly speaking, would also delegitimize such an ancient principle of Roman and Western law as the protection of the child. In morality it would affirm a radical skepticism that denies the possibility of slipping into another person's clothes and acting from a non-egoistic stance. This can be obviously upheld, but at the price of the disappearance of morality as well as of the polity, which is – in any case and among other things – a solidaristic association.[¶] A second problem, which is more difficult to deal with, is that we do not know as a general piece of knowledge what the interest of future generations is; whereas in the case of legal protection of the child we share a generally accepted knowledge of his or her future interest (to remain healthy, to get sufficient education, to be free to make the best of him/herself). What the real life conditions and the presumable vital interests of future generations will be can only be tentatively argued from what the several branches of natural and economic (e.g. demography) science are able to tell us about what is likely to remain constant in physical and cultural anthropology and what is likely to be most endangered.[¶] As such, it is important that moral and political theory renew their relationship to the natural sciences after a time of reciprocal disdain between the two. While science cannot by itself draw an encompassing picture of future life under global threats, philosophy should learn from science what those future problems are likely to be and elaborate on them, instead of reflecting on the future of humanity by just moving from the doctrines of past philosophers or relying on the hearsay about it based on media reports or the philosopher's personal divinations.[¶] 6. My philosophical proposal to fill a hole in human rights discourse and legislation by introducing a first or meta-fundamental right of humankind to survival and positivizing it in national, international and world law³⁸ resonates with two legal developments. The first related to 'humanity', the second to 'human rights'. The latter resonates with the novelties in constitutional law mentioned in §5.[¶] The first one began in 1970 as the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 2749, the Declaration of Principles Governing the Seabed and Ocean Floor, containing the notion of a "common heritage of mankind"; it was originally introduced to protect the seabed and ocean floor and later the "moon and other celestial bodies" from exploitation by powerful countries against the interest of the developing ones.³⁹ In the 1990s, the competing and "thinner" concept of "common concern of mankind" emerged, as in the Convention on Biodiversity of 1992; nonetheless it can be said that humankind has become a notion contained in binding international law and referred to indivisible (climate) and divisible (seabed, ocean floor, moon) objects, and that this has happened as an answer to problems and chances generated by huge technological advancement.[¶] In another corner of legal development, it could be argued that the logical structure, so to speak the normative algorithm of the UDHR norms – the aforementioned "everyone has the right . . ." – implies that humankind, not just single individuals, is to be the bearer of those rights, even if the collective singular is not used. Turning to a more substantive level, we could go as far as to say that the legal protection of humankind's survival was implicitly enshrined as early as 1948 in the UDHR and later in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), both of 1966. Art. 28 UDHR ("everyone has the right to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized") could be rethought in the direction of institutions bound to implement for everyone, now and in the future, the right to life (Art.3 UDHR, Art. 6 ICCPR), the right to an adequate standard of living incl. adequate food (Art.11 ICESCR)⁴⁰ as well as[¶] the right of the family to be protected (Art.10 ICESCR), a right that would be denied to families of the posterity bound to live under

insufferable environmental conditions (cf. above the notion of a transgenerational chain of parents). While the different binding strength of the several **legal formulations** (treaty, covenant, convention, declaration) **cannot**

be ignored, it remains clear that legal documents do not advance by themselves the cause of humankind's survival, except if they can be effectively referred to in a court of justice; but **they create an**

appropriate and stable environment for what can really bring about a change, that is

educational and political struggles^{the former aiming at a change in the political culture.}[¶] To sum up, **(hu)mankind has thus ceased to be**

just a concept used by philosophers and theologians, whose presence in international law was merely philosophical, if not rhetorical, as in the Preamble to the UN Charter of 1945. Though not explicitly

endowed with rights in the documents quoted above, the humankind of the "common heritage" doctrine is an important precedent in the direction, suggested by this article, of introducing this new legal actor. When looking at the implementation of the rights that can be attributed to it, the other legal novelty of the "common but differentiated responsibility"⁴¹ of individual actors, such as countries, should also be brought to bear. This is important when it comes to distributing the burden of the duties corresponding to those rights – which is indeed one of the major issues in the debate following the Copenhagen Accord on Climate Change of 2009. In any case, the legal acknowledgment of a "common responsibility" for the global commons is a further step in designing humankind as a juridical notion.[¶] This article is policy-oriented in the peculiar sense of a constitutional policy that will require decades, if ever, to become the subject of debate and even longer to be legally implemented. Impulses in this direction are certainly not expected from the world of politics, but rather from the scientific community (provided a now utopian sounding collaboration of physics, philosophy and legal theory materializes) or from scattered sentences of national and international courts, particularly in environmental

matter.⁴² **Support from civil society would help**.[¶] Finally, the author's suggestion as to how to read this proposal: it has a clearly cosmopolitan (or better: cosmopolitical) character, not however in

the sense of cosmopolitanism as a general doctrine of government/ governance. It is rather generated by tools coming from realist thought: new threats as source of new rights, and lethal and planetary threats to the survival of humankind's civilization as drivers towards a new level of legal protection.

Framing—AT Structural Violence First

Discussion of war doesn't displace focus on structural violence – it allows an injection of complexity

Barkawi 12 – Professor Politics at the New School for Social Research

(Tarak, "Of Camps and Critiques: A Reply to 'Security, War, Violence'" Millennium - Journal of International Studies, Vol 41 No 1, p 124-130, SagePub)

A final **totalising move** in 'Security, War, Violence' **is the idea** that the study of war should be subsumed under the category of 'violence'. The reasons offered for this are: violence does not entail a hierarchy in which war is privileged; **a focus on violence** encourages us to see war in relational terms and **makes visible other kinds of violence besides that of war; and that the analysis of violence somehow enables the disentangling of politics from war** and a proper critique of liberal violence.²² **I have no particular objection to the study of violence, and I certainly think there should be more of it in the social sciences. However, why and how this obviates or subsumes the study of war is obscure to me. Is war not historically significant enough to justify inquiry into it? War is a more specific category relative to violence in general,** referring to reciprocal organised violence between political entities. **I make no claims that the study of war should be privileged over that of other forms of violence. Both the violence of war, and that of, say, patriarchy, demand scholarly attention, but they are also distinct** if related topics requiring different forms of theorisation and inquiry. As for relationality, the category of war is already inherently relational; one does not need the concept of violence in general to see this. **What precisely distinguishes war from many other kinds of violence, such as genocide or massacre, is that war is a relational form of violence in which the other side shoots back. This is ultimately the source of war's generative social powers,** for it is amidst the clash of arms that the truths which define social and political orders are brought into question. **A broader focus on violence in general risks losing this central, distinctive character of the violence of war.** Is it really more theoretically or politically adequate to start referring to the Second World War as an instance of 'violence'? Equally, while I am all for the analysis of liberal violence, another broad category which would include issues of 'structural violence', I also think **we have far from exhausted the subject of liberalism and war, an important area of inquiry** now dominated by the mostly self-serving nostrums of the liberal peace debates. What perhaps is most interesting about Aradau's remarks on violence is that she assumes we know what war is. So, for example, she suggests that we attend to a continuum of violence in which war is considered alongside 'insurrections, revolts, revolutions, insurgencies, rebellions, seditions, disobediences, riots and uprisings'.²³ Apparently, on her understanding, these other things are not war, even though most of them typically involve reciprocal, organised violence. This is precisely to take as given the IR disciplinary view of 'real interstate war' that underlies Correlates of War and other mainstream work. This is the definition of war that I sought to critique in 'From War to Security', a critique Aradau has overlooked. I was posing new questions and possibilities for the study of war, not proffering definitive answers about what war is and what it is not, or about where and when it starts and ends. It is, I would suggest, Aradau who is most concerned about hierarchy and privilege, particularly in respect of perceived slights to Critical Security Studies and her demand that any study of war be in dialogue with Critical Security Studies. In this, she overlooks the fact that, conceived another way, with a more holistic vision of the community of relevant scholars, my article was already an engagement with critical inquiry into security relations. Perhaps it was the opening rhetoric of my article that inspired Aradau's ire, my reference to partygoers from Copenhagen and Aberystwyth dancing on graves, or my suggestion that contemporary 'wider agenda' security scholars know rather less about the composition of carrier battle groups than did their traditional predecessors.²⁴ But does anyone seriously doubt that 'wider agenda' scholars are less familiar with histories and sociologies of wars and militaries than were the traditional predecessors, who even so still managed to overlook their significance? **These passages were meant to serve a very specific purpose, to denaturalise our images of the new and old security studies, and to open up the reader to the possibility that, with respect to the study of war, these fields of study share more in common than is conceivable within the current terms of debate. Neither traditional nor 'wider agenda' security studies are centrally interested in war. Given the significance of war in the human past and present, and the dire state of the study of war in the Anglo-American academy, this seems to me a serious problem for critical thought.**

--- Impact – Retrenchment ---

1NC—!—Retrenchment Scenario

Trump reelection collapses alliances and greenlights retrenchment

Wright 20 (Thomas Wright, Director of the Center on the United States and Europe and a Senior Fellow in the Project on International Order and Strategy at the Brookings Institution, “The Folly of Retrenchment: Why America Can’t Withdraw From the World,” Foreign Affairs, March/April 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-02-10/folly-retrenchment>, WC)

For seven decades, U.S. grand strategy was characterized by a bipartisan consensus on the United States’ global role. Although successive administrations had major disagreements over the details, Democrats and Republicans alike backed a system of alliances, the forward positioning of forces, a relatively open international economy, and, albeit imperfectly, the principles of freedom, human rights, and democracy. Today, that consensus has broken down.

President Donald Trump has questioned the utility of the United States’ alliances and its forward military presence in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. He has displayed little regard for a shared community of free societies and is drawn to authoritarian leaders. So far, Trump’s views are not shared by the vast majority of leading Republicans. Almost all leading Democrats, for their part, are committed to the United States’ traditional role in Europe and Asia, if not in the Middle East. Trump has struggled to convert his worldview into policy, and in many respects, his administration has increased U.S. military commitments. But if Trump wins reelection, that could change quickly, as he would feel more empowered and Washington would need to adjust to the reality that Americans had reconfirmed their support for a more inward-looking approach to world affairs. At a private speech in November, according to press reports, John Bolton, Trump’s former national security adviser, even predicted that Trump could pull out of NATO in a second term. The receptiveness of the American people to Trump’s “America first” rhetoric has revealed that there is a market for a foreign policy in which the United States plays a smaller role in the world.

Retrenchment triggers great power wars, prolif and terrorism, racist nationalism, and cedes the world to Russia and China

Wright 20 (Thomas Wright, Director of the Center on the United States and Europe and a Senior Fellow in the Project on International Order and Strategy at the Brookings Institution, “The Folly of Retrenchment: Why America Can’t Withdraw From the World,” Foreign Affairs, March/April 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-02-10/folly-retrenchment>, WC)

The realists and the progressives arguing for retrenchment differ in their assumptions, logic, and intentions. The realists tend to be more pessimistic about the prospects for peace and frame their arguments in hardheaded terms, whereas the progressives downplay the consequences of American withdrawal and make a moral case against the current grand strategy. But they share a common claim: that the United States would be better off if it dramatically reduced its global military footprint and security commitments.

This is a false promise, for a number of reasons. First, retrenchment would worsen regional security competition in Europe and Asia. The realists recognize that the U.S. military presence in Europe and Asia does dampen security competition, but they claim that it does so at too high a

price—and one that, at any rate, should be paid by U.S. allies in the regions themselves. Although pulling back would invite regional security competition, realist retrenchers admit, the United States could be safer in a more dangerous world because regional rivals would check one another. **This is a perilous gambit**, however, because regional conflicts often end up implicating U.S. interests. They might thus end up **drawing the United States back** in after it has left—resulting in a much more dangerous venture than heading off the conflict in the first place by staying. Realist retrenchment reveals a hubris that the United States can control consequences and prevent crises from erupting into war.

The progressives' view of regional security is similarly flawed. These retrenchers reject the idea that regional security competition will intensify if the United States leaves. In fact, they argue, U.S. alliances often promote competition, as in the Middle East, where U.S. support for Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates has emboldened those countries in their cold war with Iran. But this logic does not apply to Europe or Asia, where U.S. allies have behaved responsibly. A U.S. pullback from those places is more likely to **embolden the regional powers**. Since 2008, Russia has invaded two of its neighbors that are not members of NATO, and if the Baltic states were no longer protected by a U.S. security guarantee, it is conceivable that Russia would test the boundaries with **gray-zone warfare**. In East Asia, a U.S. withdrawal would force **Japan to increase its defense capabilities** and change its constitution to enable it to compete with China on its own, **straining relations with South Korea**.

The second problem with retrenchment involves nuclear proliferation. If the United States pulled out of NATO or ended its alliance with Japan, as many realist advocates of retrenchment recommend, some of its allies, no longer protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella, would be tempted to acquire nuclear weapons of their own. Unlike the progressives for retrenchment, the realists are comfortable with that result, since they see deterrence as a stabilizing force. Most Americans are not so sanguine, and rightly so. There are good reasons to worry about nuclear proliferation: nuclear materials could end up in the hands of **terrorists**, states with less experience might be more prone to nuclear **accidents**, and nuclear powers in close proximity have **shorter response times** and thus conflicts among them have a greater chance of spiraling into **escalation**.

Third, retrenchment would heighten nationalism and xenophobia. In Europe, a U.S. withdrawal would send the message that every country must fend for itself. It would therefore **empower the far-right groups** already making this claim—such as the Alternative for Germany, the League in Italy, and the National Front in France—while undermining the centrist democratic leaders there who told their populations that they could rely on the United States and NATO. As a result, Washington would lose leverage over the domestic politics of individual allies, particularly younger and more **fragile democracies** such as Poland. And since these nationalist **populist groups** are almost always protectionist, retrenchment would damage U.S. economic interests, as well. Even more alarming, many of the **right-wing nationalists** that retrenchment would empower have called for greater accommodation of China and Russia.

A fourth problem concerns regional stability after global retrenchment. The most likely end state is a spheres-of-influence system, whereby China and Russia dominate their neighbors, but such an order is inherently unstable. The lines of demarcation for such spheres tend to be unclear, and there is **no guarantee that China and Russia will not seek to move them outward over time**. Moreover, the United States cannot simply grant other major powers a sphere of influence—the

countries that would fall into those realms have agency, too. If the United States ceded Taiwan to China, for example, the Taiwanese people could say no. The current U.S. policy toward the country is working and may be sustainable. Withdrawing support from Taiwan against its will would plunge cross-strait relations into chaos. The entire idea of letting regional powers have their own spheres of influence has an imperial air that is at odds with modern principles of sovereignty and international law.

A fifth problem with retrenchment is that it lacks domestic support. The American people may favor greater burden sharing, but there is no evidence that they are onboard with a withdrawal from Europe and Asia. As a survey conducted in 2019 by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs found, seven out of ten Americans believe that maintaining military superiority makes the United States safer, and almost three-quarters think that alliances contribute to U.S. security. A 2019 Eurasia Group Foundation poll found that over 60 percent of Americans want to maintain or increase defense spending. As it became apparent that China and Russia would benefit from this shift toward retrenchment, and as the United States' democratic allies objected to its withdrawal, the domestic political backlash would grow. One result could be a prolonged foreign policy debate that would cause the United States to oscillate between retrenchment and reengagement, creating uncertainty about its commitments and thus raising the risk of miscalculation by Washington, its allies, or its rivals.

Realist and progressive retrenchers like to argue that the architects of the United States' postwar foreign policy naively sought to remake the world in its image. **But the real revisionists are those who argue for retrenchment,** a geopolitical experiment of unprecedented scale in modern history. If this camp were to have its way, Europe and Asia—two stable, peaceful, and prosperous regions that form the two main pillars of the U.S.-led order—would be plunged into an era of uncertainty.

!—Retrenchment—2020 key

Trump reelection destroys alliances and emboldens Russia

Clark 20 (Wesley K. Clark, a former NATO Supreme Allied Commander. He is a senior fellow at the UCLA Burke Center for International Relations, “Can The Liberal World Order Survive Another Four Years of Trump?” Washington Monthly, Spring 2020, <https://washingtonmonthly.com/magazine/april-may-june-2020/can-the-liberal-world-order-survive-another-four-years-of-trump/>, WC)

Donald Trump’s critics have often charged him with ignorance and a lack of a strategic approach to foreign policy. This is a profound misunderstanding of the president. In fact, Trump has always had a certain strategy, based on his “gut” and his experience with international business and business personalities. It is a strategy built on old-style U.S. isolationism and an appreciation of the new realities of international business. His reelection will confirm a profound realignment in U.S. security policies and U.S. military priorities. This strategy will be based on transactional values and uninhibited by history and experience.

For more than 70 years the United States has maintained its powerful grip on western Europe, an outgrowth of World War II and the subsequent Cold War challenge of the Soviet Union. The principal instrument of U.S. influence has been NATO, in which the U.S. provided the dominant military component while the Europeans provided the geography, and a lesser degree of financial commitment and defense resources. It was a matter of mutual using—we used the Europeans’ diplomatic and financial clout to serve what we believed were vital U.S. interests, not only in Europe but also beyond, and they got a powerful security umbrella, under which they could devote proportionately greater resources to social welfare without fear of renewed intra-European conflict. With more than 500 million people, a GDP that rivals our own, and a culture that largely shares our own values, Europe was our natural partner—and the transatlantic partnership has been hugely successful in promoting peace and prosperity.

After his reelection, President Trump is likely to gut NATO of its significance. Expect policy changes by tweet. Russia will no longer be seen as a threat. NATO enlargement will cease, and support for Ukraine and Georgia will be curtailed. Countries will be expected to spend more than 2 percent of their GDP on defense, and they will pay more for U.S. troop presence and exercises. Article 5—collective defense—will be conditioned. Security arrangements will be created with the United Kingdom outside NATO, and NATO will be held hostage to more favorable U.S. trade terms. Should the European Union resist U.S. economic pressures, the president will bring leverage through diminished American support for NATO.

The United States will look increasingly to the financial consequences of its alignments and alliances. **China will be able to purchase a U.S. withdrawal from the western Pacific.**

The consequence will be an opening for Russia to exploit the particular weaknesses of each of these countries, politically, economically, or informationally, further weakening not only NATO but also the EU. Europe, including western Europe, will be open for deeper penetration by Russia and China.

In the Mideast, the U.S. will anchor a U.S.-Israeli-Saudi alliance directed against Iran. American forces will leave Iraq and Syria. Russia will be viewed increasingly as a sometime partner, sometime collaborator, and sometime adversary as it consolidates its control over Syrian and

Libyan oil and stabilizes Turkey's expansionist tendencies. ISIS will become a weapon used primarily against Iran and the Kurds, reducing parts of Iran to a failed state. But U.S. military efforts, largely directed against ISIS, will be curtailed.

In Africa, U.S. investment efforts to increase its influence under an enhanced U.S. International Development Finance Corporation will be too little, too late. An expanding Russian military and contract military footprint will further grow Russian influence over not just Europe and the country's own oil and gas needs, but also its investment flows into Africa. Continuing large Chinese investments in resource-rich southern African countries will enable China to find the resource security it seeks.

In both the Mideast and Africa the consequence will be continuing low-level conflict and a loss of broader American influence.

The U.S. military needed to pursue the America First strategy will be subtly transformed with higher technology and smaller forces, even as the defense budget grows. The emphasis will be on defense, not intervention, and where there is intervention, it will be a quick strike and then withdrawal. Forward forces will be largely withdrawn, including, at last, from Afghanistan. Active, multiple lines of defense along our southern border will be established, with the U.S. Border Patrol increasingly supplemented by deep intelligence and backstopped by mobilized National Guard forces.

The Army will likely face the greatest cutbacks, with withdrawals of forward forces from Korea and Europe enabling major units to be cut. Special Operations Forces will be protected, even as some forces are withdrawn from Africa. The National Guard can expect to be well funded and to receive expanded missions in fields such as cyber-defense and border reinforcements. High-tech projects like directed energy weapons, hypersonic missiles, glide aircraft, and space-directed efforts will continue.

The Navy will be sustained with a focus on its missions in the Mideast and the Indo-Pacific, but it will be seen as particularly valuable as leverage in securing the right trade arrangements with China. In the end, it will sustain deep cutbacks in ships, and especially aircraft carrier battle groups, as the U.S. pulls away from its extended overseas commitments.

In Asia, the U.S. will look increasingly to the financial consequences of its alignments and alliances. Temporarily, Japan and South Korea will be able to maintain a U.S. presence and commitment by substantially raising their "host nation support" payments. But in order to move forward with a resolution of U.S. trade issues with China, the president is likely to trade off U.S. forward presence in the western Pacific; the key issue will be the price. These military commitments will be viewed in transactional terms—how and how much will China pay for the U.S. to depart the region?

The consequence in Asia will be to avoid an armed conflict with China over Taiwan and the South China Sea—the so-called Thucydides trap—but it will also trade U.S. alliances for an economic purchase of American withdrawal, greatly increased Chinese power in the area, and reduced U.S. influence.

In Latin America, the president's principal aim will be to drive back immigration, including illegal immigration. Foreign assistance will be directed to those countries and activities that can best preclude immigration. A secondary aim will be to ensure that U.S. companies can exploit any

particular resource opportunities, for example the massive oil find off the coast of Guyana, and to maintain the current trade balances under the newly agreed United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

History and experience would teach us that these policies are unwise. In two world wars in the twentieth century, the United States determined that it could not allow a hostile power to dominate Europe. Three generations of American leaders faithfully sustained that lesson, maintained peace, and ensured that the United States—and American values—maintained their dominance through the Cold War and post–Cold War period across the globe. But that lesson, and the alliances and forces that enabled it, and the world that was built with American values and American blood, will be left behind with the 2020 reelection of President Donald Trump. Long-term security will be negotiated away for short-term gains, both economic and political. In the world left to our children, America will be more isolated and less secure. Hardly America First.

!—Retrenchment—Hegemony Impact

US hegemony prevents great-power conflicts that escalates to nuclear war

Brands and Edel 19 (Hal Brands and Charles Edel. Hal Brands is the Henry Kissinger Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs in the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. Charles Edel is a senior fellow at the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney and previously served on the U.S. Secretary of State's policy planning staff, "Rediscovering Tragedy. In The Lessons of Tragedy: Statecraft and World Order; Chapter 6: The Darkening Horizon," Yale University Press, pp 128-131 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvbnm3r9.11>, WC)

Each of these geopolitical challenges is different, and each reflects the distinctive interests, ambitions, and history of the country undertaking it. Yet there is growing cooperation between the countries that are challenging the regional pillars of the U.S.-led order. Russia and China have collaborated on issues such as energy, sales and development of military technology opposition to additional U.S. military deployments on the Korean peninsula, and military exercises from the South China Sea to the Baltic. In Syria, Iran provided the shock troops that helped keep Russia's ally, Bashar al-Assad, in power, as Moscow provided the air power and the diplomatic cover. "Our cooperation can isolate America," supreme leader Ali Khamenei told Putin in 2017. ³⁴ More broadly, what links these challenges together is their opposition to the constellation of power, norms, and relationships that the U.S.-led order entails, and in their propensity to use violence, coercion, and intimidation as means of making that opposition effective. Taken collectively, these challenges constitute a geopolitical sea change from the post-Cold War era.

The revival of great-power competition entails higher international tensions than the world has known for decades and the revival of arms races, security dilemmas, and other artifacts of a more dangerous past. It entails sharper conflicts over the international rules of the road on issues ranging from freedom of navigation to the illegitimacy of altering borders by force, and intensifying competitions over states that reside at the intersection of rival powers' areas of interest. It requires confronting the prospect that rival powers could overturn the favorable regional balances that have underpinned the U.S.-led order for decades, and that they might construct rival spheres of influence from which America and the liberal ideas it has long promoted would be excluded. Finally, it necessitates recognizing that great-power rivalry could lead to great-power war, a prospect that seemed to have followed the Soviet empire onto the ash heap of history.

Both Beijing and Moscow are, after all, optimizing their forces and exercising aggressively in preparation for potential conflicts with the United States and its allies. Russian doctrine explicitly emphasizes the limited use of nuclear weapons to achieve escalation dominance in a war with Washington. ³⁵ In Syria, U.S. and Russian forces even came into deadly contact in early 2018 American airpower decimated a contingent of government-sponsored Russian mercenaries that was attacking a base at which U.S. troops were present. an incident demonstrating the increasing boldness of Russian operations and the corresponding potential for escalation. ³⁶ The world has not yet returned to the epic clashes for global dominance that characterized the twentieth century, but it has returned to the historical norm of great-power struggle, with all the associated dangers.

Those dangers may be even greater than most observers appreciate, because if today's great-power competitions are still most intense at the regional level, who is to say where these competitions will end? By all appearances, **Russia does not simply want to be a "regional power"** (as Obama cuttingly described it) that dominates South Ossetia and Crimea. ³⁷ It aspires to the deep European and extra-regional impact that previous incarnations of the Russian state enjoyed. Why else would Putin boast about how far his troops can drive into Eastern Europe? Why else would Moscow be deploying military power into the Middle East? Why else would it be continuing to cultivate intelligence and military relationships in regions as remote as Latin America?

Likewise, China is today focused primarily on securing its own geopolitical neighborhood, but its ambitions for tomorrow are clearly much bolder. Beijing probably does not envision itself fully overthrowing the international order, simply because it has

profited far too much from the U.S.-anchored global economy. Yet China has nonetheless positioned itself for a global challenge to U.S. influence. Chinese military forces are deploying ever farther from China's immediate periphery; Beijing has projected power into the Arctic and established bases and logistical points in the Indian Ocean and Horn of Africa. Popular Chinese movies depict Beijing replacing Washington as the dominant actor in sub-Saharan Africa—a fictional representation of a real-life effort long under way. The Belt and Road Initiative bespeaks an aspiration to link China to countries throughout Central Asia, the Middle East, and Europe; BRI, AIIB, and RCEP look like the beginning of an alternative institutional architecture to rival Washington's. In 2017, Xi Jinping told the Nineteenth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party that Beijing could now “take center stage in the world” and act as an alternative to U.S. leadership.³⁸

These ambitions may or may not be realistic. But they demonstrate just how significantly the world's leading authoritarian powers desire to shift the global environment over time. The revisionism we are seeing today may therefore be only the beginning. As China's power continues to grow, or if it is successful in dominating the Western Pacific, it will surely move on to grander endeavors. If Russia reconsolidates control over the former Soviet space, it may seek to bring parts of the former Warsaw Pact to heel. Historically, this has been a recurring pattern of great-power behavior—interests expand with power, the appetite grows with the eating, risk-taking increases as early gambles are seen to pay off.³⁹ This pattern is precisely why the revival of great-power competition is so concerning—because geopolitical revisionism by unsatisfied major powers has so often presaged intensifying international conflict, confrontation, and even war. The great-power behavior occurring today represents the warning light flashing on the dashboard. It tells us there may be still-greater traumas to come.

!—Retrenchment—Alliances Key

A strong alliance network is an impact filter — solves great-power war, growth, and democracy

Brands & Edel, 19 — Hal Brands; PhD, Henry A. Kissinger Distinguished Professor of Global Affairs at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Charles Edel; PhD, Senior Fellow and Visiting Scholar at the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney. (“The Lessons of Tragedy: Statecraft and World Order;” Ch. 7: Rediscovering Tragedy; Published by Yale University Press)

What’s true for America is equally true for its broader coalition of like-minded states. In geopolitics as in many things, there is **great strength in numbers**. Yet that strength will hold only if the supporters of the international order **lock arms and commit fully to its defense**.

Preventing **great-power war** and **international aggression**, promoting an **open global** economy that **averts depression** and privation, **upholding democracy and human rights** in the face of **authoritarian resurgence**, and defending **liberal norms** that are being assaulted are goals that can be achieved only through strong partnerships and collective effort. If the democracies are **divided**, the autocracies will **exploit those divisions**; if America and its allies struggle to achieve **unity of action**, they will be **outmaneuvered** or overawed by **revisionist powers**. The trend in today’s environment is, in many ways, toward **greater fragmentation** within what was once called the “free world.” But a tragic mindset requires understanding that **greater coordination and solidarity is required** if that **free world is to prosper**.

For defenders of the international order, then, the question is not **whether** such coordination and solidarity is desirable, but how it can **best be achieved**. Here there is **no escaping the centrality of American leadership**. It is fair enough to point out that America pays a disproportionate share of the costs of sustaining an order that benefits so many. It is entirely reasonable, at a time when threats are rising and challenges multiplying, to demand that collective sacrifices be distributed more evenly, if only because Americans themselves will tire of supporting that order if they feel that they are doing it alone. To put the matter baldly, Americans will not be forever willing to send their ~~sons and daughters~~ to die for NATO if some of the richest countries in that alliance refuse to field minimally capable militaries of their own.

What Americans must remember, though, is that the **strong collective measures** required to **preserve the international order** are **far more likely to emerge** when America **itself is fully committed**. **Allies and partners** will be **more willing to run risks and confront revisionist powers** if they are **assured of U.S. support** than if they doubt it. An Asia-Pacific without American leadership would **not** be a region **better positioned to resist Chinese expansionism**; it would be a **weaker and more divided region**, increasingly at **Beijing’s mercy**. Likewise, supporters of free markets and democracy are more likely to stand up for those arrangements if the world’s preeminent free-market democracy is in the vanguard; **collective action to meet the greatest global challenges** will materialize more successfully if the United States acts as the **convener**. America was “the **one nation** that has the necessary **political, military, and economic instruments** at our disposal to **catalyze a successful collective response**,” James Baker said during the Persian Gulf crisis in 1990; **no other nation can play this role**, even today.¹³ Finally, Americans must keep in mind that if Washington pursues protectionist economic policies that impoverish its partners, if it forsakes the liberal principles that have formed the ideological core

of its alliances, if it extorts tribute from its allies like some mafia protection racket, then it will lose the attractive power that allowed it to lead such formidable coalitions in the first place. America endures its share of inequities and burdens in the service of global order. Yet as a tragic sensibility reminds us, some burdens are tolerable because they help prevent something far, far worse.

!—Retrenchment—Transition Wars

Heg decline causes china to fill in – the process causes transition wars and their world order is net worse

Wright 20 (Thomas Wright, Director of the Center on the United States and Europe and a Senior Fellow in the Project on International Order and Strategy at the Brookings Institution, “The Folly of Retrenchment: Why America Can’t Withdraw From the World,” Foreign Affairs, March/April 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2020-02-10/folly-retrenchment>, WC)

Such are the inherent flaws of retrenchment, downsides that would apply at any time in the post–Cold War era. But the strategy is particularly poorly suited for the current moment, when the United States finds itself in a systemic competition with China, in which each side threatens the other not just because of what they do but also because of what they are.

To China and other autocracies, the United States’ democratic system is inherently threatening. The free press promises to reveal vital secrets about the Chinese regime simply because it can, with American journalists’ 2012 reports about elite corruption in China and Hong Kong and their 2019 revelations about the repression of China’s Uighurs serving as Exhibits A and B. Social media, businesses, universities, nongovernmental organizations, and Congress have all played a role in undermining the regime in Beijing and sowing the seeds of democracy.

To combat these threats, Beijing is increasingly relying on repression, often facilitated by innovations such as facial recognition technology and artificial intelligence. But its ambitions are not limited to its own territory: Beijing has exported its tactics and technology abroad in an attempt to undermine liberalism. It has cracked down on foreign nongovernmental organizations with a presence in China, pressured foreign corporations to endorse its behavior, and grown more vocal within the UN Human Rights Council in an effort to weaken international norms. China has also attempted to illicitly influence Western democracies through operations such as illegally funneling money into Australian politics to support politicians favorable to China. These actions are seen as threatening by the United States.

The competition of systems between the United States and China increasingly involves all parts of society—business, the media, sports, technology, education, politics, diplomacy, intelligence, the military. This competition does not generally involve the use of force, but the geopolitical balance of power is a vital component. It is the United States’ strength and the deterrence it produces that prevents this competition from spilling over into the military domain. The U.S. alliance system also provides a basis for helping other states preserve and strengthen their democratic systems in the shadow of Chinese influence. But advocates of retrenchment aim to weaken both the U.S. military and U.S. alliances. It is vitally important that the United States manage this competition of systems responsibly to protect U.S. interests and to prevent the rivalry from spiraling out of control.

In a moment of such ideological competition, global retrenchment would effectively concede victory to China and other authoritarian states. It would make it impossible to maintain a political alliance with the democratic world—most notably, with France, Germany, and the United Kingdom in Europe and with Australia, Japan, and South Korea in Asia. In the absence of U.S. support, these countries could never hold the line against China. Governments would begin to give Beijing the benefit of the doubt on everything from human rights to 5G wireless

technology. As the U.S. defense budget plummeted, the United States would fall behind in new technologies, giving China an additional edge.

!—Retrenchment—Hegemony Sustainable

Hegemony is sustainable – policies are formed within an existing security framework and influenced by an elite class of experts –that constrains Trump’s effect and subsumes public disinvestment

Porter 18 [Professor Patrick Porter is the Chair of Strategic Studies at the University of Exeter, Academic Director of Strategy and Security Institute and Senior Associate Fellow at RUSI, “Why America's Grand Strategy Has Not Changed: Power, Habit, and the U.S. Foreign Policy Establishment,” 5/4/18, *International Security*, Volume 42 | Issue 04 | Spring 2018, p.9-46, https://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/full/10.1162/isec_a_00311] sg

I argue that an interaction of power and habit makes U.S. grand strategy stable. By “power,” I mean a state’s relative economic size and military capabilities. By “habit,” I mean collective ideas that come to seem obvious, axiomatic choices made from unexamined assumptions.¹⁰ Material power may enable the United States to pursue primacy. Habitual ideas, however, make U.S. grand strategy hard to change. These habits are perpetuated by a foreign policy establishment known as the “Blob.” A nickname popularized by former Deputy National Security Adviser Benjamin Rhodes, the Blob comprises a class of officials and commentators who worry incessantly about the “collapse of the American security order.”¹¹ The Blob emerged from World War II, as the United States’ rising power generated a demand for security expertise. U.S. government officials turned to a group of experts who formed into a cohesive, influential class. Their commitment to primacy became an article of faith. As a grand strategy, primacy warrants scrutiny. It demands significant upfront investments, implicates national security in developments far and wide, and makes the United States prone to the frequent use of force.¹² Yet the Blob’s achievement was to erect primacy as the seemingly natural framework of U.S. diplomacy. The pervasive ideology of U.S. leadership constrains Washington’s foreign policy choices. Successive presidents have been predisposed toward the status quo with little critical evaluation. Alternative strategies based on the retrenchment of commitments are effectively taken off the table. For U.S. grand strategy to change, two developments would need to combine: rapidly changing material conditions, shocking enough to disconfirm the assumptions of the status quo, and determined agents of change willing to incur domestic costs to drive it. Absent these developments, Washington is likely to remain committed to primacy. I test my argument by examining two cases. The first is the presidency of Bill Clinton (1993–2001). The Clinton administration had discretionary power to choose an alternative grand strategy and strong incentives to consider change. Yet Clinton preserved primacy in its essentials. The second case is the first year of the presidency of Donald Trump. Trump challenged the bipartisan consensus that the United States should lead the world. He threatened to shred alliances, abandon commitments, and tolerate horizontal nuclear proliferation. Even in this case, my argument accords with preliminary observations. The Blob asserted itself. Existing accounts of U.S. grand strategy provide some explanation of continuity, but are inadequate. Structural interpretations rightly highlight the importance of objective power realities that allow the United States to pursue primacy in the first place. The distribution of material capabilities is only a permissive condition, however, enabling the pursuit of primacy, not causing it. In earlier periods, when the United States was ascendant, it passed up opportunities to increase its power. Structural interpretations also fail to explain why Washington selects traditional ways of maximizing power over others, balancing rather than buck-passing, retaining alliances, and fighting peripheral wars. Domestic-level explanations rightly incorporate ideas, but also struggle to explain U.S. grand strategy. They predict more change than has actually happened. Those that emphasize the content of ideas mostly treat grand strategy as a deliberative planning process of cost-benefit calculation, where the United States selects primacy against competing alternatives in an open contest. As I demonstrate, a rigorously self-conscious process is mostly absent from U.S. foreign policy decisionmaking circles. Some observers acknowledge that grand strategic debate in Washington is sterile.¹³ Yet the question of how an organically evolving grand strategy emerges from the interaction of policy agents and external conditions remains undertheorized. The power of habit helps explain this process by showing why some policy ideas do or do not receive a hearing in debates designed to chart a course in response to external circumstances. I thus help connect systemic- and domestic-level theories of grand strategy by showing how the policymaking process itself is shaped by prior events alongside individual and group beliefs. This article proceeds in four sections. I begin by offering a deductive argument that explains the stability of U.S. grand strategy, and then derive predictions about U.S. behavior since the Cold War. Next, I demonstrate how this argument explains continuities in U.S. diplomatic behavior in the Clinton era and the first year of Trump’s presidency. In the conclusion, I forecast that primacy will prove resilient. Power and

Habit in Washington Why is U.S. grand strategy hard to change, even when conditions change? To understand why, it is necessary to examine not only what decisionmakers think about, but where they think from. Habit is a type of path dependency, the process whereby prior historical developments limit the scope of choices set before decisionmakers, reproducing behavior even in the absence of the conditions where it began. **States move** not from a neutral zero but **from legacies that prescribe what is legitimate and effective.** The logic of habit is distinct from the logic of consequences, where actors consciously make instrumental cost-benefit calculations, and the logic of appropriateness, where agents choose with conscious reference to rules and norms. It is distinct from bureaucratic politics theory, where policy is the outcome of bargaining within government, with officials driven by organizational and personal interests.¹⁴ To say that habit drives U.S. grand strategy is to suggest that policymakers become unreflective and non-deliberative about the framework within which decisions are made. The process is not automatic, but **prior beliefs about the United States' place in the international order mostly set the agenda and impose tight parameters within which bureaucratic politics play out.** Habituated decisionmakers are insufficiently stimulated by changing conditions. They deliberate mostly within the boundaries of traditional rationales. A “common sense” mediates between the environment and decisionmakers, turning what were once calculated choices into axiomatic ones.¹⁵ Winston Churchill, for instance, invoked Britain's “unconscious tradition” of supporting weaker states “to oppose the strongest, most aggressive” powers in continental Europe.¹⁶ The process of habituation manifests itself negatively and positively. Negatively, it takes the form of self-censorship, with senior policymakers sidestepping reevaluation of first-order questions. Scrutiny will be absent even where one should most expect it, within authoritative institutions charged with examining choices. Policy discussion will mostly be conducted through an operational mind-set, confined to issues of implementation. Positively, habit functions as a conformist pressure visibly applied to officials who question assumptions. When officials question basic assumptions, gatekeepers with privileged access, expert status, and agenda-setting power will discipline discussion. Where does the habit of primacy come from? In the final years of World War II, the United States rapidly became the most powerful nation on Earth.¹⁷ With other major powers exhausted by war, it experienced unprecedented industrial expansion. Its gross domestic product doubled. It enjoyed the world's highest per capita productivity. It dominated the world's gold reserves and became the largest creditor and exporter. The dollar was the reserve currency. It had a monopoly on atomic weapons. Its long-range bombers, carrier task forces, and bases gave it unrivaled reach. There was worldwide demand for its loans, arms, and patronage. The United States recognized, as any state would, its vastly increased power position. This growth in relative power enabled the United States to enlarge its ambitions and reorder the international system. Its rise amid the dangers of conflict generated demand for security experts. America at war became a national security state, organizing intensively to mobilize and project power. The global disorder of the 1930s and 1940s had already prompted an intellectual rediscovery of strategy, with security experts urging the United States to realize its latent strength and flex its geopolitical muscles.¹⁸ Experts then urged Washington to translate victory into hegemony, under a Washington-designed world order,¹⁹ assuming that the United States would “succeed Britain as the military and economic guarantor and moral leader of the world.”²⁰ This Washington did in concrete form, placing large parts of the globe under U.S. military commands, reshaping the global economy through U.S.-designed institutions, and creating a security bureaucracy. Out of this process emerged a cohesive U.S. foreign policy elite. This elite advanced major policies, from the postwar revival of Western Europe's economies and the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to the creation of a National Economic Council. The establishment was demoralized by the Vietnam War and economic malaise in the late 1960s and early 1970s, but rebuilt itself on the back of Ronald Reagan's presidency.²¹ It often gets its way. As research demonstrates, “the gravitational pull” on foreign policy decisions by the foreign policy establishment tends to be “stronger than the attraction of public opinion.”²² The foreign policy establishment is not monolithic. Its members dispute issues below the grand strategic level, such as human rights, the extent of multilateral cooperation, democracy promotion, and specific interventions. Until the 1960s, it was mostly a patrician, predominantly white, Protestant class that internalized values nurtured “in prep schools, at college clubs, in the boardrooms of Wall Street, and at dinner parties.”²³ It then incorporated nonwhites, women, first-generation immigrants, Jews, and Roman Catholics, to form a more heterogeneous class of coastal internationalists, oriented around the Ivy League. Still, this cross-section of internationalist elites is united by a consensus. They want the United States to remain engaged in upholding world order. They are primacists. They fear U.S. retreat from overseas responsibilities and warn that abandonment would lead to the return of rival power blocs, economic stagnation, and catastrophe. They have established primacy as the only viable, legitimate grand strategy, and as an ingrained set of ideas, while installing themselves as insiders, positioned to steer the state. The Blob reproduces its ideology through four causal mechanisms. First, security elites accumulate knowledge about how grand strategy succeeds and form mental shortcuts that they repeat and internalize. Second, they socialize personnel into their worldview, educating and selecting individuals who conform, excluding or penalizing those who do not, and linking conformity to an axiomatic worldview with insider status; they also dominate the pool of experienced talent that makes up officialdom. They have privileged access to power via an

institutional revolving door, a set of social networks, and institutions—the locations where grand strategic ideas intervene at the unit level, between appointments in government through to foundations, think tanks, universities, and bodies from the Council on Foreign Relations to the Trilateral Commission.²⁴ New presidential administrations will often retain career security officials for the sake of continuity. As the cohorts of qualified officialdom are socialized into orthodoxy, even presidents who wish to institute change will be drawn to select from that pool. **The Blob has close ties to corporate networks**. Fifteen of Clinton's key policymakers, according to one study, had a total of forty-one corporate affiliations, breeding an instinctive sympathy toward the penetration of transnational capital,²⁵ which was reflected in Clinton's goal of "open and equal U.S. access to foreign markets."²⁶ **Third, the Blob dominates public discourse and sets its agenda**, through privileged access to the commentariat, of which it forms a part. Presidential candidates routinely approach establishment figures at think tanks to formulate their foreign policy manifestos. They define the terms of debate, delegitimizing alternative strategies as alien and foolish. **They present alternatives to primacy, involving retrenchment or the avoidance of war, in binary terms as retreat or isolationism**. **Fourth, they exert influence via a transnational pathway**, supplying allies with ideas that those allies repeat, creating a feedback loop. The Blob itself is candid about its privileged access to state power. For Richard Haass, former director of the Policy Planning Staff, **think tanks constitute an "informal shadow foreign affairs establishment."** As Haass once observed, "Madeleine Albright, Colin Powell's predecessor as Secretary of State, once headed the Center for National Policy. Her former deputy, Strobe Talbott, is now president of the Brookings Institution—where I previously served as vice-president and director of foreign policy studies.... I've alternated stints at the National Security Council, the Defense and State Departments, and on Capitol Hill with time at Brookings, the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Carnegie Endowment."²⁷ **Self-identified members of the Blob acknowledge the conformist pressures that this policy environment creates**. Leslie Gelb confessed he supported the invasion of Iraq in 2003 out of the "disposition and incentives to support wars to retain political and professional credibility."²⁸ Derek Chollet observes an "ecosystem" that incentivizes support for activism and delegitimizes arguments for restraint.²⁹ Michael Mandelbaum notes that the establishment defines the policy "ballpark," setting boundaries for "what may be legitimately proposed and carried out."³⁰ Contrary to theories that the marketplace of ideas ensures rigorous weighing of choices, the suggestions of those outside the security establishment rarely penetrate foreign policy decisionmaking.³¹ If **habit often shapes grand strategy by inhibiting actors from revising it**, how do grand strategies change? **Alteration happens normally through an interaction of two variables: rapidly changing external conditions sufficiently shocking to disconfirm the assumptions of the status quo, and determined agents of change willing to incur domestic costs to drive it**. A good example is Great Britain's postwar abandonment of empire. External conditions had turned against the maintenance of colonies, through the cumulative fiscal pressures of World War II; a growing decolonization resistance; the United States' dismantling of the economic order of imperial preference and the sterling bloc; and the shock of the Suez crisis of 1956, which revealed Britain's vulnerability to U.S. coercion. Domestically, successive governments redefined Britain's status around alliances and nuclear weapons, presenting retreat from empire as a graceful management of change and casting the emergence of independent countries as "the crowning achievement of British rule."³² Short of external circumstances quite so overwhelming as those confronting postwar Britain, grand strategic change remains possible but difficult. For the United States, the major interruption to its traditional strategy was the Richard Nixon administration.³³ When Nixon became president, multiple pressures—including the Vietnam War, the oil embargo imposed by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, inflation, an imbalance of payments, and racial conflict at home—were eroding the United States' international supremacy. Nixon was determined to shift Washington toward accepting stable multipolarity, particularly through his opening to China and his treatment of the Soviet Union as a permanent partner in a post-hegemonic world order, downplaying and at times abandoning nuclear counterproliferation as a priority, and pursuing hard-line realpolitik.³⁴ To achieve this objective, Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, issued public explanations to legitimize their shift. They also made policy secretly and obstructed oversight, by turns excluding, deflecting, or dominating the national security bureaucracy, State Department, and Congress, to concentrate power among a small coterie of presidential advisers. This project attracted strong opposition. By the time of President Gerald Ford, it had unraveled. **Grand strategic change is therefore rare. Hardwired beliefs are resistant to change**.³⁵ **Major powers can retrench in order to adjust to adversity, but they often fall prey to adjustment failure and overreach**.³⁶ People revise habits only when contradictory information is received dramatically and in large batches, making them realize they cannot assimilate those shocks into their worldview. Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 is an example of a shocking event discrediting established orthodoxy. **U.S. primacy, and the confidence that the United States possesses vast latent power, is especially resilient to shocks**. **The country's relative strength is almost unparalleled in history and enables a story hard to falsify. It predisposes policymakers to interpret disasters—such as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001—as caused by an insufficiency of U.S. dominance and as evidence of the need for more**. The "Bush Doctrine," triggered by those attacks, unapologetically reasserted primacy and revived U.S. traditions of preventive war.³⁷

Washington keeps its core commitments even in the wake of setbacks. Based on the deductive argument I have set out, I offer a prediction about U.S. grand strategy since the United States became the world's sole superpower. **There will be an essential continuity** in the decades after the Cold War. **The four parts of that grand strategy**—preponderance, reassurance, integration, and nuclear inhibition—**will persist despite shifts between presidencies, a changing political balance in Congress, economic change and demands for re-allocation of resources, a more benign threat environment, and a public increasingly averse to the costs of primacy.** With the Soviet Union gone as the last major check on its power, the United States will look to realize its long-held goal of unrivaled dominance. No fundamental review of its grand strategy will occur, despite incentives and opportunities for revision. The policy process within the executive branch, the branch that directs U.S. statecraft, commands military forces, and makes treaties, will be disciplined by gatekeepers, and public grand-strategic debate will hardly intrude. An operational mind-set, or the “how” and “when,” will overshadow “whether.” Allies of the United States will encourage and reinforce the reigning ideology.

Heg pursuit is inevitable and sustainable

Zhang **Tengjun**, Ph.D. in Diplomacy from Renmin University, M.A. in International Politics from Zhejiang University, assistant research fellow at the China Institute of International Studies, 2-6-2017, "Will Washington abandon world leadership under Trump?", Foreign Policy, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1051172.shtml> JEJP

America under the rule of the business tycoon-turned politico has triggered worldwide concern for globalization and its future and raised doubts as to whether the most powerful country is seeking to give up world leadership. What's more, there is a view that the liberal international order is crumbling and Washington's retreat is the beginning of a great transformation. If the rise of Trump is viewed as a phenomenon, then its main significance lies in shaking the US' long-standing political ecology. Trump has mostly focused on domestic issues in the past five months, and the changes he has brought about to the country's foreign policy are actually less than expected. By his own admission, the "America First" position means that he puts most of his energy into addressing domestic affairs. His nature as a businessman determines the negotiability of foreign affairs. All the arrangements conducive to achieving his political goals can be compromised and changed. In this sense, the view that the US will abandon the world leadership is a pseudo-proposition.

Hampered by a slew of conundrums at home, the Trump administration has yet to formulate an explicit global strategy or more specific Asia-Pacific policy. Its foreign policy is somewhat fragmented, subject to a severe lack of coherence and consistency. It has so far been handling diplomatic episodes quite passively. Though many of Trump's foreign policy measures are questioned by the international community at large, it should not be viewed as an abdication of US hegemony. Currently speaking, it would be wrong to draw the conclusion that Trump is intentional giving up regional and global dominance. Two main pillars of US hegemony are the **military and financial sectors.** The former is backed by military power far better than other countries, the strongest circle of allies, and military bases spanning the globe. The latter is heavily dependent on dollar hegemony and the US-dominated international financial system. **Trump has no intention of abandoning American military hegemony. Instead, he seeks to boost military spending by 10 percent in the coming fiscal year, further equipping the ground force, air force and navy with advanced weaponry.** In this way, he inherits many of Obama's strategies. In addition, Trump remains ambiguous toward the financial system under US governance. Given the domestic landscape, he will prefer trade protectionism and a curtailment in expenditure of public products. **But he will never discard US financial leadership on the world stage. More importantly, the US dollar, as a major international currency, is closely related to the country's leadership, and Trump understands this well.** To say the least, even if he once planned on giving up Washington's global leadership and drawing back to the North American continent, it seems that he lacks the capacity to do so. The existing

international order features a US hegemony which dates back to the start of WWII and has since been maintained through the strenuous efforts of generations of governments. Washington is unlikely to detach itself from the decades-long, consolidated framework. The conception of "peace under American governance" begun in the US has spread to every corner of the world to the extent that it is America's allies, instead of the American people, that are most concerned with Trump leading from the White House. They fear that if Washington breaks its promises on security, the international order will be plunged into chaos and conflict. By then they will find themselves mired in gridlock. Furthermore, Trump will think twice and be prudent given domestic obstruction. Both the Democrats and the Republicans continue to support American leadership in the world; they merely differ on policy and how to best exert leadership.

--- Impact – Warming ---

1NC—!—Warming

Trump re-election leads to irreversible and catastrophic climate change

Starr 19 – PhD, professor of sociology and public affairs at Princeton and a winner of the Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction. He is the author of *Entrenchment: Wealth, Power, and the Constitution of Democratic Societies* (Paul, “Trump’s Second Term It’s more likely than most people think—and compared with his first term, its effects would be far more durable.,” *The Atlantic*, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/05/trump-2020-second-term/585994/>)//BB

Of all the questions that will be answered by the 2020 election, one matters above the others: Is Trumpism a temporary aberration or a long-term phenomenon? Put another way: Will the changes brought about by Donald Trump and today’s Republican Party fade away, or will they become entrenched? Trump’s reelection seems implausible to many people, as implausible as his election did before November 2016. But despite the scandals and chaos of his presidency, and despite his party’s midterm losses, he approaches 2020 with two factors in his favor. One is incumbency: Since 1980, voters have only once denied an incumbent a second term. The other is a relatively strong economy (at least as of now). Alan Abramowitz, a political scientist at Emory University who weights both of those factors heavily in his election-forecasting model, gives Trump close to an even chance of reelection, based on a projected 2 percent GDP growth rate for the first half of 2020. So far, much of the concern about the long-term effects of Trump’s presidency has centered on his antidemocratic tendencies. But even if we take those off the table—even if we assume that Trump continues to be hemmed in by other parts of the government and by outside institutions, and that he governs no more effectively than he has until now—the impact of a second term would be more lasting than that of the first. In normal politics, the policies adopted by a president and Congress may zig one way, and those of the next president and Congress may zag the other. The contending parties take our system’s rules as a given, and fight over what they understand to be reversible policies and power arrangements. But some situations are not like that; a zig one way makes it hard to zag back. This is one of those moments. After four years as president, Trump will have made at least two Supreme Court appointments, signed into law tax cuts, and rolled back federal regulation of the environment and the economy. Whatever you think of these actions, many of them can probably be offset or entirely undone in the future. The effects of a full eight years of Trump will be much more difficult, if not impossible, to undo. Three areas—climate change, the risk of a renewed global arms race, and control of the Supreme Court—illustrate the historic significance of the 2020 election. The first two problems will become much harder to address as time goes on. The third one stands to remake our constitutional democracy and undermine the capacity for future change. In short, the biggest difference between electing Trump in 2016 and reelecting Trump in 2020 would be irreversibility. Climate policy is now the most obvious example. For a long time, even many of the people who acknowledged the reality of climate change thought of it as a slow process that did not demand immediate action. But today, amid extreme weather events and worsening scientific forecasts, the costs of our delay are clearly mounting, as are the associated dangers. To have a chance at keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius—the objective of the Paris climate agreement—the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says that by 2030, CO2 emissions must drop some 45 percent from 2010 levels. Instead of declining,

however, they are rising. In his first term, Trump has announced plans to cancel existing climate reforms, such as higher fuel-efficiency standards and limits on emissions from new coal-fired power plants, and he has pledged to pull the United States out of the Paris Agreement. His reelection would put off a national commitment to decarbonization until at least the second half of the 2020s, while encouraging other countries to do nothing as well. And change that is delayed becomes more economically and politically difficult. According to the Global Carbon Project, if decarbonization had begun globally in 2000, an emissions reduction of about 2 percent a year would have been sufficient to stay below 2 degrees Celsius of warming. Now it will need to be approximately 5 percent a year. If we wait another decade, it will be about 9 percent. In the United States, the economic disruption and popular resistance sure to arise from such an abrupt transition may be more than our political system can bear. No one knows, moreover, when the world might hit irreversible tipping points such as the collapse of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, which would likely doom us to a catastrophic sea-level rise. The 2020 election will also determine whether the U.S. continues on a course that all but guarantees another kind of runaway global change—a stepped-up arms race, and with it a heightened risk of nuclear accidents and nuclear war. Trump’s “America first” doctrine, attacks on America’s alliances, and unilateral withdrawal from arms-control treaties have made the world far more dangerous. After pulling the United States out of the Iran nuclear agreement (in so doing, badly damaging America’s reputation as both an ally and a negotiating partner), Trump failed to secure from North Korea anything approaching the Iran deal’s terms, leaving Kim Jong Un not only unchecked but with increased international standing. Many world leaders are hoping that Trump’s presidency is a blip—that he will lose in 2020, and that his successor will renew America’s commitments to its allies and to the principles of multilateralism and nonproliferation. If he is reelected, however, several countries may opt to pursue nuclear weapons, especially those in regions that have relied on American security guarantees, such as the Middle East and Northeast Asia. At stake is the global nonproliferation regime that the United States and other countries have maintained over the past several decades to persuade nonnuclear powers to stay that way. That this regime has largely succeeded is a tribute to a combination of tactics, including U.S. bilateral and alliance-based defense commitments to nonnuclear countries, punishments and incentives, and pledges by the U.S. and Russia—as the world’s leading nuclear powers—to make dramatic cuts to their own arsenals. In his first term, Trump has begun to undermine the nonproliferation regime and dismantle the remaining arms-control treaties between Washington and Moscow. In October, he announced that the U.S. would withdraw from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty signed in 1987 by Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev. While the Russian violations of the treaty that Trump cited are inexcusable, he has made no effort to hold Russia to its obligations—to the contrary, by destroying the treaty, he has let Russia off the hook. What’s more, he has displayed no interest in extending New START, which since 2011 has limited the strategic nuclear arsenals of Russia and the United States. If the treaty is allowed to expire, 2021 will mark the first year since 1972 without a legally binding agreement in place to control and reduce the deadliest arsenals ever created. The prospect of a new nuclear arms race is suddenly very real. With the end of verifiable limits on American and Russian nuclear weapons, both countries will lose the right to inspect each other’s arsenal, and will face greater uncertainty about each other’s capabilities and intentions. Already, rhetoric has taken an ominous turn: After Trump suspended U.S. participation in the INF Treaty on February 2, Vladimir Putin quickly followed suit and promised a “symmetrical response” to new American weapons. Trump replied a few days later in his State of the Union address, threatening to “outspend and out-innovate all others by far” in weapons development. The

treaties signed by the United States and Russia beginning in the 1980s have resulted in the elimination of nearly 90 percent of their nuclear weapons; the end of the Cold War seemed to confirm that those weapons had limited military utility. Now—as the U.S. and Russia abandon their commitment to arms control, and Trump’s “America first” approach causes countries such as Japan and Saudi Arabia to question the durability of U.S. security guarantees—the stage is being set for more states to go nuclear and for the U.S. and Russia to ramp up weapons development. This breathtaking historical reversal would, like global warming, likely feed on itself, becoming more and more difficult to undo. Finally, a second term for Trump would entrench changes at home, perhaps the most durable of which involves the Supreme Court. With a full eight years, he would probably have the opportunity to replace two more justices: Ruth Bader Ginsburg will be 87 at the beginning of the next presidential term, and Stephen Breyer will be 82. Whether you regard the prospect of four Trump-appointed justices as a good or a bad thing will depend on your politics and preferences—but there is no denying that the impact on the nation’s highest court would be momentous. Not since Richard Nixon has a president named four new Supreme Court justices, and not since Franklin D. Roosevelt has one had the opportunity to alter the Court’s ideological balance so decisively. In Nixon’s time, conservatives did not approach court vacancies with a clear conception of their judicial objectives or with carefully vetted candidates; both Nixon and Gerald Ford appointed justices who ended up on the Court’s liberal wing. Since then, however, the conservative movement has built a formidable legal network designed to ensure that future judicial vacancies would not be squandered. The justices nominated by recent Republican presidents reflect this shift. But because the Court’s conservative majorities have remained slim, a series of Republican appointees—Sandra Day O’Connor, Anthony Kennedy, and most recently John Roberts—have, by occasionally breaking ranks, held the Court back from a full-scale reversal of liberal principles and precedents. With a 7–2 rather than a 5–4 majority, however, the Court’s conservatives could no longer be checked by a lone swing vote. Much of the public discussion about the Court’s future focuses on *Roe v. Wade* and other decisions expanding rights, protecting free speech, or mandating separation of Church and state. Much less public attention has been paid to conservative activists’ interest in reversing precedents that since the New Deal era have enabled the federal government to regulate labor and the economy. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, conservative justices regularly struck down laws and regulations such as limits on work hours. Only in 1937, after ruling major New Deal programs unconstitutional, did the Court uphold a state minimum-wage law. In the decades that followed, the Court invoked the Constitution’s commerce clause, which authorizes Congress to regulate interstate commerce, as the basis for upholding laws regulating virtually any activity affecting the economy. A great deal of federal law, from labor standards to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to health and environmental regulation, rests on that foundation. But the Court’s conservative majority has recently been chipping away at the expansive interpretation of the commerce clause, and some jurists on the right want to return to the pre-1937 era, thereby sharply limiting the government’s regulatory powers. In 2012, the Court’s five conservative justices held that the Affordable Care Act’s penalty for failing to obtain insurance—the so-called individual mandate—was not justified by the commerce clause. In a sweeping dissent from the majority’s opinion, four of those justices voted to strike down the entire ACA for that reason. The law survived only because the fifth conservative, Chief Justice Roberts, held that the mandate was a constitutional exercise of the government’s taxing power. If the Court had included seven conservative justices in 2012, it would almost certainly have declared the ACA null and void. This is the fate awaiting much existing social and economic legislation and regulation if Trump is reelected. And that’s to say

nothing of future legislation such as measures to limit climate change, which might well be struck down by a Court adhering to an originalist interpretation of our 18th-century Constitution. Democracy is always a gamble, but ordinarily the stakes involve short-term wins and losses. Much more hangs in the balance next year. With a second term, Trump's presidency would go from an aberration to a turning point in American history. But it would not usher in an era marked by stability. The effects of climate change and the risks associated with another nuclear arms race are bound to be convulsive. And Trump's reelection would leave the country contending with both dangers under the worst possible conditions, deeply alienated from friends abroad and deeply divided at home. The Supreme Court, furthermore, would be far out of line with public opinion and at the center of political conflict, much as the Court was in the 1930s before it relented on the key policies of the New Deal. The choice Americans face in 2020 is one we will not get to make again. What remains to be seen is whether voters will grasp the stakes before them. In 2016, Hillary Clinton's emails absorbed more media and public attention than any other issue. In 2018, Trump tried to focus attention on a ragtag caravan of a few thousand Central Americans approaching the southern border. That effort failed, but the master of distraction will be back at it next year. If we cannot focus on what matters, we may sleepwalk into a truly perilous future.

Extinction

Sprat and Dunlop **19** (David Spratt and Ian Dunlop, *Research Director for Breakthrough National Centre for Climate Restoration and co-author of *Climate Code Red: The case for emergency action*; **member of the Club of Rome AND formerly an international oil, gas and coal industry executive, chairman of the Australian Coal Association, chief executive of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and chair of the Australian Greenhouse Office Experts Group on Emissions Trading, "Existential climate-related security risk: A scenario approach," Breakthrough National Centre for Climate Restoration, https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/148cb0_90dc2a2637f348edae45943a88da04d4.pdf)//BB

2050: By 2050, there is broad scientific acceptance that system tipping-points for the West Antarctic Ice Sheet and a sea-ice-free Arctic summer were passed well before 1.5°C of warming, for the Greenland Ice Sheet well before 2°C, and for widespread permafrost loss and large-scale Amazon drought and dieback by 2.5°C. The "hothouse Earth" scenario has been realised, and Earth is headed for another degree or more of warming, especially since human greenhouse emissions are still significant. While sea levels have risen 0.5 metres by 2050, the increase may be 2–3 metres by 2100, and it is understood from historical analogues that seas may eventually rise by more than 25 metres. Thirty-five percent of the global land area, and 55 percent of the global population, are subject to more than 20 days a year of lethal heat conditions, beyond the threshold of human survivability. The destabilisation of the Jet Stream has very significantly affected the intensity and geographical distribution of the Asian and West African monsoons and, together with the further slowing of the Gulf Stream, is impinging on life support systems in Europe. North America suffers from devastating weather extremes including wildfires, heatwaves, drought and inundation. The summer monsoons in China have failed, and water flows into the great rivers of Asia are severely reduced by the loss of more than one-third of the Himalayan ice sheet. Glacial loss reaches 70 percent in the Andes, and rainfall in Mexico and central America falls by half. Semi-permanent El Nino conditions prevail. Aridification emerges

over more than 30 percent of the world's land surface. Desertification is severe in southern Africa, the southern Mediterranean, west Asia, the Middle East, inland Australia and across the south-western United States. Impacts: A number of **ecosystems collapse**, including coral reef systems, the Amazon rainforest and in the Arctic. Some poorer nations and regions, which lack capacity to provide artificially-cooled environments for their populations, **become unviable**. Deadly heat conditions persist for more than 100 days per year in West Africa, tropical South America, the Middle East and South-East Asia, which together with land degradation and rising sea levels contributes to 21 perhaps a billion people being displaced. Water availability decreases sharply in the most affected regions at lower latitudes (dry tropics and subtropics), affecting about two billion people worldwide. **Agriculture becomes nonviable** in the dry subtropics. Most regions in the world see a significant drop in food production and increasing numbers of **extreme weather events**, including heat waves, floods and storms. **Food production is inadequate** to feed the global population and food prices skyrocket, as a consequence of a one-fifth decline in crop yields, a decline in the nutrition content of food crops, a catastrophic decline in insect populations, desertification, monsoon failure and **chronic water shortages**, and conditions **too hot for human habitation** in significant food-growing regions. The lower reaches of the agriculturally-important river deltas such as the Mekong, Ganges and Nile are inundated, and significant sectors of some of the world's most populous cities — including Chennai, Mumbai, Jakarta, Guangzhou, Tianjin, Hong Kong, Ho Chi Minh City, Shanghai, Lagos, Bangkok and Manila — are **abandoned**. Some small islands become **uninhabitable**. Ten percent of Bangladesh is inundated, displacing 15 million people. According to the Global Challenges Foundation's Global Catastrophic Risks 2018 report, **even for 2°C of warming, more than a billion people may need to be relocated due to sea-level rise, and** In high-end scenarios "the scale of destruction is beyond our capacity to model, with a **high likelihood of human civilisation coming to an end**". 22

!—Warming—2020 Key

Trump re-election leads to catastrophic warming

---and US is key

Levitan 19 – MA @ NYU, author of the book *Not a Scientist: How Politicians Mistake, Misrepresent, and Utterly Mangle Science.*, science and politics journalist (Dave, “Would Trump’s Reelection Doom the Planet?,” *The New Republic*, [//BB">https://newrepublic.com/article/154539/trumps-reelection-doom-planet">//BB](https://newrepublic.com/article/154539/trumps-reelection-doom-planet)

The urgency of climate change is finally dawning on the public. Two-thirds of Democrats now say they view global warming as a “critical threat,” and most call it the most important issue to discuss in presidential debates. The Democratic presidential candidates are paying attention, too. Many have released detailed climate plans; most have promised to refuse campaign contributions from fossil fuel industry executives; and nearly all support having a climate-only debate. This sudden interest is understandable. The climate crisis is playing out before our eyes in ways it never has before, with unprecedented heat waves, flooding, and storms around the globe. Scientists’ warnings have also become more dire in recent years, their worst-case scenarios reading more like dystopian fiction than reality. But the most potent reason for voters to be concerned about climate change this year is that we’re running out of time to prevent some of its worst effects. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has determined that the world could hit 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming—the point at which irreversible damage begins—as soon as 2030. This time crunch has led some to say **the 2020 election represents humanity’s last hope.** “This is a climate crisis. An emergency,” Washington Governor Jay Inslee said last month during the first Democratic debate. “And it is our last chance in an administration—the next one—to do something about it.” But how important is this election, really? Scientists and policy experts agree that 2020 isn’t literally the last chance to save humanity, but four more years of Trump undoubtedly shrinks our chances to ensure a future safe from catastrophe. U.S. emissions likely wouldn’t reduce at the necessary pace, and the lack of leadership on the international stage could cause countries to decelerate their own energy transitions. **The planet** wouldn’t be doomed quite yet, but it **would be closer to doom than ever before.** Climate change is a global problem that must be addressed on a global scale, but the United States has an outsized role in whether that global effort succeeds or fails. Historically, the U.S. has emitted more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than any other country, making it the leading contributor to global warming. Today, it’s the second-largest emitter, after China. In order to maintain a stable climate, according to the IPCC, net global emissions must reach zero by 2050. To achieve that, emissions must start rapidly declining in or around 2020. If Trump is reelected, that “would probably mean a stalling of U.S. emissions,” said Corrine Le Quéré, a climate scientist at the University of East Anglia. That’s already happening under Trump. While most developed countries—including the U.S.—have averaged between 1 and 2 percent emissions reductions per year over the last decade, emissions in the U.S. rose by 3.4 percent in 2018, in part due to Trump’s campaign to dismantle climate regulations. “At this stage, to limit climate change anywhere below two degrees [of] warming, the decreases in emissions in developed countries should be accelerating,” Le Quéré said. Necessary carbon reductions in the U.S. are unlikely to happen if Trump is reelected—and not just because of his deregulatory campaign on behalf of polluters. “I’d say one of the worst things about another four years would be that it

would allow the Trump Administration to continue packing the courts with conservative judges,” said Drew Shindell, a professor of earth science at Duke University. Many of the administration’s attempts at regulatory rollbacks—of which there are 83 related to the environment, at last count—end up in the courts. So far, judges have delayed or stopped many of those policy moves, from vehicle emissions standards to efforts at promoting fossil fuel extraction on public lands. But four more years of Trump means four more years of lifetime judicial appointments for conservative judges who might be more inclined to allow the rollbacks. Each individual policy may leave a small mark on the country’s overall emissions picture, **but the sum of them would doom reductions in the near term.** A Trump win in 2020 could **discourage other countries** from rapidly reducing their emissions, too. Historically, American political leadership has been hugely influential in international climate negotiations, said Andrew Light, a senior fellow at the World Resources Institute who helped negotiate the Paris Agreement during the Obama administration. “The United States was absolutely instrumental in getting the strong agreement out of Paris,” he said. The Paris agreement, as currently drafted, is not enough to stave off the worst of global warming, but it was intended to be strengthened periodically—and since Trump announced his intention to pull the U.S. out of the agreement in June 2017, the leadership that was so crucial to the initial negotiations has been absent. The next deadline for more aggressive climate targets arrives at the end of 2020. Thus, Light said, “2020 has got to be an inflection point for the world.” Michael Mann, a distinguished professor of atmospheric science at Penn State, feels likewise. “Another four years of Trump would probably render futile any efforts to limit planetary warming to 1.5 [degrees Celsius], which is necessary to avert ever-more catastrophic climate-change impacts,” he said in an email. Others think the effort to limit warming to 1.5 degrees is futile no matter the outcome of the election. “[It’s] hard to say four more years of Trump makes impossible something that seems unlikely either way,” Shindell said. Experts like Le Quéré, however, hope that the target could still be met even if Trump wins, because U.S. emissions are not tethered irrevocably to the occupant of the White House. “The U.S. president alone would probably not completely remove the chance that the [1.5-degree] target is met, but cities and states in the U.S. would need to redouble their actions and other countries would need to work harder,” she said. That means efforts like the U.S. Climate Alliance—a group of governors representing half the states and more than half the population, committed to reaching Paris agreement goals with or without federal government help—would have to ramp up significantly during Trump’s second term. “Those particular four years are extremely important to keep the 1.5-degree limit in sight,” Le Quéré said. No one disputes that. Waiting another four years to take aggressive action on climate change will have real consequences, which may include whether the world, led by the U.S., can keep warming below that limit. But even if warming exceeds that target, **each additional fraction of a degree represents more destruction, more death.** So in that sense, it will never be too late—not in 2024, not even in 2028—to prevent an even greater toll.

!—Warming—2020 Key to Paris

2020 determines U.S. participation in the Paris agreement---key to avoid extinction from warming

Schlanger 17 - Environment Reporter for Quartz; and Akshat Rathi, Science Journalist with Quartz (Zoë, “It’s Official: Trump is Forcing the US to Turn its Back on the Paris Climate Agreement,” <https://qz.com/996376/trump-has-decided-to-pull-the-us-from-the-paris-climate-agreement/>)

Since Trump reportedly waffled up to the last moment on the Paris agreement decision, we decided to show you what almost could have been. Here’s our story, written both ways. US president Donald Trump announced today (June 1) he’s decided to withdraw the country from the Paris climate agreement. The US emits about one-sixth of the planet’s total greenhouse gas emissions, making it the second-largest emitter in the world. The decision removes the US from its commitments to international efforts to reduce fossil-fuel emissions and thereby avoid levels of global temperature rise that imperil the future viability of human life on Earth. The US joins Nicaragua and Syria as the only countries to reject the Paris agreement. Notably, Nicaragua refused to join because its leadership felt the agreement did not go far enough. Syria, meanwhile, has since 2011 been mired in one of the globe’s most violent civil conflicts. Not leaving means Trump will have to respect the US’s commitments to reduce emissions. Trump will abide by the structure laid out in the agreement, which means it could take the US up to four years to actually leave. So the real question of whether the country stays in the Paris climate agreement may be decided by voters in 2020 the presidential election. Trump, who reportedly was undecided as recently as last evening, ultimately listened to ignored the voices of energy industry giants like ExxonMobil and Shell, coal company Cloud Peak, and Rex Tillerson, his own secretary of state, not to mention some of his most trusted advisors, daughter Ivanka Trump and son-in-law Jared Kushner. He thus ignored instead listened to the climate-denying faction of his inner-circle, including Environmental Protection Agency administrator Scott Pruitt, chief strategist Steve Bannon, and a coterie of 22 Republican senators who sent a letter to the president urging him to back out. (Those senators have collectively received \$10 million in campaign contributions from the oil and gas industry since 2012.) The pledge made by the Obama administration to the Paris agreement is was not legally binding, but symbolically important. It offers offered an assurance to other nations that the country would take responsibility for its own share of global emissions. Within weeks of Trump taking office, however, his administration began the process of rolling back key federal emissions standards, making clear that it had no intention of working towards meeting the US’s commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 to about a third of the country’s 2005 emission levels. Without the US, the total number of countries that have formally pledged emissions reductions remains 147 drops to 146, in total accounting for roughly 80% 65% of the planet’s emissions. As the US vacates its seat at the bargaining table, it cedes climate leadership to India, China, and the EU, all of which have publicly pledged to strengthen their commitments to mutually reduce emissions. Still, without US participation during what scientists agree are critical years, the hope of avoiding dangerous levels of climate change slips farther away.

A new president can reverse the damage from Paris and restore US climate leadership.

Nuccitelli 17 – Dana Nuccitelli, environmental scientist and risk assessor and writes the column Climate consensus, aster's Degree in physics from the University of California at Davis, author of Climatology versus Pseudoscience, 2017 ("On climate and global leadership, it's America Last until 2020," *The Guardian*, November 13th, Available Online At <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/climate-consensus-97-per-cent/2017/nov/13/on-climate-and-global-leadership-its-america-last-until-2020>)

Five months ago, **Trump quickly cemented his legacy as the country's worst-ever president by inexplicably starting the process to withdraw from the Paris climate accords.** With even war-torn Syria now signing the agreement, the leadership of every world country has announced its intent to tackle the existential threat posed by human-caused climate change, except the United States. While this decision may seem puzzling to the rest of the world, the explanation is simple - a study published two years ago found that the Republican Party is the only major political party in the world that rejects the need to tackle climate change, and we know that voters follow elite cues. In 2016, **American voters made the terrible mistake of putting that party in charge of the entire federal government,** including electing this man president: Donald J. Trump ✓ @realDonaldTrump The concept of global warming was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive. However, a year later, Americans are already recognizing this error. Trump's approval rating is around 38%, and has not touched 40% in over six months. Meanwhile, congressional Democrats enjoy an 8–10% lead over their Republican opponents. Those polling results translated into a landslide Democratic victory in the 2017 elections last week. The clearest result came in Virginia's gubernatorial election, in which Republican candidate Ed Gillespie ran a Trump-like culture war campaign. He also took the standard Trump administration line on climate change, acknowledging only that humans play some undetermined role while supporting America's withdrawal from the Paris climate accords and opposing all policies to address the problem. Last week's election results showed that Trump has strongly mobilized Democrats to vote, even in off-year elections. In Virginia state House of Delegates elections, Democratic candidates similarly beat their Republican opponents by more than 9% in total votes. However, due to gerrymandering and geographical disadvantages (Democrats tend to cluster in cities), unless recounts change the results of close races, Democrats will only hold 49% of the seats in the Virginia House. That structural disadvantage holds across the country. Estimates are that Democrats need to beat Republicans by 7–8% in overall congressional votes in order to win a bare majority of the seats. With a current lead of 8–10% in the generic congressional ballot, they have a chance to take the House in 2018, depending on what happens over the next year. We saw that same structural advantage hand Trump the presidency in 2016. While he lost the popular vote by over 2% (nearly 3 million votes), Trump won the Electoral College, as was the case in 2000 with Bush v. Gore (Gore won the popular vote by a half million votes). America has a bizarrely unbalanced election system in which people who live in sparsely populated areas (predominantly rural Republicans) are disproportionately represented in the government. It will take a landslide election for Democrats to overcome that structural disadvantage, but last week's results demonstrate that Trump and the Republican Party have become so unpopular, it very well might happen in the 2018 and 2020 elections. That would give Democrats the opportunity to undo Republican gerrymandering after

the 2020 census. The Supreme Court is also currently considering a critical gerrymandering case. Regarding the presidency, betting markets currently give Trump approximately a 35–40% chance of winning a second term (which seems overly bullish), and Democrats a 55% chance of retaking the White House in 2020. **If that happens, the next president can quickly begin reversing the damage the Trump administration has done to American climate policies and its standing in the world.** America's divide is on display at COP23 At the UN climate talks in Bonn, the 'We Are Still In' coalition of US states, cities, tribes, and businesses has been given a US Climate Action Center. Meanwhile, the US government for the first time doesn't have a pavilion, and the Trump administration perversely plans to promote fossil fuels and nuclear power in a presentation at the meeting. As Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI) noted, If you show up at a climate conference to talk about coal, you're likely to be ignored. I think the We Are Still In delegation will get more attention than the executive branch. **We've gone from the indispensable leader to being the only country not engaged in climate change.** Many people in Congress are troubled not only from a climate standpoint but a geopolitical standpoint. China is happy to take that leadership from us. Indeed, China is stepping into the global leadership role that the United States has shrunk from under Trump's "America First" platform. Chinese carbon pollution is approaching a peak 15–20 years ahead of schedule, and its leaders relish the opportunity to take America's place as a global leader. America Last, for now Americans embrace the notion that their country is the greatest in the world. But what does it say that the United States is the nation that is responsible for the largest fraction of overall carbon pollution and global warming over the past 200 years, and is the only country in the world that refuses to take steps to address the existential threat we created? That lack of responsibility and willingness to protect the well-being of future generation is not the behavior of a great nation. However, that is almost exclusively a Republican Party position, and the party and its president are currently supported by fewer than 40% of Americans. Most of its leaders seem unwilling to reverse the party's slide toward anti-climate culture wars-based isolationism, but with accelerating climate change and a growing population of non-whites, these are positions that will cost them elections. As we saw last week, the 'Trump base' is relatively small, and structural advantages won't be enough to withstand landslide elections. America's withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement won't take effect until the day after the 2020 elections. **The next president can quickly reverse that withdrawal, making America the last country to sign on,** but resuming its global leadership role. While the Trump administration has exceeded everyone's fears in its anti-environment, anti-climate actions, the damage is temporary. While the American majority fights to wrest control of its government away from the isolationist climate-denying minority, the rest of the world (literally) is moving forward to tackle this problem.

!—Warming—Paris Key

Paris is the most important mechanism for mitigation---it can limit warming to below 2 degrees

Salawitch 17 (Ross J. Salawitch, Professor, Department of Atmospheric & Oceanic Science and Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, University of Maryland, with Timothy P. Canty, Austin P. Hope, Walter R. Tribett, Brian F. Bennett, Paris Climate Agreement: Beacon of Hope, pp. 87-93)

[ΔT was changed to “temperature change”]

One clear message that emerges from Figs. 2.15 and 2.16 is that to achieve the goal of the Paris Climate Agreement, emissions of GHGs must fall significantly below those used to drive RCP 8.5. The range of ΔT_{2100} shown in Fig. 2.16b is 1.6–4.7 °C. Climate catastrophe (rapid rise of sea level, large shifts in patterns of drought and flooding, loss of habitat, etc.) will almost certainly occur by end of this century if the emissions of GHGs, particularly CO₂, follow those used to drive RCP 8.5.³² The book Six Degrees: Our Future on a Hotter Planet (Lynas 2008) provides an accessible discourse of the consequences of global warming, organized into 1 °C increments of future ΔT . In the rest of this chapter, policy relevant projections of ΔT are shown, both from the EM-GC framework and CMIP5 GCMs. Figure 2.17 shows the statistical distribution of ΔT_{2060} from our EM-GC calculations. The EM-GC based projections are weighted by $1/\chi^2$ (i.e., the better the fit to the climate record, the more heavily a particular projection is weighted). The height of each histogram represents the probability that a particular range of ΔT_{2060} , defined by the width of each line segment, will occur. In other words, the most probable value of ΔT in year 2060, for the EM-GC projection that uses RCP 4.5, is 1.2–1.3 °C above pre-industrial, and there is slightly less than 20 % probability ΔT will actually fall within this range. In contrast, the CMIP5 GCMs project ΔT in 2060 will most probably be 2.0–2.2 °C warmer than pre-industrial, with a ~12 % probability ΔT will actually fall within this range. A finer spacing for ΔT is used for the EM-GC projection, since we are able to conduct many simulations in this model framework. Figure 2.18 is similar to Fig. 2.17, except the projection is for year 2100. The collection of histograms shown for any particular model (i.e., either CMIP5 GCMs or EM-GC) on a specific figure is termed the probability distribution function (PDF) for the projection of the rise in GMST (i.e., ΔT). The PDFs shown in Figs. 2.17 and 2.18 reveal stark differences in projections of ΔT based on the EM-GC framework and the CMIP5 GCMs. In all cases, ΔT [temperature change] from the GCMs far exceed projections using our relatively simple approach that is tightly coupled to observed ΔT , OHG, and various natural factors that influence climate. These differences are quantified in Table 2.1, which summarizes the cumulative probability that a specific Paris goal can be achieved. The cumulative probabilities shown in Table 2.1 are based on summing the height of each histogram that lies to the left of a specific temperature, in Figs. 2.17 and 2.18. Time series of ΔT found using the CMIP5 GCM and EM-GC approaches are illustrated in Figs. 2.19 and 2.20, which show projections based on RCP 4.5 and RCP 8.5. The colors represent the probability of a particular future value of ΔT being achieved, for projections computed in the EM-GC framework weighted by $1/\chi^2$. Essentially, the red (warm), white (mid-point), and blue (cool) colors represent the visualization of a succession of histograms like those shown in Figs. 2.17 and 2.18. The GCM CMIP5 projections of ΔT (minimum, maximum, and multi-model mean) for RCP 4.5 and RCP 8.5 are shown by the three grey lines. These lines, identical to those shown in Fig. 2.3a (RCP 4.5) and Fig. 2.3b (RCP 8.5), are based on our analysis of GCM output preserved on the CMIP5 archive. The green trapezoid, which originates from Fig. 11.25b of IPCC (2013), makes a final and rather important appearance on these figures. Also, the Paris target (1.5 °C) and upper limit (2 °C) are marked on the right vertical axis of both figures. There are resounding policy implications inherent in Figs. 2.17, 2.18, 2.19, and 2.20. First, most importantly, and beyond debate of any reasonable quantitative analysis of climate, if GHG emissions follow anything close to RCP 8.5, there is no chance of achieving either the goal or upper limit of the Paris climate agreement (Fig. 2.20). Even though there is a small amount of overlap between the Paris targets and our EM-GC projections for year 2100 in Fig. 2.20, this is a false hope. In the highly unlikely event this realization were to actually happen, it would just be a matter of time before ΔT [temperature change] broke through the 2 °C barrier, with all of the attendant negative consequences (Lynas 2008). Plus, of course, 1.5–2.0 °C warming (i.e., the lead up to breaking the 2 °C barrier) could have rather severe consequences. This outcome is all but guaranteed if GHG abundances follow that of RCP 8.5. The second policy implication is that projections of ΔT found using the EM-GC framework indicate that, if emissions of GHGs can be limited to those of RCP 4.5, then by end-century there is: (a) a 75 % probability the Paris target of 1.5 °C warming above pre-industrial will be achieved (b) a greater than 95 % probability the Paris upper limit of 2 °C warming will be achieved As will be shown in Chap. 3, the cumulative effect of the commitments from nations to restrict future emissions of GHGs, upon which the Paris Climate Agreement is based, have the world on course to achieve GHG emissions that fall just below those of RCP 4.5, provided: (1) both conditional and unconditional commitments are followed; (2) reductions in GHG emissions needed to achieve the Paris agreement, which generally terminate in 2030, are continually improved out to at least 2060. The policy implication articulated above differs considerably from the consensus in the climate modeling community that emission of GHGs must follow RCP 2.6 to achieve even the 2 °C upper limit of Paris (Rogelj et al. 2016). We caution those quick to dismiss the simplicity of our approach to consider the emerging view, discussed in Chap. 11 of IPCC (2013) and quantified in their Figs. 11.25 and TS.14, as well as our Figs. 2.3 and 2.13, that the CMIP5 GCMs warm much quicker than has been observed during the past three decades. In support of our approach, we emphasize that Our projections of ΔT [temperature change] are bounded nearly exactly by the green trapezoid of IPCC (2013), which reflects the judgement of at least one group of experts as to how ΔT [temperature change] will evolve over the next two decades. Given our present understanding of Earth's climate system, we contend the Paris Climate Agreement is a beacon of hope because it places the world on a course of having a reasonable probability of avoiding climate catastrophe.

Paris can keep it below 2 degrees

Schellhuber 16 (Schellhuber et al., German theoretical physicist and founding director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and chair of the German Advisory Council on Global Change, ‘16 Hans Joachim, Stefan Rahmstorf, and Ricarda Winkelmann, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, “Why the right climate target was agreed in Paris,” Nature Climate Change 6, 649–653)

Several analysts have recently claimed that the 2 °C line is already untenable^{16, 17}, but they failed to underpin their 'impossibility hypothesis' with concrete calculations, so the prime reference point remains the monumental 2014 assessment provided by Working Group III of the IPCC². This assessment concludes that the 2 °C guardrail can be respected at moderate cost under certain **not entirely unreasonable assumptions**, including the realization of 'negative-emissions' schemes. However, the enormous challenges associated with massive atmospheric CO₂ removal or negative emissions have been highlighted by several experts¹⁸. A recent study¹⁹ nevertheless maintains that anthropogenic global warming could be confined to 1.5 °C, an environmental excursion that would probably allow for the survival of most of the low-lying island states. The Paris Agreement¹ formally invites the IPCC to explore — by 2018, in a Special Report — global emissions pathways consistent with the lower end of the temperature target range. The 2014 IPCC analysis has to be applauded for shattering the sweeping infeasibility myth. However, the authors of this Commentary are not convinced that decarbonization will necessarily come in the form of such a planned, smooth, centennial-scale transition. We think that a better chance to deliver on the Paris promises can be generated by an alternative and more plausible route: in order to avoid the need to recourse to negative emissions as a late-regrets magic bullet (with questionable outcome), renewable energies and efficiency technologies could be scaled up exponentially, more rapidly than envisaged in the integrated assessment models behind the IPCC scenarios. We expect that such a 'technical explosion' will be matched by an 'induced implosion' of the incumbent industrial metabolism nourished by coal, oil and gas. Among the driving processes, investment dynamics is crucial, and this dynamic might in fact transgress its own tipping point in response to the narrative transpiring from Paris. This has often been described as the bursting of the 'carbon bubble'²⁰. Yet what could be concrete triggers of such a disruptive change in asset fluxes? We can think of at least three causative pathways, which all have to do with expectation and fear. First, there is the classical hypothesis that a strong climate agreement paves the way towards carbon-pricing instruments that will be adopted by more and more nation states in the medium term. As a consequence, investors anticipating the so-induced rise in fossil business costs should make the rational choice to opt out of that business. Second, there is a growing risk/chance that morals are going to interfere significantly with economics. The so-called divestment campaign has become a global social movement that demands leaving most of the fossil fuel resources in the ground^{21, 22}. In public, many business leaders and government officials still try to ridicule or dismiss this sentiment surge within civil society. Yet in private conversations they admit their worries that particularly institutional investors (such as pension funds or big foundations) might be 'infected' by the divestment virus. Third, there is Schumpeter's 'creative destruction' that might instigate a systemic innovation of the existing economic structures. Let us briefly elaborate on this: when studying industrial history for a better understanding of transformational processes, one encounters certain evidence for a semi-quantitative rule, known as Pareto Principle²³, which states that in heterogeneous community production systems, roughly 80% of the total output is typically generated by roughly 20% of the individual units involved. The Italian economist Vilfredo Pareto originally formulated this empirical rule in his studies about the distribution of population and wealth and provided a number of supporting observations. The '80–20 law' was later found to work in numerous other contexts, including prominent examples from manufacturing, quality control, computing science and hazard protection^{24, 25}. With respect to the Paris Agreement, the Pareto Principle could come into play in two different ways²⁶: following the 'law of the vital few', it can be argued that the decarbonization of the world will be led by a critical minority of key agents that advance transformative action. In fact, the intended nationally determined contributions submitted by crucial countries in the run-up to COP21 are not sufficient in terms of medium-term emissions reductions, yet may initialize an accelerating diversion of development pathways away from fossil trajectories. China has recently announced the closure of a thousand coal mines as its coal use is falling and expected to continue its decline, and India appears very serious about implementing its colossal renewables target announced before Paris. These are self-amplifying developments that have the potential to tip the global market scales. Based on certain observations from industrial history and investment behavior (see, for example, ref. 27) we submit here also a different Pareto-type hypothesis: if a traditional and a novel business paradigm compete with each other, the old one tends to implode once the new one reaches a market penetration of about 15–20 percent (according to appropriate metrics). On the one hand, it can be argued that investors will perceive an alternative systems option as too marginal as long as its business share is clearly below 10%. For instance, in the 1990s solar electricity was expected to never rise to significance. On the other hand, asset managers are looking for emerging opportunities, where they are ahead of the pack and can expect above-average returns. Once the alternative systems option exceeds around a quarter of the overall pertinent business volume, it cannot be considered a smart minority choice any

more. These two arguments combine to delineate a “basin of venture capital attraction” centred in the 15–20% domain. The share of new renewables is rapidly increasing²⁸, especially in the electricity sector, and might quickly pass through **this critical domain**, as several examples on the national level **teach us**. A prime country example is provided by Denmark, which increased its wind share in total power demand to a new record in 2015, moving from 17% to 42% within just one decade²⁹. By contrast, **the renewables contribution to the overall global energy consumption only rose from 17% in 2004 to 19% in 2013**²⁸. This does not indicate, however, that the dynamics got stuck in the 15–20% range; **those numbers only mask several dramatic developments**: first, the pertinent lion's share still refers to the 'old' renewables such as traditional biomass and conventional hydroelectricity, which are either resource-restricted or highly capital/planning-intensive. Those problems are much less serious for the 'new' renewables such as solar photovoltaics (solar PV), which has virtually no supply limits and is perfectly scalable. Second, **entire energy market sectors such as transportation are poised for transformational change towards electrification, not least by imminent advances in storage technologies and operations**. Therefore, we expect the new renewables to take the lead and to push the total renewables share quickly beyond the 20% line. **A recent study³⁰ confirms that the deployment of solar and wind power capacities worldwide has increased exponentially while the costs of solar and wind power generation have fallen in a similarly non-linear fashion** (Fig. 3). **In retrospective, these developments may be considered as transgression of regional and global tipping points**.

!—Warming—US Key

Other countries are acting on climate now but failure to reduce U.S. emissions derails global targets that solve dangerous levels of warming

Rahmstorf 17 – Professor of Ocean Physics at Potsdam University, Head of Earth System Analysis at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (Stefan, “The world needs the US in fight against climate change,” *The Hill*, <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/energy-environment/336066-the-world-needs-the-us-in-fight-against-climate-change>)

The incontrovertible physics of the greenhouse effect means that global temperatures are rising. They have risen exactly as was predicted in the 1970s, by 1 degree Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures until now. Incontrovertible physics also means that warming causes sea-levels to rise. They are rising faster now than they have for several millennia, and the rise has accelerated threefold during the 20th century. Global warming also brings us more extreme weather events, like crippling heat waves and droughts already affecting millions of people.¶ The world must work together to stop global warming. It is a threat to all of us, to our children and to our children’s children. It cannot be reversed, only stopped in time.¶ The Paris accord is not perfect, but it is the best we could hope for. The deal’s main fault is that, due to decades of dithering, it came so late. It aspires to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, but that is practically unachievable by now. Some critical tipping points may have already been triggered.¶ The West Antarctic Ice Sheet looks doomed, a fatal instability that will lead to its irreversible decay and raise global sea levels by three meters. Coral reefs are already dying on a massive scale due to heat stress. Even holding global temperatures well below 2 degrees Celsius, which should help to prevent even worse tipping points from happening, will require global emissions to fall to zero by 2040 or 2050 at the latest.¶ That is why fighting climate change is a race against the clock now. That is why with any delay, even by a few years, the last chance to halt global warming within manageable bounds is slipping through our fingers.¶ President Trump appears unaware of basic scientific knowledge, preferring to believe a false propaganda narrative from a group of fossil-fuel fans among his advisers. He even reportedly fell for a well-known fake Time magazine cover — supposedly from the 1970s but in reality a modern Photoshop job — warning of an Ice Age. It’s a favorite myth promoted by climate deniers that most climate scientists predicted an Ice Age in the 1970s.¶ And Trump has clearly fallen for the false “Climategate” narrative, referring to “those horrible emails that were sent between the scientists” in a New York Times interview. This kind of doubt over climate science is a “product with an industry behind it.” Someone with a lot of money is trying to fool you with this — and, by the way, with bizarre economic studies that paint a grim picture of the economic consequences of the Paris accord. The organizations that make up the U.S. climate change counter-movement have an annual income of over \$900 million.¶ In the scientific community, there has long been an overwhelming consensus about the basic facts of human-caused global warming. Apart from the studies that demonstrate this, I can vouch for this fact from my personal experience of working in climate science for the past thirty years.¶ The United States is currently the second-largest emitter of greenhouse gases after China; in terms of the accumulated historical emissions it is the largest. And, of course, U.S. emissions per person are about twice as large as those of China or of Europe. That means that the U.S. has a **large responsibility** for the worldwide consequences of these emissions that it cannot just walk away from.¶ Leaving the Paris Agreement and withdrawing from its emissions reduction

commitment is a reckless and irresponsible act. The Trump administration will not be able to derail the global effort to halt global warming, since almost every country on the planet by now understands — at least partly — how serious the threat of further global warming is.¶ But the U.S. can delay progress enough to push the Paris goals out of reach. If the U.S. does not reduce its emissions in the coming years along with the rest of the world, we will altogether fail in keeping global warming below a **highly dangerous level.**

!—Warming—Extinction

Climate change leads to extinction

Klein 17 - former Miliband Fellow, lectured at the London School of Economics on the anti-globalization movement, social activist, and filmmaker known for her political analyses and criticism of corporate globalization and of capitalism (Naomi, “No is not enough: Resisting Trump’s shock politics and winning the world we need,” pg. 68-70)//BB

The stakes in the 2016 election were enormously high for a great many reasons, from the millions who stood to lose their health insurance to those targeted by racist attacks as Trump fanned the flames of rising white nationalism; from the families that stood to be torn apart by cruel immigration policies to the prospect of women losing the right to decide whether or not to become mothers, to the reality of sexual assault being normalized and trivialized at the highest reaches of power. With so many lives on the line, there is nothing to be gained by ranking issues by urgency and playing “my crisis is bigger than your crisis.” If it’s happening to you, if it’s your family being torn apart or you who is being singled out for police harassment, or your grandmother who cannot afford a life-saving treatment, or your drinking water that’s laced with lead—it’s all a five-alarm fire. Climate change isn’t more important than any of these other issues, but it does have a different relationship to time. When the politics of climate change go wrong—and they are very, very wrong right now—we don’t get to try again in four years. Because in four years the earth will have been radically changed by all the gases emitted in the interim, and our chances of averting an irreversible catastrophe will have shrunk. This may sound alarmist, but I have interviewed the leading scientists in the world on this question, and their research shows that it’s simply a neutral description of reality. The window during which there is time to lower emissions sufficiently to avoid truly catastrophic warming is closing rapidly. Lots of social movements have adopted Samuel Beckett’s famous line “Try again. Fail again. Fail better” as a lighthearted motto. I’ve always liked the attitude; we can’t be perfect, we won’t always win, but we should strive to improve. The trouble is, Beckett’s dictum doesn’t work for climate—not at this stage in the game. If we keep failing to lower emissions, if we keep failing to kick-start the transition in earnest away from fossil fuels and to an economy based on renewables, if we keep dodging the question of wasteful consumption and the quest for more and more and bigger and bigger, there won’t be more opportunities to fail better. Nearly everything is moving faster than the climate change modeling projected, including Arctic sea-ice loss, ice-sheet collapse, ocean warming, sea-level rise, and coral bleaching. The next time voters in countries around the world go to the polls, more sea ice will have melted, more coastal land will have been lost, more species will have disappeared for good. The chance for us to keep temperatures below what it would take for island nations such as, say, Tuvalu or the Maldives to be saved from drowning becomes that much slimmer. These are irreversible changes—we don’t get a do-over on a drowned country. The latest peer-reviewed science tells us that if we want a good shot at protecting coastal cities in my son’s lifetime—including metropolises like New York City and Mumbai—then we need to get off fossil fuels with superhuman speed. A paper from Oxford University that came out during the campaign, published in the Applied Energy journal, concluded that for humanity to have a fifty-fifty chance of meeting the temperature targets set in the climate accord negotiated in Paris at the end of 2015, every new power plant would have to be zero-carbon starting in 2018. That’s the second year of the Trump presidency. For most of us—including me—this is very hard information to wrap our heads around, because we are used to narratives that reassure us about the inevitability of eventual progress. Martin Luther King Jr. said, “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.” It’s a powerful idea that sadly doesn’t work for the climate crisis. The wealthy governments of the world have procrastinated for so long, and made the problem so much worse in the meantime, that the arc has to bend very, very fast now—or the shot at justice is gone for good. We are almost at midnight on the climate clock. Not Just Another Election Cycle—Epic Bad Timing During the Democratic primaries, I was really struck by the moment when a young woman confronted Hillary Clinton on the campaign trail and asked her if—given the scale of the global warming crisis—she would pledge not to take any more money from the fossil fuel interests that are supercharging it. Up to that point, Clinton’s campaign had received large sums of money from employees and registered lobbyists of fossil fuel companies—about \$1.7 million, according to Greenpeace’s research. Clinton looked disgusted and snapped at the young woman, saying she was “so sick” of this issue coming up. A few days later, in an interview, Clinton said young people should “do their own research.” The woman who had asked the question, Eva Resnick-Day, worked as a campaigner for Greenpeace. She had done her research, she insisted, “and that is why we are so terrified for the future.... What happens in the next four or eight years could determine the future of our planet and the human species.” For me, her words cut to the heart of why this was not just another election cycle. Why it was not only legitimate but necessary to question Hillary’s web of corporate entanglements. Resnick-Day’s comments also highlight one of the big reasons why Trump’s presidency is harrowing: the most powerful man in the world is a person who says global warming is a hoax invented by the Chinese, and who is feverishly trashing the (already inadequate) restraints on fossil fuels that his country had put in place, encouraging other governments to do the same. And it’s all happening at the worst possible time in human history. We have so far warmed the planet by just one degree Celsius, and from that, we are already seeing dramatic results: the mass coral die-off, balmy Arctic weather leading to severe ice loss, the breaking apart of Antarctic ice sheets. If we continue on our current pollution

trajectory, we are set to warm the planet by four to six degrees Celsius. The climate scientist and emissions expert Kevin Anderson says that four degrees of warming is “incompatible with any reasonable characterization of an organized, equitable and civilized global community.” That is why governments came together in Paris and drew up an agreement to make their best efforts to get off this dangerous course, and try to limit warming to “well below” 2 degrees, pursuing efforts to keep it below 1.5 degrees. The high end of that temperature target represents double the warming we have already experienced, so it’s by no means safe.

Warming causes extinction---consensus

Schultz 16 – retired Professor and Chair of Computer Information Systems at Woodbury University (Robert, “Modern Technology and Human Extinction,” <http://proceedings.informingscience.org/InSITE2016/InSITE16p131-145Schultz2307.pdf>)

There is consensus that there is a relatively short window to reduce carbon emissions before drastic effects occur. Recent credible projections of the result of lack of rapid drastic action is an average temperature increase of about 10o F by 2050. This change alone will be incredibly disruptive to all life, but will also cause great weather and climate change. For comparison purposes, a 10 degree (Fahrenheit) decrease was enough to cause an ice layer 4000 feet thick over Wisconsin (Co2gether, 2012). Recently relevant information has surfaced about a massive previous extinction. This is the Permian extinction, which happened 252 million years ago, during which 95% of all species on earth, both terrestrial and aquatic, vanished. The ocean temperature after almost all life had disappeared was 15 degrees (Fahrenheit) above current ocean temperatures. Recent information about the Permian extinction indicates it was caused by a rapid increase in land and ocean temperatures, caused by the sudden appearance of stupendous amounts of carbon in the form of greenhouse gases (Kolbert, 2014, pp. 102-144). The origin of the carbon in these enormous quantities is not yet known, but one possibility is the sudden release of methane gases stored in permafrost. This is also a possibility in our current situation. If so, extinction would be a natural side effect of human processes. There is also a real but smaller possibility of what is called “runaway greenhouse,” in which the earth’s temperature becomes like Venus’ surface temperature of 800o The threat of extinction here is not entirely sudden. The threat is, if anything, worse. Changes in the atmosphere--mainly increases in the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere-- can start processes that can’t be reversed but which take long periods of time to manifest. “Runaway greenhouse” may be the worst. Once again, suggestions of technological solutions to this situation should be treated with some skepticism. These proposals are often made by technophiles ignoring all the evidence that technology is very much subject to unanticipated side effects and unanticipated failures. What has happened concerning the depletion of the ozone layer should be a clear warning against the facile uses of technology through geoengineering to alter the makeup of the entire planet and its atmosphere. The complicating factor in assessing extinction likelihood from climate change is corporations, especially American fossil fuel corporations such as Exxon-Mobil and Shell. Through their contributions, they have been able to delay legislation ameliorating global warming and climate change. As mentioned before, recently released papers from Exxon-Mobil show that the corporation did accept the scientific findings about global warming and climate change. But they concluded that maintaining their profits was more important than acting to ameliorate climate change. Since it is not a matter of getting corporations to appreciate scientific facts, the chances of extinction from climate change are good. To ameliorate climate change, it is important to leave a high percentage of fossil fuel reserves in the ground. But this is exactly

what a profit-seeking fossil fuel corporation cannot do. One can still hope that because fossil fuel corporations are made up of individuals, increasingly bad consequences of global warming and climate change will change their minds about profits. But because of the lag in effects, this mind change will probably be too late. So I conclude we will probably see something like the effects of the Permian extinction perhaps some time **around 2050**. (The Permian extinction was 95% extinction of all species.) This assumes the release of methane from the arctic will take place around then.

!—Warming—AT warming inevitable

Even if some warming is inevitable, stopping tail-end risk prevents extinction

Roberts 8-7-2018 (David, “This graphic explains why 2 degrees of global warming will be way worse than 1.5,” Vox, https://www.vox.com/platform/amp/energy-and-environment/2018/1/19/16908402/global-warming-2-degrees-climate-change?__twitter_impression=true)

By delaying the necessary work of decarbonization, we are consigning millions of people in tropical regions to less food and in the Mediterranean to less water — with all the attendant health problems and conflict. We’re allowing more heat waves and higher seas. We’re giving up on the world’s coral reefs, and with them the hundreds of species that rely on them. And even then, the decision will still face us: **2 degrees or 3?** Again, it will mean more heat waves, more crop losses, more water shortages, more inundated coastal cities, more disease and conflict, millions more suffering. And even then, the decision: **3 degrees or 4?** The longer we wait, the more human suffering and irreversible damage to ecosystems we inscribe into our collective future. But there’s no hiding, no escaping the imperative to decarbonize. It **must be done** if our species is to have a long-term home on Earth.

!—Warming—AT adaptation

Adaptation efforts are completely swamped by emissions

Harvey 19 – environmental journalist @ The Guardian (Fiona, “Adaptation isn’t enough. We’ve got to throw everything at the climate crisis,” *The Guardian*, [//BB">https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/sep/11/adaptation-climate-disaster-cutting-emissions">//BB](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/sep/11/adaptation-climate-disaster-cutting-emissions)

When we’re faced with threats of inundation, our reaction has traditionally been to build walls.

Sea-level rises, storms and floods have been held back with solid barriers, seawalls and dykes. We have used walls to keep out people, too: the fact that this has failed throughout the ages has not stopped its recent revival in the United States. The climate crisis threatens global sea-level rises of well over half a metre if we fail to act, while tidal storm surges will reach many times that height. Fiercer and more frequent hurricanes will batter us, and millions of people who live in areas where crops have failed and wells run dry will be forced to flee their homes. But walls will not work with the climate crisis, even if the temptation to try to

keep out the consequences, rather than dealing with the causes, is as strong as ever.

The prospect of a “climate apartheid”, in which the rich insulate themselves from the impacts of the climate emergency while the poor and vulnerable are abandoned to their fate, is now real. According to the UN, climate-related disasters are already taking place at the rate of one a week, though only a few of them – such as Hurricane Dorian – get reported. Nowhere on Earth will be untouched, with the number of people facing water shortages set to leap from 3.6 billion today to 5 billion by 2050. At least 100 million people will be plunged into poverty in the next decade, and in the decades following that, rising sea levels will swamp coastal cities from Miami to Shanghai, wiping \$1tn a year from the global economy. Agriculture will become increasingly difficult, with more people displaced as a result, searching for liveable conditions elsewhere. The Global Commission on Adaptation, headed by Bill Gates and Ban Ki-moon, warned this week that we have failed to plan adequately for a crisis that is now upon us. At a series of high-level meetings beginning in the next few weeks, and continuing into next year, world leaders and representatives of civil society and businesses will try to devise a better response. Among the questions they face will be how to set new targets, secure new funding and take more effective action to help the world not just prevent further warming, but to adapt to the impacts already being felt. Currently, 20 times more is being spent on reducing emissions than building resilience to the effects of rising temperatures and extreme weather, according to the Commission on Adaptation. That seems patently unbalanced, and neglecting adaptation is putting millions of people and their livelihoods in danger now, as well as storing up problems for the future. What’s more, money invested today will pay dividends in the near future. Spending less than \$2tn by 2030 would result in more than \$7tn saved in damage avoided and better economic growth. These sums sound huge, but are a fraction of the amount the world will spend on infrastructure in the next decade. And modern adaptation means more than building seawalls. Restoring natural features, such as mangrove swamps and wetlands, can do far more to protect coastal regions, as well as nurturing biodiversity and tourism. New technology will play a key role, as early warnings of extreme weather give people time to take shelter or protect their property. Engineering climate-ready infrastructure encompasses everything from porous pavements to urban trees to provide shade. What’s clear is that we need to adapt and build resilience now, because climate change is no longer a comfortably faraway problem. The predicted ravages have come sooner than expected: heatwaves over much of the northern hemisphere last year, floods and extreme weather in south-east Asia, Arctic ice melting at unprecedented levels this summer, and Hurricane Dorian, one of the strongest ever recorded. Worse still, some of these effects are likely themselves to increase temperatures further, in a series of feedback loops. The fires in the Amazon are destroying a vital “carbon sink”. Shrinking ice reveals darker water that absorbs more heat than highly reflective snow. Melting permafrost releases methane, a greenhouse gas many times more powerful than carbon dioxide. It is tempting, in the face of these events, to suggest that the game is up for trying

to prevent climate change. The emissions reductions needed to stop it are so vast, and the changes to our way of

life so total, that it may seem like all we can do is adapt to the consequences. The hastening prospect of a “climate

apartheid” is morally revolting as well as politically alarming, and could lead to a kind of paralysis. The view that adapting to inevitable climate change should be our priority, over futile and ruinously expensive attempts to cut emissions, has been

spread by those who want to continue to emit CO₂, come what may. Fossil fuel companies saw adaptation, along with the idea that we could geo-engineer our way out of trouble, as a way to keep selling oil while paying lip service to the climate science. Now it is gaining traction among more respectable thinkers. Jonathan

Franzen, the American novelist and nature lover, whipped up a storm when he suggested in the *New Yorker* that: “In the long run, it probably makes no difference how badly we overshoot 2C ... Every billion dollars spent on high-speed trains ... is a billion not banked for disaster preparedness, reparations to inundated countries, or future humanitarian relief.” It’s true that spending on adaptation is a good deal. It saves lives, and if used wisely could stave off the climate apartheid that experts foresee. But setting up

adaptation versus emissions-cutting as an either-or choice is a grave mistake. Trying to adapt to the consequences of climate change while continuing to burn fossil fuels is like trying to mop up an overflowing sink while the taps are still running. As long as we continue to pump CO₂ into the air, we are fuelling rises in temperature. We cannot outrun global heating any more than we can hold back

the rising sea with dykes. And the fires blazing through the Amazon show that without action, things could easily get much worse.

We won’t adapt successfully---and it can’t solve any of the systemic risks like oceanic decline, biodiversity loss and oxygen deficiency

McPherson 16 - professor emeritus of natural resources and the environment at the University of Arizona

(Guy, "Climate-Change Summary and Update," <http://guymcpherson.com/climate-chaos/climate-change-summary-and-update/>)

If you think we'll adapt, think again, even if you're the Wall Street Journal claiming on 2 September 2014 that it's too late for mitigation. **The rate of evolution trails the rate of climate change by a factor of 10,000**, according to a paper in the August 2013 issue of Ecology Letters focused on vertebrates. An example comes from the 20 January 2016 online issue of Global Ecology and Biogeography comes research focused on California, which has an extensive collection of herbarium records. **The researchers used 681,609 georeferenced herbarium records to estimate mean shifts in elevational and climatic space of 4426 plant taxa, and found that non-native, invasive species were more likely to be expanding their ranges than native species.** Furthermore, **plants and animals did not move together in synchronized fashion, and thus leading to the suspicion that ecological communities are breaking down and disassembling.** Tack on the following title from a 6 June 2015 paper in PLoS Biology and it's easy to understand the importance of habitat for human animals: "Suitable Days for Plant Growth Disappear under Projected Climate Change: Potential Human and Biotic Vulnerability." **Even once-rich habitats in Antarctica are becoming biologically impoverished as icebergs, increasingly breaking free from the surrounding sea ice, scour the shallow-water rocks and boulders on which a diversity of creatures cling to life** (according to research published in the 16 June 2014 issue of Current Biology). A paper in the 22 February 2016 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences reports that, consistent with research on vertebrates, butterflies cannot keep up with rapid changes in habitat. The bottom line of the abstract: **"These results highlight a potentially common situation in changing environments: evolutionary changes are not strong enough to fully compensate for the direct adverse effects of environmental change and thereby rescue populations from extinction."** ** A study published in the 22 June 2016 issue of Earth and Planetary Science Letters reports that parts of the ocean became inhospitable for some organisms as **the Earth's climate warmed 94 million years ago. As the Earth warmed, several natural elements – what we think of as vitamins – depleted, causing some organisms to die off or greatly decrease in numbers. The decrease of these trace metals also suggests a global expansion of oxygen deficiency, which could lead to larger dead zones in bodies of water around the world, meaning little to no life could exist in those areas.**

***** AFF *****

--- Uniqueness ---

UQ—Trump Win—Secret Voters

Trump will win – polls cant account for secret voters

Parker 7/23 – staffwriter

(Kathleen Parker Jul 23, 2020 “Here's why Trump can still win” https://www.heraldbulletin.com/opinion/columns/heres-why-trump-can-still-win/article_0bf68d4e-cd2c-11ea-9d9c-87b1a326f56b.html) IB

Four years ago in mid-July, polls said Hillary Clinton was leading Donald Trump by 12 points, much as they say Joe Biden leads him now. The former secretary of state had 49% support compared with Trump's 37%, according to a Bloomberg poll. Libertarian and former New Mexico governor Gary Johnson had 9%. Most confounding given the final results, 55% of those surveyed said they would never vote for Trump, while just 43% said the same about Clinton. The survey of 750 people was conducted shortly after Trump said a federal judge of Mexican descent couldn't be impartial in a case against Trump University because of the candidate's push for a U.S.-Mexico border wall. This comment earned him a stern rebuke from then-Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, R-Wis., saying Trump's comment was “the textbook definition of a racist remark.” Ryan was Mitt Romney's running mate in 2012, the year Trump, while watching Romney sink during his second debate with President Barack Obama, said to himself, “I can win.” What emerged from the Bloomberg poll, as well as dozens of others leading up to Election Day, was the inescapable conclusion that Clinton would win. Even Trump believed so, despite his rally-to-rally “winning” refrain. In other words, what we think we know isn't always so. When Trump was elected in 2016, the news was received in the nation's capital, where I lived at the time, like the arrival of unwanted, unexpected out-of-town visitors. Usually friendly neighbors stared vacantly at one another as they reached for their morning papers. Wordlessly, they quickly retreated back inside, away from the searing light of unbearable truth. The models and internal polling had all agreed! models and polls, like reporters and columnists, are only as good as their sources. And political history hasn't been coy about the pitfalls of relying too heavily on textbook scenarios. Politics has a scent, and the nose usually sniffs out outcomes before the eyes can see. Sweat equity wins every time. How much are people willing to wait in lines, make cold calls, give of their own money and rally strangers to support their candidate? Which candidate is most able to rally people to do the hard work? We speak in terms of authenticity, but that's not the whole of it. For good or ill, winners have a certain instinctual allure. This makes Biden's current status as the front-runner a bit uncertain. Biden-in-the-basement has worked well so far, but he may not be able to compete with a fully unleashed Trump on the hustings. Past elections remind us, too, that voters sometimes lay their own explosives when the pollster rings. Many won't even take that call, or stay on it for very long. (This is such a problem that many pollsters have given up surveying by telephone.) When the calls do go through, other problems arise: Even in those places where Trump won handily last time, folks are reluctant to express political views. Still other Trump supporters might say to a pollster that they will vote for Biden just to mess with the guy and his clipboard. Americans have a strong what-the-hell, troublemaking streak. Four years ago, I wrote about that sort of voter: the kind who pulled the lever for Trump just to tick off all the right people. That same voter, likely well-entertained these past four years, is more concerned now about the socialist bent of the Democratic Party and whether Biden is strong enough to stem the tide. There's also concern that Biden may not be as cognitively nimble as in earlier years, and that his vice-presidential pick won't be seen as presidential. Which is to say, Trump could win reelection despite his unfavorable numbers or the galloping pandemic. In his recent, free-ranging interview with Fox News anchor Chris Wallace, Trump defaulted to “fake polls” when asked about his “losing.” “I'm not losing,” he insisted. And, contrary to everything we think we know, he may not be wrong.

UQ—Trump Win—Polls Inaccurate—2016 Proves

Polling Data is irrelevant – its flawed and cant predict the election

Nicholas 7/27 – staff writer at The Atlantic, where he covers the White House.

(Peter Nicholas 7/27/20 “Don’t Count Trump Out” <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/07/how-trump-could-win-reelection/612205/>) IB

2. Polling could be wrong (again). Four years ago, the race between Trump and Hillary Clinton came down to Wisconsin, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. Trump narrowly won all three. This time around, Biden is leading in each of the same three states by anywhere from 6 to 8 points, the RealClearPolitics average of polls shows. If that sounds familiar, it may be because state surveys also showed Clinton topping Trump in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Pennsylvania ahead of the election. In Pennsylvania alone, seven different state polls taken in the first two weeks of October 2016 showed Clinton beating Trump by no fewer than 4 percentage points and by as many as 9. She wound up losing the state by about a point. Read: Debbie Dingell is afraid the Trump polls are wrong—again Postmortem analyses of state polling turned up serious flaws. In some instances, surveys failed to correct for the overrepresentation of college-educated voters who participate more in polls and tended to favor Clinton. Or they didn’t capture a trend in which most voters who made up their minds late voted for Trump. Franklin, the Marquette Law School poll director, told me that his survey now shows Biden leading the president by 8 points in Wisconsin. But how much weight do such polls deserve, given the debacle in 2016? At the end of that race, Clinton led Trump by an average of more than 6 points in Wisconsin and then lost by nearly a point. “So, that’s a large error,” Franklin said. “Was that a humbling experience?” I asked. “Yes! Absolutely. How could it not be?” **It’s not clear that state polling this time around is any better.** “You certainly see state polls appearing today that clearly are not reflecting the educational distribution in the states they’re polling,” said Franklin, who took part in a postelection polling study conducted by the American Association for Public Opinion Research. “That’s a bit of a puzzlement.” Kellyanne Conway, a former pollster and a current counselor to the president who served as Trump’s campaign manager in the 2016 race, argues that nothing has been fixed. “The same problems surround the polls this time because many of the people running the polls then are running the polls now. There’s been no course correction whatsoever,” Conway told me. “If polling were run like a business, the C-suite would have been cleaned out, the shareholders would have revolted, the customers would have walked away.”

UQ—Trump Win—Polls Inaccurate—COVID

Polls cant account for who will actually vote – COVID will effect voter outcomes

Contreras 7/23 - staffwriter

(Brian Contreras JULY 23, 2020 Biden leads in the polls: Could they be missing something?
<https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-07-23/polling-took-hit-in-2016-now-facing-coronavirus>) IB

Nathaniel Rakich, an elections analyst for prominent forecasting outlet FiveThirtyEight.com noted the virus could disrupt the electoral process in other ways. “You’ve seen it in primaries: There have been voters who haven’t been able to vote because of problems with absentee ballots, there have been long lines at some primaries,” he said. The economic impact of the pandemic could also complicate polling, Franklin said. One problem would be if large numbers of people “lose their homes and have to move, because that can involve re-registering to vote,” which isn’t always easy, he said.

UQ—Trump Win—Democrats Wont Vote

Trump will win now – progressives have already abandoned Biden in swing states

Nicholas 7/27 – staff writer at The Atlantic, where he covers the White House.

(Peter Nicholas 7/27/20 “Don’t Count Trump Out” <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/07/how-trump-could-win-reelection/612205/>) IB

4. Biden’s got his own problems. Biden has suffered personal loss, which has made him a comforting figure to grieving Americans who have lost jobs and loved ones in the pandemic. Yet he still symbolizes a brand of establishment centrism that leaves some younger voters and some in the party’s activist wing uninspired. “We have to be true to ourselves and acknowledge that Biden is a mediocre, milquetoast, neoliberal centrist that we’ve been fighting against in the Democratic establishment,” Cornel West, the Harvard University professor and a Bernie Sanders supporter, told me. If Sanders’s primary voters stay home on Election Day out of pique, that could damage Biden’s chances, especially in must-win swing states. Nina Turner, a co-chair of the Sanders campaign, told me she has no appetite for the choice she faces: “It’s like saying to somebody, ‘You have a bowl of shit in front of you, and all you’ve got to do is eat half of it instead of the whole thing.’ It’s still shit.” Expect Trump to aggravate a dispute that advances his own interests. As I’ve written, he spent months wooing Sanders voters during the primary, trying to convince them that the senator was the victim of a Democratic conspiracy to prevent him from getting the party’s nomination.

UQ—Trump Win—Voter Suppression

Trump will win now – voting stations have been shut down in key democratic areas

Nicholas 7/27 – staff writer at The Atlantic, where he covers the White House.

(Peter Nicholas 7/27/20 “Don’t Count Trump Out” <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/07/how-trump-could-win-reelection/612205/>) IB

5. Biden voters might not get to vote. If the state elections held in recent months are any sort of dry run, **November could be a disaster**. The number of polling places was slashed in the face of COVID-19, forcing voters to wait hours in line. More than 80 voting locations were shut down or consolidated in the Atlanta metro area last month, while places in Milwaukee were cut from 180 to 5. **That amounts to voter suppression**. A replay in November might dampen the Biden vote in the Democrats’ urban strongholds within red, blue, and purple states alike. **Millions of potential Biden voters would face a bleak choice**: Stay home, or go to the polls and risk catching a potentially fatal disease. An obvious work-around is mail-in voting. But Trump has used his megaphone to make the spurious claim that expanded mail-in voting is a plot to defeat Republicans, which sends a clear message to state GOP leaders and election officials that he’s not in favor of greater access. And the mail-in process is already difficult for voters in some states, as my colleague Adam Harris recently wrote.

UQ—Trump Win—October Surprise

Trump will win now – COVID breakthrough will be an ‘October Surprise’ that swings the election

Nicholas 7/27 – staff writer at The Atlantic, where he covers the White House.

(Peter Nicholas 7/27/20 “Don’t Count Trump Out” <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/07/how-trump-could-win-reelection/612205/>) IB

6. What if there’s an October surprise?

Ever the showman, Trump could try to shake up the race with a late announcement of dramatic progress in fighting COVID-19. News of a “breakthrough” would get ample attention, and whether he’s right or wrong might not get sorted out until long after the votes are counted. **By that time, it wouldn’t matter; Trump could lock in a chunk of voters grateful for any news of an antidote.**

“He’ll probably **announce a vaccine in October,**” Charlie Black, the longtime Republican strategist, told me with a laugh.

Polls cant account for sudden shifts around COVID

Contreras 7/23 - staffwriter

(Brian Contreras JULY 23, 2020 Biden leads in the polls: Could they be missing something? <https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2020-07-23/polling-took-hit-in-2016-now-facing-coronavirus>) IB

Former Vice President Joe Biden has a big lead over President Trump in polls nationally and in key swing states. But with memories of Trump’s upset victory in 2016 still fresh, professional pollsters as well as average voters are spending a lot of time wondering whether something unexpected might trip up forecasts again this year. **Many of the uncertainties involve the impact of the worldwide health crisis.** Four years ago, a mix of methodological mistakes and political circumstance led many analysts to confidently predict a Hillary Clinton presidency, only for Trump to win instead. That error came after an election cycle that seemed unique at the time: a political outsider and former reality show host on one hand, the first female nominee of a major political party on the other. This time around, circumstances feel equally novel, albeit for very different reasons. But Gelman notes that his model, which currently gives Biden a better than 9-in-10 probability of winning, is less concerned with what’s special about the current moment than with “the general range of specialness that can occur,” as captured by the historical data. “People have said, ‘Well, 2020 is special,’” he explained. “But you go back every election: 1948 was the first election without Franklin Roosevelt running in a really long time, right? 1952 had Dwight Eisenhower, who was a uniquely non-partisan figure. 1960 had [John F.] Kennedy, who was the first Catholic You can keep going; just about every election, there’s been something special and unusual.” The pandemic, then, might be unusual — but historically speaking, being unusual is the usual. **Even if forecasters did want their models to explicitly account for the coronavirus, there doesn’t seem to be an empirical way to incorporate whatever extra error the pandemic introduces**, said G. Elliott Morris, the Economist data journalist with whom Gelman worked. “You [would] have to make assumptions about how much error you’re going to add,” Morris said. “Those assumptions are really hard to make in a way that makes your model better.” But **with months to go until election day, there’s plenty of time for things to change**. Courtney Kennedy, director of survey research at Pew Research Center, said she doesn’t know what impact the coronavirus will have on the ability of polls to forecast the outcome of the election, but it’s reasonable to expect some sort of effect. “I think it’s one of the big reasons why folks

really can't take [a poll], especially a national poll, in June or July right now, and assume that that translates into votes," she said.

Thumper—Covid

Thumper—Trump’s covid response is the only factor that will determine the election

Waldman 7/3 (Paul Waldman, 7-3-2020, accessed on 7-23-2020, The Washington Post, "How Trump can win reelection", <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/07/03/how-trump-can-win-reelection/>)/Jam

Republicans are getting desperate about the state of President Trump’s reelection campaign — and you can’t blame them. It isn’t just that polls show Trump trailing Joe Biden by about 10

points. It’s also that the campaign itself is an absolute mess. Look no further than the fact that Jared Kushner, fresh from failing to achieve peace in the Middle East, manage the coronavirus response, reinvent government or solve the opioid crisis — all tasks his father-in-law assigned him — has now “asserted further control over the campaign,” according to Politico. If you’re a Republican, does that make you feel better? Meanwhile, the New York Times describes “frenetic, and often fruitless, attempts by top Republicans to soothe the president and steer him away from self-sabotage, while also manipulating him to serve their own purposes.” It’s so bad that aides are afraid to tell Trump the truth about how poorly he’s doing. Fortunately, I have the answer they’re looking for. There is something the president can do to turn things around in the four months he has left before the election. It’s not a staff shakeup, or a newly honed message, or a wittier nickname for Biden. All he has to do is change absolutely everything about how he confronts the two great crises facing the country. In other words, if he wants to get reelected, he needs to do his job. That would start with admitting that his performance in confronting the novel coronavirus pandemic has been a disaster. While many other countries have gotten the virus under control, here in the United States new cases have shot past 50,000 a day, and at least 126,000 of us have died. It’s getting worse, not better. So instead of continuing to talk about how, before you know it, the virus will disappear, Trump could make a fresh start in both his actions and his rhetoric. “I thought that if I pretended that things were going great, people wouldn’t realize how bad everything is,” he could say. “I was wrong.” Trump could then tell the country that we’re in a moment of inflection, when we can either get a handle on the pandemic or watch as everything all of us have done up until this point begins to look like a waste. And his government could immediately bring in people with actual expertise in public health and crisis management — not some of Kushner’s buddies — to run a national testing and tracing program, make sure personal protective equipment is available, and create uniform standards for both how to maximize safety and how to carefully resume normal activity. “We’ve been doing this wrong,” Trump could say. “That ends today.” Next, Trump could say this to the public: “If you’re going to be in proximity to other people, particularly indoors, wear a mask. I’m going to be modeling good behavior, so from now on, whenever you see me with others close by, I’ll be wearing a mask.” If even the governor of Texas can swallow his pride and order masks to be worn in public across most of the state, and even a Trump lickspittle on “Fox & Friends” says, “I wish the president would put on a mask every once in a while, just because it would make him look as if he’s taking it seriously,” then Trump can at least do that. The next thing Trump could do if he wants to save his reelection is to do everything possible to alleviate the economic effects of the economic crisis. Forget about photo ops at factories, forget about ridiculous cheerleading for the stock market, and actually take action to get us through this economic nightmare. That would mean extending enhanced unemployment benefits, giving state and local governments every dime they need so they can avoid the millions of layoffs that are coming if the federal government doesn’t help them out, and giving Americans at least one more round of stimulus checks, if not more. Instead of sending his treasury secretary to negotiate down from what Democrats ask for and acting as if he’s reluctant to do anything that might actually prop up the economy, he ought to be trying everything anyone can think of to put money into the economy so we can recover. If the president made this turn tomorrow, the pandemic and the economic crisis wouldn’t be behind us by Nov. 3. But at least we’d be headed in the right direction, and it would be possible that voters would decide that he’s doing a good job and he deserves to stay in office. But of course, he won’t do any of that. The relatively simple things I’ve laid out here read like an absurd fantasy. Doing the job of president at the moment when America needs him the most runs against everything Donald Trump is.

Thumper—Kanye

Kanye's entrance into the race has ensured a trump victory— his campaign has siphoned a large amount of votes from Biden's campaign

Knox 7/6 (Patrick Knox, Scottish journalist for The Sun on U.S and international politics, 7-6-2020, accessed on 7-23-2020, The US Sun, "Kanye West 'only running for president to split Joe Biden vote and make sure "buddy" Trump gets re-elected", <https://www.the-sun.com/news/1091293/kanye-west-running-president-to-split-joe-biden-vote-trump-re-elected/>)/Jam

Rapper West, who is married to reality star Kim Kardashian , announced to his 29.4million Twitter followers that he was "running for president of the United States" come the November election. The 21-time Grammy Award winning musician has been a staunch supporter of Trump. In a 2018 meeting with Trump at the White House, Kanye said: "I love this guy right here." But with just four months until polling day on November 3, he surprised fans over the weekend when he announced he was running against the president and Biden. Kanye tweeted: "We must now realize the promise of America by trusting God, unifying our vision and building our future. "I am running for president of the United States." Kim, 39, is standing by her husband's decision and billionaire pal Elon Musk, 49, is also backing him, tweeting: "You have my full support!" But some are skeptical about his true motives, suggesting **the known Trump supporter really wants to split the vote among young people.** CJ Pearson, president at activist youth organisation Last Hope USA, said: "If Kanye runs in 2020 he'd only take away votes from Joe Biden. "Young people are already unenthusiastic enough as is about Biden's candidacy but he'd also chip away at Biden's black support. "Trump voters are TRUMP voters. His base remains unchanged." Replying to Pearson, political analyst Rachel Bitecofer claimed Trump's campaign had "worked Kanye West via Elon Musk" to siphon off votes. Meanwhile actor Eric Balfour tweeted: "Do you guys think this is all a joke?" **That potentially pulling votes away from the only nominee who can defeat Donald Trump is cute or funny?** "This is the height of privilege, ultimately it won't hurt you, you're wealthy enough to survive four more years of Trump! Come the f*** on!" Another Twitter user said: "Last known, Kanye West is an avid Trump supporter. "A candidacy steering potential Biden votes is certainly one way to increase chances of a Trump win. "The best interest of a nation is at stake. Stay focused." The rapper and fashion designer, whose hits include Power, has not yet registered his name with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) for November's election. West has left his bid for the Oval Office a bit late. But while the filing deadline for independent candidates has passed in several major states, he can still get the ticket in Florida, Oklahoma, Michigan and South Carolina. The states crucially hold 61 votes in the Electoral College, enough for him affect Biden's White House bid. Kanye said at 2015's MTV awards he would run in 2020. Others suspect the move is a publicity stunt, something he is known to do. The first single of West's upcoming album God's Country did drop this week. As well as pulling stunts, he is also known to court controversy. In a 2018 interview he claimed that slavery was a "choice" for African Americans - and defended his decision to support Trump.

He can effect the election even if he isn't on the ballot – write ins are enough to have an effect in key swing states

Fink 7/7 – staffwriter

(By Jenni Fink On 7/7/20 AT 2:01 PM EDT "If Kanye West Actually Runs for President, Will He Hurt Biden or Trump?" <https://www.newsweek.com/kanye-west-2020-campaign-president-white-house-slim-chances-electoral-college-1515954>) IB

If Kanye West makes a serious bid for the White House, his fame and fortune could benefit him but it's unlikely it'll be enough to overcome the disadvantage of a late start in order to have a significant impact on the election. West, who floated the possibility he'd make a bid for the White House at least twice before, posted to Twitter on Saturday that he is running for president. Though the rapper is known for teasing song and album releases with political statements, he hasn't yet filed any of the paperwork required to formally enter the race. By the time West announced his intentions, the deadline to file to appear on the ballot as an independent passed in Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina and Texas, according to the Federal Election Commission. Those six states account for 71 of the 270 electoral college votes needed to win the presidency. By July 16, filing deadlines will have

passed in seven more states, accounting for an additional 97 electoral votes. If West doesn't get on any ballots with July deadlines, he will have forfeited 255 electoral college votes, putting him at a significant disadvantage. That said, West has the money to put together a campaign without relying on fundraising efforts. But he's also going up against the COVID-19 era when it's difficult to organize, Barry Burden, director of the Elections Research Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison told Newsweek. An election victory is "very unlikely," Burden predicted, but he could "have an effect in any state that's close." "I think he has little chance to win the popular vote anywhere but if there's a close divide in a state like Michigan, maybe Kanye could play the role of the decider," Burden said. "Minor parties often end up playing that role." Ralph Nader's 2000 campaign for the White House is one such example. Running against Democratic candidate Al Gore and Republican candidate George W. Bush, the Green Party candidate garnered about three percent of the nationwide vote. Bush won Florida by 537 votes and analysts noted at the time that if a small percentage of Nader's 100,000 Florida supporters voted for Gore instead, he would have ended up in the White House. If West doesn't make the deadline to appear as an independent on the ballot, people can still vote for him as a candidate in states where write-ins are accepted. Although, that would likely decrease the number of votes he receives even more.

UQ—Biden Win—UQ Overwhelms the Link

Uniqueness overwhelms the link – Biden will win by a landslide now

Cillizza 7/17 - CNN Editor-at-large

(Analysis by Chris Cillizza, Updated 10:13 AM ET, Fri July 17, 2020 “The signs of a Democratic landslide are everywhere” <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/17/politics/democrats-republicans-2020-election-trump-house-senate/index.html>) IB

With just more than 100 days left before the 2020 election, there are an increasing number of red flags that suggest Republicans are headed toward a disastrous result at the ballot box this fall.

Consider: * President Trump's ratings on his handling of the coronavirus pandemic continue to collapse. In a new Washington Post-ABC News poll, just 38% approved of how Trump has dealt with the virus while 60% disapproved. Back in March, 51% approved of how Trump was handling the pandemic while 45% disapproved in that same poll. As the public has soured on Trump's ability to deal with the coronavirus pandemic, it has also moved heavily in Joe Biden's favor in general election polling. The former vice president leads Trump by 15 and 11 points in two new national polls released this week. * Democrats have a double-digit lead in party identification. In a new Gallup number, 50% of Americans identify as Democrats or Democratic leaners while 39% describe themselves as Republicans or Republican leaners. That's a major shift from January when Republicans had a 47% to 45% edge on party ID in Gallup polling and a rapid acceleration of Democrats' advantage since even May when Democrats had a 3-point edge on the party ID question. * Democrats are crushing Republicans in fundraising. The Democratic candidates in the 11 most competitive Senate contests in the country raised a collective \$67.3 million in between April 1 and June 30 --- \$20.5 million more than their Republican counterparts, according to tabulations made by the Wall Street Journal. The story is the same in the House where Democratic candidates raised \$457 million in that 2nd quarter of 2020 compared to \$365 million for Republican candidates. And, as the Center for Responsive Politics, which did that calculation, notes: "That fundraising difference is even larger in swing districts currently held by well-funded Democratic incumbents. "Recent filings show that Democrats are widening the gap. In 13 races holding primaries in June and July that are considered competitive by the Cook Political Report, incumbent Democrats have 9 times more money in the bank -- \$40 million to \$4.5 million -- than the best-funded Republican challengers." Political handicappers are taking notice. On Friday, the Cook Political Report moved 20(!) House races in favor of Democrats -- an unprecedented shift to one party. As House editor David Wasserman wrote: "President Trump's abysmal polling since the pandemic began is seriously jeopardizing down-ballot GOP fortunes. We may be approaching the point at which dozens of House Republicans will need to decide whether to cut the president loose and run on a "check and balance" message, offering voters insurance against congressional Democrats moving too far left under a potential Biden administration...." "...Republicans began the cycle hoping to pick up 18 seats to win the majority back. Now they're just trying to avoid a repeat of 2008, when they not only lost the presidency but got swamped by Democrats' money and lost even more House seats after losing 30 seats and control two years earlier. For the first time this cycle, Democrats have at least as good a chance at gaining House seats as Republicans on a net basis." Earlier this week, Inside Elections' editor Nathan Gonzales wrote this of the state of play in the Senate (bolding is mine): "The Senate has been in play for at least nine months, but Democratic chances of winning control of the chamber have improved significantly in the last few weeks...." "...Democrats need a net gain of four seats for a majority, but can control the Senate by gaining three seats and winning the White House. With less than four months to go before Election Day, the most likely outcome is a Democratic net gain of 3-5 Senate seats. Since Biden has a clear advantage in the presidential race, that means Democrats are more likely than not to win control of the Senate." THE POINT -- NOW ON YOUTUBE! In each episode of his weekly YouTube show, Chris Cillizza will delve a little deeper into the surreal world of politics. Click to subscribe! On the presidential level, Trump is in equally bad shape. The Cook Report gives Biden 279 electoral votes in the solid, likely or leaning Democrat categories as compared to just 188 for Trump. This week the University of Virginia's Crystal Ball moved seven traditional Republican strongholds -- Alaska, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, South Carolina and Utah -- from safe Republican states to likely Republican states and into the slate of potential competitive races in the presidential race. As UVA's Kyle Kondik wrote: "Trump is extremely unlikely to win if the polls continue to look the way they do now. And if these numbers represent a new normal, we need to account for the possibility that this election won't be particularly close, and that new states may come into play. In other words, if the national picture remains bleak for Trump, then the slippage he's seen from earlier this year wouldn't just be limited to a handful of swing states." In short: All the signs are there that this could be a landslide up and down the ballot for Democrats. Yes, things could change between now and November 3. But, given Trump's obstinacy in refusing to admit his errors in dealing with the coronavirus and the current spikes in some of the most

populous states in the country, such a turnaround seems very, very unlikely at the moment.

Biden is too far ahead in the election – any changes in voter turnout will be small and insignificant

Cole 6-20 (Brendan Cole; Editor at Newsweek; 6-20-2020; "With Trump weak in swing state polls, Biden has 86 percent chance: Forecast"; Newsweek; <https://www.newsweek.com/joe-biden-polls-donald-trump-election-2020-1512325>)

In a further fillip to Joe Biden's election campaign, the former vice president is estimated as having an 86 percent chance of beating President Donald Trump in November, according to a forecast. A model run by The Economist, which is updated every day and combines state and national polls, as well as economic indicators, put Biden's chances on June 19 of winning the White House at 86 percent. This is just shy of the 87 percent in the previous two days, the highest chance the model has given Biden so far, as polling in several key swing states show Biden is either leading Trump or within the margin of error. Trump's chances, on the other hand, are now at only 13 percent, a far cry from March 14 when, according to the model, he was ahead of Biden by 51 to 48 percent. The model also calculated that Biden would win 54 percent of the popular vote to Trump's 46 percent. Given that Trump lost the popular vote in 2016 but still won the election, more significantly the survey shows Biden would get 339 electoral college votes compared with Trump's 199, a wide margin. **It would put Biden comfortably ahead of the 270 threshold needed to take the White House.** The former Delaware Senator is gaining momentum in swing states as the country grapples with protests against racism and the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. A CNBC/Change Research poll out on Wednesday showed that Biden was ahead of Trump in what are considered to be the six battleground states in 2020. His biggest lead in these key states was in Florida, where he was ahead by seven percentage points (50 to 43). He was also beyond the two percent margin for error and ahead of Trump in Wisconsin (48 to 44) and Pennsylvania (49 to 46). However, Biden had narrower leads within the margin for error in Michigan (47 to 45), North Carolina (47 to 45), and Arizona (45 to 44). The poll of 2,408 likely voters took place June 12 to 14 across the six battleground states and has a 2 percent margin of error. "Battleground voters don't just disapprove of the job Trump is doing, they increasingly prefer Biden and Democrats to Trump and Republicans when it comes to handling key issues," the poll concluded. A majority (53 percent) of battleground voters disagreed that Trump has done enough to help people through the current economic downturn. On Friday, Trump hit out at a Fox News poll that showed him trailing Biden by 12 points in a head-to-head matchup, by 50 to 38 percent, which is an increase of four points from last month. The Fox poll of 1,343 randomly chosen registered voters nationwide was conducted June 13 to 16 and had a margin of sampling error of 2.5 percentage points either way. Trump dubbed the poll "phony" and said it had been "done by the same group of haters that got it even more wrong in 2016." Daron Shaw, who conducted the Fox News Poll with Democrat Chris Anderson issued a caveat to the results, saying: "Negative emotions like fear, anxiety, and anger, can be powerful motivators for political participation. The lack of enthusiasm for Biden, however, does create an opening for Trump to define him as out of touch and not up to the task." Meanwhile, a national poll by Quinnipiac University put **Biden ahead of Trump by eight points, 49 percent to 41 percent, well outside the survey's 2.7 percent margin of error.** The survey of 1,332 self-identified registered voters took place June 11 to 15.

Predictions Are Impossible

Predictions are impossible – Trump messes with the election in every way possible

LeTourneau 20 – bachelor’s degree in Psychology/Social Studies/Secondary Education (Nancy; “How Trump Will Try to Steal the Election”; 6/24/20; <https://washingtonmonthly.com/2020/06/24/how-trump-will-try-to-steal-the-election/>; accessed 6/30/20) dmc

It would be foolish to try to predict the outcome of the 2020 presidential race with over four months to go before the ballots are counted. But let’s be very clear: if the election were held today, Joe Biden would win. Along with all of the other chaos going on across the country right now, that is what has Donald Trump in a tailspin. At this point, the president is doing two things in preparation for November. Employ grievance politics to motivate his base, and Do everything he can to steal the election. On number two, there are three primary strategies the president is counting on. **Voter Suppression** This has been a Republican strategy for some time now, with Trump egging things on to an unprecedented level. Since voter suppression efforts are launched by states, a good example is what happened in Kentucky in preparation for the Tuesday primary. Fewer than 200 polling places will be open for voters in Kentucky’s primary Tuesday, down from 3,700 in a typical election year. Amid a huge influx in requests for mail-in ballots, some voters still had not received theirs days before they must be turned in. And turnout is expected to be higher than in past primaries because of a suddenly competitive fight for the Democratic Senate nomination. The scenario has voting rights advocates and some local elections officials worried that the state is careening toward a messy day marked by long lines and frustrated voters — similar to the scenes that have played out repeatedly this spring as the novel coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the 2020 primaries. Because of a shortage of workers willing to staff voting sites during the health crisis, each of the commonwealth’s 120 counties is opening a very limited number of polling locations. The two largest counties will have just one in-person location each. The other voter suppression effort coming from Trump is to try to bully states into rejecting an expansion of vote-by-mail—even in the midst of a pandemic. He says that the process leads to massive fraud, even though there is no evidence for the claim. Five states—Colorado, Hawaii, Oregon, Utah and Washington—have conducted their elections using a vote-by-mail system with practically no issues. In addition to the fact that members of the military who are stationed overseas have always voted by mail, Aaron Blake documents that 16 Trump officials, including the president, vice-president, and attorney general have voted by mail recently. **Foreign Interference** We all know that Trump welcomed Russian interference in the 2016 election and will do so again. But according to John Bolton, Trump asked China’s President Xi Jinping to help him out. Bolton writes that while meeting with Xi at last year’s G-20 meeting, “Trump ‘stunningly’ turned the conversation to the upcoming 2020 election.” The president “stressed the importance of farmers and increased Chinese purchases of soybeans and wheat in the electoral outcome.” The most telling thing about that report is that Trump assumed Xi would want to help him win reelection and would therefore agree to purchase more products from American farmers. Here is what Bolton told Martha Raddatz during their interview on Sunday. Referring to his book, he said: [I]t shows a pattern quite contrary to the image [Trump] would like to convey, of a decisive president who knows something about what he’s doing. There really isn’t any guiding principle — that I was able to discern other than— what’s good for Donald Trump’s reelection. **Other than Russia, Ukraine, and China**, it is very possible that Trump has either made requests or attempted to extort other countries into doing things that would help him win re-election. If He Loses, **Challenge the Results** The president is already setting the stage to claim that the election was “rigged” if he loses. This is where claiming that vote-by-mail is inherently fraudulent plays a dual role. Not only does Trump use it to suppress votes during a pandemic, he will use it to challenge the results if he loses. Recently we learned that **Attorney General Barr will back him in those efforts.** Here is what Barr said during an interview with Maria Bartiromo. Barr: But when government, state governments start adopting these practices like mail-in ballots that open the floodgates of potential fraud, then

people's confidence in the outcome of the election is going to be undermined. And that could take the country to a very dark place, if we lose confidence in the outcomes of our elections... Bartiromo: Well, there's a big discussion right now about mail-in voting... Barr: Well, it absolutely opens the floodgates to fraud. Those things are delivered into mailboxes. They can be taken out. There's questions about whether or not it even denies a secret ballot, because a lot of the states have you signing the outside of the envelope. So, the person who opens — person who opens the envelope will know how people voted. There's no — right now, a foreign country could print up tens of thousands of counterfeit ballots, and be very hard for us to detect which was the right and which was the wrong ballot. That is the chief law enforcement officer in this country throwing out a claim without a shred of evidence that is disputed by every election official that has been involved with mail-in ballots. So Chief Justice John Roberts should dust off his referee uniform and be prepared to call out the attorney general when he makes such a claim if Trump loses. **October Surprise(s)** While not a direct attempt to steal the election, we can expect that Trump will attempt to deceive the public with big announcements prior to the election. It is pretty certain, for example, that Attorney General Barr will make some sort of announcement about the probe John Durham is conducting into the Trump-Russia investigation. Just this week the president accused his predecessor of treason, referring to what Durham will uncover. Prior to hearing Durham's conclusions, Barr referred to the Trump-Russia investigation as the closest thing to a coup we've seen in this country since the Lincoln assassination. Since this president is willing to do or say anything in service of his own political interests, there's no way of predicting what other lies he'll tell over the next four months. But we can rest assured that there will be some whoppers in the mix. So the one thing we can know for sure is that there will be some major political fireworks over the next few months.

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No Link – AT Trump Will Take Credit

Trump won't get credit – GOP has distanced from executive response Edmondson and Fandos 6/9

Catie Edmondson is a reporter in the Washington bureau of The New York Times, covering Congress. Nicholas Fandos is a national reporter based in the Washington bureau. He has covered Congress since 2017 and is part of a team of reporters who have chronicled investigations by the Justice Department and Congress into President Trump and his administration. Mr. Fandos joined The Times in 2015 as an intern. He is originally from St. Louis and graduated from Harvard. The New York Times: G.O.P. Scrambles to Respond to Public Demands for Police Overhaul 6/9/2020. DA online – 6/13/2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/09/us/politics/republicans-police-reform.html>

WASHINGTON — Congressional Republicans, caught flat-footed by an election-year groundswell of public support for overhauling policing in America to address systemic racism, are struggling to coalesce around a legislative response.

Having long fashioned themselves as the party of law and order, Republicans have been startled by the speed and extent to which public opinion has shifted under their feet in recent days after the killings of unarmed black Americans by the police and the protests that have followed. The abrupt turn has placed them on the defensive.

Adding to their challenge, President Trump has offered only an incendiary response, repeatedly invoking “law and order,” calling for military and police crackdowns on protesters, promoting conspiracy theories, and returning time and again to the false claim that Democrats agitating for change are simply bent on defunding police departments.

On Tuesday, **Republicans on Capitol Hill rushed to distance themselves from that approach, publicly making clear that they would lay out their own legislation and refraining from attacking a sweeping Democratic bill** unveiled this week aimed at combating racial bias and excessive use of force by the police. The measure, which House Democrats plan to push through this month, would make it easier to track, prosecute and punish police misconduct, ban chokeholds and restrict the use of deadly force by officers, as well as condition federal grants on anti-bias training and other practices to combat racial profiling and discrimination.

Senator Mitch McConnell, Republican of Kentucky and the majority leader, pressed on whether his party would embrace such steps, said on Tuesday that Republicans had yet to fashion their response.

“We are still wrestling with America’s original sin,” Mr. McConnell told reporters on Capitol Hill. “We try to get better, but every now and then, it is perfectly clear we are a long way from the finish line. And I think the best way for Senate Republicans to go forward on this is to listen to one of our own who has had these experiences.”

He said that he had tasked the Republicans’ lone black member, Tim Scott of South Carolina, to lead a group of senators to draft a conservative response that they could get behind. **Ignoring repeated questions from reporters about Mr. Trump’s views, Mr. McConnell said senators would pursue “what we think is the appropriate response,” a notable shift from his customary refusal to bring up any legislation without an assurance that the president would embrace and sign it.**

In the House, a group of Republicans on the Judiciary Committee — led by Representative Jim Jordan of Ohio — was looking at its own plans to reimagine police training, increase accountability for officers who use improper force or violate the rights of civilians, and collect new data to track the behavior by departments across the country.

But privately, Republican lawmakers and aides conceded they had few proposals ready to offer and were instead racing to reach a consensus about how to proceed. Late Tuesday afternoon, Mark Meadows, the White House chief of staff, rushed to Capitol Hill with Jared Kushner, Mr. Trump’s son-in-law and senior adviser, to huddle with Republicans about what they could quickly agree on.

Mr. Meadows told reporters after that meeting that Mr. Trump was in favor of overhauling policing laws “sooner rather than later.” But he declined to name any specific legislative priorities the

White House would support, saying the administration would be “responsive” to suggestions made by “stakeholders” on Capitol Hill.

The dilemma for Republicans is urgent. For decades, their party has been built on the legacy of the “Southern strategy,” in which candidates sought to win over onetime Democrats by portraying themselves as tough on crime and disorder.

Over the years, some Republicans have used the issue to traffic in racial stereotypes and fear-mongering, like when George H.W. Bush and his supporters highlighted the case of a black murderer named Willie Horton, who raped a white woman and assaulted her boyfriend while on a prison furlough, to portray Gov. Michael S. Dukakis of Massachusetts, his Democratic presidential rival, as insufficiently tough on crime.

Mr. Trump has sought to stir up white grievance as well, calling immigrants criminals, berating professional African-American football players for kneeling during the national anthem, and calling protesters of police brutality against black Americans “thugs.” But **polls now show that huge majorities of the country, including whites, believe that policing must change.**

“In every survey, you see intensity, determination and unity among African-Americans that the time for statements is done and the time for meaningful, measurable action is now,” said Frank Luntz, a Republican pollster and messaging consultant. “The turning point is among white respondents, who not only acknowledge that injustice has happened, but now also agree that action, not words, are necessary.”

A Washington Post poll conducted over the past week indicated that nearly 70 percent of Americans viewed the killing of George Floyd — the black man whose death last month after an encounter with Minneapolis police officers — as indicative of a broader problem with law enforcement, rather than an isolated episode. The figure was significantly higher than those who said the same nearly six years ago after the police killed an unarmed black man in Ferguson, Mo.

It is yet unclear what kind of action Mr. Trump, who has embraced law enforcement as he eyes an increasingly treacherous political landscape, might be willing to support. **Trying to polarize the electorate before the fall campaign, the president instead has spent much of the past two days posting messages on Twitter that called for “LAW & ORDER.”** And, on Tuesday morning, he veered into the conspiratorial, claiming that a 75-year-old protester shoved violently to the pavement and injured by Buffalo police officers could have been “a set up.”

Uncertainty about whether Mr. Trump would ultimately sign a bill could create havoc down the line, when Republicans on Capitol Hill put forward a proposal that the White House does not like.

For example, some congressional Republicans have voiced an openness to changing the legal doctrine known as qualified immunity that shields police officers from being held legally liable for damages sought by citizens whose constitutional rights were violated.

Senator Mike Braun of Indiana said he was interested in revisiting the issue, even though a day earlier, Kayleigh McEnany, the White House press secretary, said the issue was likely to be a “nonstarter” and noted that Attorney General William P. Barr, who embodies the tough-on-crime approach Republicans traditionally embrace, was opposed.

“That’d be the one thing that shows our conference means business,” Mr. Braun said. “You never know, this might be a watershed moment.”

The prospect of a messy intraparty split is one reason that Mr. McConnell generally refuses to bring up legislation that has not been preapproved by Mr. Trump, but **Republicans appear to see more potential risk in waiting around for the White House to move than in crossing the president.**

“We are on a separate track from the White House,” Mr. Scott told reporters, a few hours before meeting on Capitol Hill with Mr. Meadows and Mr. Kushner.

Even if Trump tries to take credit, it will be ineffective in swinging voters

Egan et al 6/10

Lauren Egan is a reporter for NBC News based in Washington. Leigh Ann Caldwell is an NBC News correspondent. Julie Tsirkin is an associate producer for NBC News' Capitol Hill team. Frank Thorp V is a producer and off-air reporter covering Congress for NBC News, managing coverage of the Senate. NBC News: Senate GOP forges ahead of Trump on police reform. 6/10/2020. DA online – 6/13/2020. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/senate-gop-forges-ahead-trump-police-reform-n1229521>

Scott met with his GOP colleagues Tuesday to discuss his proposal, which is expected to leverage federal funding to promote the use of body cameras and de-escalation training, as well as improve the reporting process of police-involved shootings to a federal database.

“Well, **we are on a separate track from the White House,” Scott told reporters** Tuesday.

Later Tuesday, White House chief of staff Mark Meadows, senior adviser Jared Kushner and adviser Ja’Ron Smith came to the Capitol for a last-minute meeting with Scott to discuss police reform.

"It's a work in progress. It was a real good conversation," Meadows told reporters after the meeting, adding that "we're hoping for something sooner than later."

Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, one of Trump’s strongest allies on the Hill, also said this week he would also be releasing his own police reform plan.

Some lawmakers have been left flat-footed in the aftermath of Floyd’s death, as public opinion has dramatically shifted in favor of Black Lives Matter and more voters say they are concerned about Floyd’s death rather than the protests that followed it.

While **Trump has done little to unify the country** after Floyd’s death on May 25, **instead tweeting out conspiracy theories about protesters and threatening to unleash “vicious dogs” and “ominous weapons” on demonstrators, some Senate Republicans have offered a notably different tone.**

Sen. Mitt Romney of Utah marched in a Black Lives Matter protest in Washington on Sunday. Sen. John Cornyn of Texas said he recognized there were “systemic problems” in policing that needed to be addressed and that the arrests of the officers involved in Floyd’s death did not solve “the larger problems that exist in our society.” Sen. John Thune of South Dakota said he hoped Republicans could propose ideas that “suggest that we hear what people are saying and we want to do better at this.”

Even Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas, who wrote an op-ed in The New York Times arguing that the U.S. military should be used against protesters, said Tuesday during the Republican meeting that “young black men have a very different experience with law enforcement in this nation” and the party needed to be “sensitive” to that.

Still, any movement by Senate Republicans on policing and discrimination could prove futile without the support from the president, who has a record of undercutting his own party’s plans.

Trump is expected to address police reform Thursday while visiting with law enforcement officers and black faith leaders in Dallas. But some in the White House cautioned that the president might not provide a clear idea of precisely what sort of reforms he supports until next week.

“As it stands currently, the president has spent the last 10 days quietly and diligently working on proposals to address the issues that the protesters raised across the country,” White House press secretary Kayleigh McEnany said at a briefing Wednesday. “That body of work, I’m told, is reaching its

final edits, and we hope to produce it for you in the coming days. I can't promise you it's tomorrow, but in the coming days we look to deliver that."

It is unclear how much change Trump is willing to consider. The president has privately stressed to aides the importance of keeping the law enforcement community on board with whatever he puts forward while simultaneously addressing public outrage over police misconduct, according to a senior administration official.

That balancing act may prove to be too difficult, as has been the case for the president with other attempts at policy reform.

Last fall, Trump abandoned gun reform legislation he had been working on with Republicans after some advisers and allies close to him raised concerns that it could splinter his political coalition ahead of his re-election.

Any legislation would also need support from the Democratic-controlled House. The president and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif, have not spoken since his impeachment earlier this year.

Democrats on Monday announced a sweeping police reform bill that would ban chokeholds and no-knock warrants in drug cases and would roll back qualified immunity, a legal provision that gives police officers and other public officials broad immunity from civil lawsuits.

The White House has said any effort to limit law enforcement's qualified immunity was a "nonstarter," while some Senate Republicans have suggested some willingness to consider the idea.

"I'm actually thinking seriously about the qualified immunity," said Sen. Mike Braun of Indiana.

"Most in our conference don't want to go that far, but I'm really going out to see if I can get a few others interested in looking at that as well because I think that'd be the one thing, that we show them, in our conference, we mean business. You never know, this might be a watershed moment."

Link Turn – Death Penalty

There is still a large partisan divide over the death penalty – most Republicans including Trump’s base supports it

Santhanam, 19 --- Data Producer for the PBS NewsHour (7/26/19, Laura, “Americans are divided on federal executions. Why is the Trump administration bringing them back?: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/americans-are-divided-on-federal-executions-why-is-trump-administration-bringing-them-back>, accessed on 4/5/2020, JMP)

The Trump administration’s decision to reinstate the federal death penalty, beginning with the executions of five men later this year, highlights a growing partisan divide over capital punishment at a time when its use has been decreasing. Polls show a strong majority of Republicans support the death penalty, while a majority of Democrats do not. The expected executions, scheduled for this winter, would be the first time the federal government has executed anyone in 16 years — a time period that encompasses both Democratic and Republican administrations. “The Justice Department upholds the rule of law — and we owe it to the victims and their families to carry forward the sentence imposed by our justice system,” Attorney General William Barr said about the move in a press release on Thursday. But many see the use of the death penalty, at the federal level in particular, as arbitrary in terms of who ultimately faces that punishment — a sentiment that has affected its public support, said Robert Dunham, director for the Death Penalty Information Center. The change also comes as the Justice Department shifts policy on what chemical it will use to kill the men, a topic of public and legal debate around the use of lethal injection drugs. Over the last two decades, capital punishment has fallen overall, and at the state level especially, Dunham said. Nearly two dozen states have abolished the death penalty, and public opinion supporting executions has followed that slump. “The national trend is [moving] away from capital punishment,” Dunham said. Could public opinion and partisanship have played a role in Trump administration’s decision? The PBS NewsHour asked experts for their insights. Who is being executed? The five men who will stand execution have all been convicted of killing children, among other victims. All were found to be guilty of federal crimes due to different specific details of their cases, such as where the murder took place, or if they had transported a minor over state lines. “Under Administrations of both parties, the Department of Justice has sought the death penalty against the worst criminals, including these five murderers, each of whom was convicted by a jury of his peers after a full and fair proceeding,” Barr said in his statement. The inmates include: Daniel Lewis Lee, who will be killed on Dec. 9, Lezmond Mitchell on Dec. 11, Wesley Ira Purkey on Dec. 13, Alfred Bourgeois on Jan. 13, 2020, and Dustin Lee Honken on Jan. 15, 2020. These men have run out of appeals to their death sentences, according to the Justice Department, and all five will be put to death at the same prison, the U.S. Penitentiary in Terre Haute, Indiana, a press release noted. To execute them, the Justice Department have proposed using a single, acutely toxic barbiturate used to euthanize animals — pentobarbital. That marks a departure from the three-chemical protocol used in previous executions but an option increasingly adopted amid continued debate around the drugs used in lethal injections. Since 2010, the Justice Department said 14 states have used pentobarbital in more than 200 executions. In 2018, drug companies distanced themselves from executions and refused to sell their product to be used for lethal injections. But it’s unclear why the federal government is assuming responsibility for the execution of these men, Dunham said. In all of these cases, they could be executed by the state. This “is a classic state interest,” Dunham said, adding that there is a false myth that the federal death penalty is somehow better applied than at the state level. How this punishment is given out remains arbitrary and there are resource constraints when it comes to such cases, he said. African Americans are disproportionately sentenced to death compared to whites, according to data from the Death Penalty Information Center, and federal prosecutors are just as prone to making mistakes or pursuing erroneous convictions as their peers at the state level. “The fact of the matter is the federal death penalty has all the same kinds of problems that state death penalties do,” he said. The death penalty, public opinion and politics Twenty-one states and the District of Columbia have abolished the death penalty, according to data from the Death Penalty Information Center. In 2018, states executed 25 people — a record low. A year earlier, the state of Arkansas stirred national outrage when the state announced plans to put eight men to death in less than two weeks around the Easter holidays. That’s down from 98 executions that took place in 1999, a time when 78 percent of Americans said they supported the death penalty. Since then, support has waned. According to Pew Research Center, 54 percent of U.S. adults said they backed the death penalty in 2018, and partisanship quickly emerges when you look at numbers, said Jocelyn Kiley, Pew’s associate director for U.S. politics. “Parties are much more divided over this question than they historically were,” she said. In 2018, a clear majority of Republicans — 77 percent — said they favored the death penalty, while 35 percent of Democrats said they supported capital punishment, Kiley said. And white Americans were more likely to say they support the death penalty than African American or Latino respondents, Pew’s polling data suggested. A few years earlier, in 2015, 49 percent of Americans said they supported the death penalty, according to Pew polling data.

Link Turn – Police Reform

The plan would be massively unpopular amongst Trumps base – cops have significant political influence over registered republicans

Levitz 2020 - New York-based journalist and contributor for the New York Magazine.

(By Eric Levitz JUNE 3, 2020 Cops Get Away With Murder Because They're Popular <https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/06/george-floyd-protests-police-abuse-reform-qualified-immunity-polls.html>) IB

But all of these barriers between criminal cops and justice rest on the same foundation: The immense political power of police officers in the United States. It is true that police unions shield their members from public accountability through collective-bargaining agreements. And Campaign Zero, an anti-police-violence organization, has proposed many worthy restrictions on what cops can bargain over in contract negotiations. But there are already five U.S. states where police officers have no collective-bargaining rights whatsoever — Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia — and none of them are bastions of police accountability. In New York, meanwhile, state law restricts the rights of police unions to negotiate over disciplinary issues. This did not prevent Eric Garner's killer, Daniel Pantaleo, from retaining his job for five years after the former's death. (Pantaleo is appealing his dismissal.) The fact that unaccountable policing persists even where unions are constrained reflects the primary importance of cops' political power. You can prohibit police from neutering oversight in collective-bargaining agreements. But you can't bar them from voting as a bloc, donating to campaigns, or lobbying the legislature. And what can't be won in a contract can often be secured via statute; in Virginia, cops lack bargaining rights but boast their very own bill of rights. This is not to say that strong police unions don't enhance their members' political clout. But unionization is not the cornerstone of their influence. In addition to the power police officers derive from their capacity to vote as a bloc and pool campaign donations, cops boast two sources of nigh-unique political strength: 1) The police are one of the only popular, widely trusted institutions in the United States. There are only three institutions that perennially command a "great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence from Americans in Gallup's polling: The military, small business, and the police. Cops command more than twice as much trust in these surveys as newspapers do and about five times more than Congress. Pew Research's opinion data affirms Gallup's findings. In a 2019 Pew survey, only K-12 school principals commanded more public confidence than cops. Some 79 percent of respondents said that police officers "care about them all or most of the time," while 74 percent said that they provide fair and accurate information all or some of the time. (Granted, "police officers provide accurate information some of the time" seems like an assertion that no one could dispute, but it remains the case that the public expresses more faith in the accuracy of cops' statements than they do in those of journalists or elected officials). Graphic: Pew Research Center What's more, as the Washington Post's Phillip Bump has illustrated, trust in police is disproportionately concentrated in constituencies with higher-than-average voter-turnout rates, such as the old and registered Republicans. Graphic: Gallup/The Washington Post All this makes crossing the police a risky proposition for elected officials, whether they be mayors, city council members, or prosecutors. 2) Police boast a monopoly on a form of labor that municipalities are profoundly reliant on. To cow elected officials, cops need not rely solely on their claim to the public's esteem. Although police do not have the legal right to strike, in practice, they have the power to execute work slowdowns that undermine public safety — and thus the standing of democratically accountable politicians. It is true that these quasi-work stoppages don't always work. When the NYPD organized a slowdown to protest Mayor Bill de Blasio's response to Eric Garner's death, incidents of crime fell. But when Baltimore's police department executed a monthslong "pullback" from the city's most disadvantaged neighborhoods, a devastating surge of homicides ensued. Small-scale efforts to discipline elected officials by withdrawing law enforcement services from their constituencies are far from uncommon, a reality Minneapolis City Council member Steve Fletcher testified to this week. To subordinate the police's prerogatives to the rule of law, reformers will need to erode — or circumvent — these sources of cop clout. A less reflexively pro-police public is possible. Of course, protesters are already hard at work at contesting the police's public image. Recent polling suggests that George Floyd's killing — and the unrest it provoked — may be affecting a shift in public attitudes on policing. In a Morning Consult poll released Monday, a majority of Americans expressed support for the protests, while 51 percent agreed that "many people nowadays do not take racism seriously enough"; last year, that figure was 41 percent. A Monmouth University survey produced even more-auspicious results. In 2015, amid the first wave of Black Lives Matter activism, the pollster found roughly half of Americans agreeing that "racial and ethnic discrimination" is a "big problem" in the United States. This week, that figure was 76 percent. Meanwhile, 78 percent said that the anger that sparked these protests was fully or somewhat justified. Most remarkably, after being reminded of the violence that has attended the protests — including the burning of a police precinct — 54 percent of respondents nevertheless affirmed that the actions of the protestors were, in the aggregate, at least partially justified. Thus, exploiting the ubiquity of cellphone cameras and the reach of social media to raise awareness of police misconduct is a vital endeavor. Political-science research indicates that few things did more to rally the public behind the Civil Rights Act than witnessing the brutalization of nonviolent protesters by southern law enforcement. Separately, progressives in the entertainment industry may also have a role to play in shifting public perceptions of the police. Judging pop-culture objects on the basis of their supposed ideological merits or heresies can get tiresome. But in some cases, the "woke scolds" have social science at their backs. We live in an atomized, media-saturated society, where televisual entertainment exerts great influence over popular attitudes. Multiple studies have found that the omnipresence of police procedurals on American television — almost all of which cast law-enforcement officials as sympathetic protagonists — has powerfully shaped public attitudes toward

the police. A 2015 paper from the journal *Criminal Justice and Behavior* found that “viewers of crime dramas are more likely to believe the police are successful at lowering crime, use force only when necessary, and that misconduct does not typically lead to false confessions.” It is therefore conceivable that dramas and films that dramatize the pathologies of American policing may help chip away at the public’s reflexive support for cops. All this said, it’s important to note that public opinion data on the present unrest remains preliminary and somewhat contradictory. **Even as voters evinced sympathy for the protestors in several polls, a majority also approved of the U.S. military aiding local police forces in reestablishing order in America’s cities.** Further, although the upsurge of protest that followed the shooting death of Michael Brown in 2014 brought Americans’ confidence in the police to a two-decade low, it returned to its long-run average of 57 percent within two years. Thus, while contesting the police’s popularity is important, the most promising path to near-term change may be navigating around it (progressives have already been doing this by, among other things, galvanizing activists and donors behind left-wing district attorney candidates in low-visibility, low-turnout elections).

Link Turn – Defunding

Defunding the police is massively unpopular – the plan would be seen as Trump flipping on his messaging on Biden

Goodkind 2020 – political reporter with a focus on Congress

(Nicole Goodkind July 9, 2020 11:58 AM PDT “The vast majority of Americans don’t want to defund the police” <https://fortune.com/2020/07/09/defund-the-police-poll-most-americans-oppose-defunding-police-departments/>) IB

As activists around the country enter their second month of protesting police brutality, a new survey finds that their messaging around defunding local precincts has fallen flat with the vast majority of Americans. Forty-two percent say that spending on their local police should stay about the same as it is now, and 31% say that spending should be increased, according to a Pew poll out Thursday. Just a quarter of Americans say spending on policing in their area should be decreased, and only about half of those say it should be decreased a lot. The numbers come as budget battles are being fought in major cities like New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles around the robust funding of police forces. Both major parties’ presidential candidates have come out against the defund the police movement. President Donald Trump has deemed himself the defender of “law and order,” and former Vice President Joe Biden told CBS News last week that he doesn't support defunding the police. Biden’s plans for police reform fall largely in line with the Democratic congressional plan to condition funding on certain standards and to provide more support for training. Still, the Trump campaign has regularly pushed the narrative that Biden supports ending funding for police precincts. The President's team is currently airing ads in both Minnesota and Wisconsin that link Biden to the progressive movement to decrease billion-dollar police budgets. The advertisements, filled with dark imagery and dramatic music, depict a 911 call gone awry and then blame Biden for it. “You have reached the 9-1-1 police emergency line. Due to defunding of the police department, we’re sorry, but no one is here to take your call. If you’re calling to report a rape, please press 1. To report a murder, press 2. To report a home invasion, press 3,” the advertisement begins. “Joe Biden’s supporters are fighting to defund police departments. Violent crime has exploded. For all other crimes, leave your name and number, and someone will get back to you,” it continues, overlaying Biden’s image in flames. “You won’t be safe in Joe Biden’s America,” it concludes. Poll results back the tactic. In general, Americans still view police positively. Nearly 60% of Americans say police around the country do an excellent or good job of protecting people from crime, down just slightly from 62% in 2016. But things are moving in a less positive trajectory when it comes to specific actions that police forces take. Just 35% of respondents said that police do an excellent or good job of using the right amount of force for each situation, down from 45% in 2016. Similarly, 34% believe the police do a good job treating racial and ethnic groups equally, down from 47% in 2016. The belief that officers are held accountable when misconduct occurs dropped from 44% to 31% over the same period. The poll also found that Americans are more likely now than they were in 2016 to support ending “qualified immunity” and allow for the suing of police officers who use excessive force. Two-thirds of voters said that civilians need to have the power to sue police officers to hold them accountable for misconduct and excessive use of force, even if that makes the officers’ jobs more difficult. There was also broad support for police training in nonviolent tactics, the creation of a federal government database to track officers accused of misconduct, a ban on chokeholds, and a requirement for police to live in the areas they patrol. Pew surveyed 4,708 U.S. adults online in June 2020 and then weighted the results to be representative of the U.S. adult population by gender, race, ethnicity, partisan affiliation, education, and other categories.

--- Impact – Retrenchment ---

AT Trump Destroys Hegemony

Trump pursues primacy NOT isolation

Cambanis 20 (Thanassis Cambanis, a Senior Fellow at the Century Foundation, “The End of American Exceptionalism: What the United States Should Learn From Its Peers,” Foreign Affairs, February 28, 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-02-28/end-american-exceptionalism>, WC)

Within the United States, the debate over the country’s shifting place in the world falls into distinct camps. President Donald Trump’s commitment to “**Make America Great Again**” **demands the reassertion of U.S. primacy.** The president’s chauvinistic rhetoric, trade wars, and blustering escalations in the Middle East reflect a fantasy of unfettered American power. Trump mistakenly believes that sharing the world with other nations is a **zero-sum affair** and that the United States must grab what it can rather than try to share the pie. Many observers have placed Trump in the tradition of American isolationism, but **that characterization is wide of the mark.** Trump has not adopted an isolationist foreign policy. Instead, he has pursued a grand strategy of “illiberal hegemony,” by which **he seeks U.S. dominance** but dispenses with past imperatives such as democracy promotion and preserving the international liberal order.

AT Trump Destroys Allies

Trump strategy is key to reduce and credibly recommit to key allies – primacy is unsustainable because overstretch makes commitments not credible and moral hazards emboldens allies

Allison 20 (Graham Allison, Douglas Dillon Professor of Government at the Harvard Kennedy School, “The New Spheres of Influence: Sharing the Globe With Other Great Powers,” Foreign Affairs, March/April 2020, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-02-10/new-spheres-influence?fa_package=1125551, WC)

To understand the risks entailed in the inheritance of current U.S. alliances, consider two scenarios U.S. defense planners worry about today. If, watching China’s suppression of protests in Hong Kong, Taiwan should make a dramatic move toward independence that leads China to react violently, would the United States go to war with China to preserve Taiwan’s status? Should it? On the European front, if in response to an uprising of ethnic Russian workers in Riga’s shipyards, the Latvian government cracked down on ethnic Russians and sparked Russia’s annexation of a swath of Latvia—Crimea 2.0—would NATO launch an immediate military response, in accordance with its Article 5 guarantee? Should it? If the answer to any of those questions is not a straightforward yes—and it is not—then the time has come for an alliance-focused version of the stress tests for banks used after the 2008 financial crisis.

Such an approach is all the more important given the realities of nuclear weapons in this new world. Both China and Russia have reliable second-strike nuclear capabilities—that is, the ability to withstand an initial nuclear attack and conduct a retaliatory strike that could destroy the United States. Accordingly, not only is nuclear war not a viable option; even a conventional war that could escalate to nuclear war risks catastrophe. Competition must thus be tempered by caution, constraints, and careful calculations in risk taking. For a nation that has accumulated a long list of entanglements with nations that may have, or may imagine they have, a blank check from Washington, this creates a big problem. The line between reassuring an ally and emboldening its leadership to act recklessly is a fine one.

If the balance of military power in a conventional war over Taiwan or the Baltics has shifted decisively in China’s and Russia’s favor, current U.S. commitments are not sustainable. The gap between those commitments and the United States’ actual military capabilities is a classic case of overstretch. What a zero-based assessment would mean for the current alliance system, and for U.S. relations with each of more than 50 treaty allies and partners, should emerge as a result of an analysis of the evidence. But it would likely lead the United States to shed some allies, double down on others whose assets are as important for U.S. security as U.S. assets are for them, and radically revise the terms of each commitment to make obligations and restraints as prominent as reassurances and guarantees.

This process would also enhance the credibility of the commitments that the United States chose to renew. While the veterans of the Cold War rightly claim that NATO has been the greatest alliance in the history of the world, neither Trump nor Obama before him was convinced. Tellingly, American military commanders doubted that the North Atlantic Council would authorize a military response to the Russian annexation of Crimea or that the U.S. government would be able to make a decision about how to respond before the event was over.

Rethinking the United States' commitments to its allies would enhance American security and make these same pacts stronger.

Retrenchment inevitable

Retrenchment inevitable – Trump has permanently undermined alliances, changed public opinion, and ceded to rivals

Lind and Press 20 (Jennifer Lind and Daryl G. Press. JENNIFER LIND is Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College and a Research Associate at Chatham House. DARYL G. PRESS is Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College. Reality Check: American Power in an Age of Constraints, “ Foreign Affairs, March/April 2020, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2020-02-10/reality-check?fa_package=1125551, WC)

The challenges to American primacy do not end with its great-power rivals. U.S. power has also weakened from within. In the United States and among several of its core allies, large parts of the public have lost confidence in the liberal project that long animated Western foreign policy. The disillusion is in part a reaction to the twin forces of economic globalization and automation, which have decimated employment in manufacturing in the developed world. It is also reflected in growing opposition to immigration, which contributed to the United Kingdom’s vote to leave the EU, the rise of chauvinist parties across Europe, and the election of Donald Trump in the United States. In his 2017 inaugural address, Trump lamented the “American carnage” that he asserted the former presidents and assorted officials sitting in the gallery behind him had caused. Their policies, he said, had “enriched foreign industry at the expense of American industry” and benefited other countries even as the United States’ own wealth, strength, and confidence had crumbled.

Trump’s political ascent, his disdain for U.S. allies, and his administration’s controversial policies —on matters such as trade, Syria, and Iran, for example—have all dismayed longtime U.S. partners. Doubts about the United States’ reliability as a military ally have grown. And allies across Asia and Europe, keen to maintain valuable economic relationships with China, have demurred to Washington’s more confrontational approach toward Beijing. With its voters overwhelmed by the burden of global leadership and its alliances fraying, **the United States lacks the domestic and coalitional unity necessary to pursue a confrontational and costly foreign policy.**

Some may dispute that so much has really changed. After all, many measures of national power (GDP per capita, total defense spending, and the metrics of economic innovation, to name just a few) suggest that the United States remains a geopolitical titan. And many people hope that perhaps after a brief dalliance with reckless chauvinism, democratic peoples around the world will decide they prefer the old, safer order.

But this optimism is misguided. Opponents of the U.S.-led order around the world have discovered that they can resist U.S. influence even if they lag far behind the United States in aggregate power. Recall that the Soviet Union competed with the United States for more than four decades without ever having the equivalent of more than 40 percent of U.S. GDP. China already vastly exceeds that threshold. The United States’ great-power rivals have the added advantage of being able to apply their military and political resources close to home, whereas Washington must spread its capabilities across the world if it is to maintain its current status. Nor will the domestic backlash against the liberal order subside quickly. Even if voters decide to reject the most extreme and incompetent populist standard-bearers, the sources of their dissatisfaction will remain, and more effective leaders will arise to give voice to it.

Together, those shifts leave the United States little option but to adapt. For roughly 25 years, the United States' all-surpassing power allowed the country to take a vacation from geopolitics. That Zeitgeist was captured by a senior adviser in the George W. Bush administration who, in a 2004 conversation with the writer Ron Suskind, scoffed at what he called "the reality-based community" for its judicious policy analyses of pros and cons. "That's not the way the world really works anymore," the official said. "We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality."

Because no other country had the power to mount a powerful resistance, U.S. leaders felt free to reimagine reality largely unconstrained by the objections of those who opposed the global liberal project. Scholars will debate the wisdom of the path they took—some arguing that, on balance, the United States' project of liberal hegemony achieved many of its goals, others saying that the country squandered its power and expedited a return to multipolarity. Yet whatever the verdict, it is clear today that the **United States' geopolitical vacation is over** and that a major course correction is due.

Hegemony Unsustainable—Rivals

Heg is unsustainable – China and Russia will inevitably rise – GDP, military size, and tech advances prove

Allison 20 (Graham Allison, Douglas Dillon Professor of Government at the Harvard Kennedy School, “The New Spheres of Influence: Sharing the Globe With Other Great Powers,” Foreign Affairs, March/April 2020, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-02-10/new-spheres-influence?fa_package=1125551, WC)

Now, however, that hegemony is fading, and Washington has awakened to what it calls “a new era of great-power competition,” with China and Russia increasingly using their power to assert interests and values that often conflict with those of the United States. But American policymakers and analysts are still struggling to come to grips with what this new era means for the U.S. role in the world. Going forward, that role will not only be different; it will also be significantly diminished. While leaders will continue announcing grand ambitions, diminished means will mean diminished results.

Unipolarity is over, and with it the illusion that other nations would simply take their assigned place in a U.S.-led international order. For the United States, that will require accepting the reality that there are spheres of influence in the world today—and that not all of them are American spheres.

THE WORLD AS IT WAS

Before making pronouncements about the new rules of geopolitics, post–Cold War U.S. secretaries of state should have looked back to the final months of World War II, when U.S. policymakers were similarly resistant to accepting a world in which spheres of influence remained a central feature of geopolitics. Competing views on the issue lay at the core of a debate between two top Soviet experts in the U.S. government.

On February 4, 1945, President Franklin Roosevelt met with Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill at Yalta. At Roosevelt’s side was his translator and principal adviser on the Soviet Union, Charles Bohlen. Just that morning, Bohlen had opened an urgent private missive from his close colleague George Kennan in Moscow. Kennan correctly forecast that the Soviet Union would attempt to maintain control of as much of Europe as it could. The question was what the United States should do about that. Kennan asked, “Why could we not make a decent and definitive compromise with it—divide Europe frankly into spheres of influence—keep ourselves out of the Russian sphere and keep the Russians out of ours?”

Bohlen was appalled. “Utterly impossible,” he erupted in response. “Foreign policy of that kind cannot be made in a democracy.” Reflecting on this moment later, Bohlen explained: “The American people, who had fought a long, hard war, deserved at least an attempt to work out a better world.” Between 1945 and 1947, Bohlen worked alongside other leading figures in the Roosevelt and then the Truman administration to realize their “one world” vision, in which the allies who had fought together to defeat the Nazis would remain allied in creating a new global order. But he ultimately resigned himself to the world as it was—in short, Kennan had been right. “Instead of unity among the great powers on the major issues of world reconstruction—both political and economic—after the war, there is complete disunity between the Soviet Union and the satellites on one side and the rest of the world on the other,” Bohlen acknowledged in the summer of 1947 in a memo to Secretary of State George Marshall. “There are, in short, two worlds instead of one.”

When he finally came to share Kennan’s diagnosis, Bohlen did not shrink from the implications. His memo to Marshall concluded:

Faced with this disagreeable fact, however much we may deplore it, the United States in the interest of its own well-being and security and those of the free non-Soviet world must . . . draw [the non-Soviet world] closer together politically, economically, financially, and, in the last analysis, militarily in order to be in a position to deal effectively with the consolidated Soviet area.

This conviction became a pillar of the United States’ strategy for the coming decades, and it rested on the acceptance of spheres of influence. There would be areas that would be subjected to Soviet domination, with often terrible consequences, but the best course for the United States was to bolster those powers on the periphery of this Soviet sphere while reinforcing the strength and unity of its own sphere.

For the four decades that followed, the United States and the Soviet Union engaged in the great-power competition that we know as the Cold War. In the Soviet sphere, the captive nations of Eastern Europe remained under the boot of an “evil empire.” American presidents faced repeated crises in which they had to choose between sending troops into Soviet-dominated

nations to support freedom fighters seeking to exercise rights that the American creed declares universal and standing by as those freedom fighters were slaughtered or suppressed. Without exception, U.S. presidents chose to watch instead of intervene: consider Dwight Eisenhower when Hungarians rose up in 1956 and Lyndon Johnson during the Prague Spring of 1968 (or, after the Cold War, George W. Bush when Russian troops attacked Georgia in 2008 and Barack Obama when Russian special forces seized Crimea). Why? Each had internalized an unacceptable yet undeniable truth: that, as U.S. President Ronald Reagan once explained in a joint statement with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.”

This bit of Cold War history should serve as a reminder: a nation that is simultaneously idealistic and realistic will always struggle to reconcile rationales and rationalizations of purpose, on the one hand, with realities of power, on the other. The result, in the foreign policy analyst Fareed Zakaria’s apt summary, has been “the rhetoric of transformation but the reality of accommodation.” Even at the height of U.S. power, accommodation meant accepting the ugly fact of a Soviet sphere of influence.

TECTONIC SHIFTS

After nearly half a century of competition, when the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union disappeared, in 1991, the United States was left economically, militarily, and geopolitically dominant. In the first two decades of the post–Cold War era, U.S. defense spending exceeded the defense budgets of the next ten nations combined (five of them U.S. treaty allies). Operationally, that meant that, as Secretary of Defense James Mattis’s 2018 National Defense Strategy put it, the United States “enjoyed uncontested or dominant superiority in every operating domain. We could generally deploy our forces when we wanted, assemble them where we wanted, and operate how we wanted.” The United States and its allies could welcome new members into NATO, applying to them its Article 5 security guarantee, without thinking about the risks, since the alliance faced no real threat. In that world, strategy in essence consisted of overwhelming challenges with resources.

But that was then. The tectonic shift in the balance of power that occurred in the first two decades of the twenty-first century was as dramatic as any shift the United States has witnessed over an equivalent period in its 244 years. To paraphrase Vaclav Havel, then the president of Czechoslovakia, it has happened so fast, we have not yet had time to be astonished. The U.S. share of global GDP—nearly one-half in 1950—has gone from one-quarter in 1991 to one-seventh today. (Although GDP is not everything, it does form the substructure of power in relations among nations.) And as the United States’ relative power has declined, the menu of feasible options for policymakers has shrunk. Consider, for example, the U.S. response to China’s Belt and Road Initiative. With currency reserves of almost \$3 trillion, China can invest \$1.3 trillion in infrastructure linking most of Eurasia to a China-centered order. When Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced that the United States would increase its own investments in the Indo-Pacific in response, he was able to come up with just \$113 million in new investments.

China has, of course, been the chief beneficiary of this transformation. In the past generation, its GDP has soared: from 20 percent of the U.S. level in 1991 to 120 percent today (measured by purchasing power parity, the metric that both the CIA and the International Monetary Fund use to compare national economies). Although China faces many internal challenges, there are more reasons to expect this basic economic trend to continue than to bet that it will stop soon. With four times as many citizens as the United States, and if Chinese workers become as productive as Portuguese workers are today (that is, around half as productive as Americans), **China will see its GDP rise to double that of the United States.**

In Asia, the economic balance of power has tilted especially dramatically in China’s favor. As the world’s largest exporter and second-largest importer, China is the top trading partner of every

other major East Asian country, including U.S. allies. (And as an aggressive practitioner of economic statecraft, Beijing does not hesitate to use the leverage this provides, squeezing countries such as the Philippines and South Korea when they resist Chinese demands.) Globally, China is also rapidly becoming a peer competitor of the United States in advanced technologies. Today, of the 20 largest information technology companies, nine are Chinese. Four years ago, when Google, the global leader in artificial intelligence (AI), the most significant advanced technology, assessed its competition, Chinese companies ranked alongside European companies. Now, that state of affairs is barely visible in the rearview mirror: Chinese companies lead in many areas of applied AI, including surveillance, facial and voice recognition, and financial technology.

China's military spending and capabilities have surged, as well. A quarter century ago, its defense budget was one-25th that of the United States; now, it is one-third and on a path to parity. And whereas the U.S. defense budget is spread across global commitments, many of them in Europe and the Middle East, China's budget is focused on East Asia. Accordingly, in specific military scenarios involving a conflict over Taiwan or in the South China Sea, China may have already taken the lead. Short of actual war, the best tests of relative military capabilities are war games. In 2019, Robert Work, a former U.S. deputy secretary of defense, and David Ochmanek, one of the Defense Department's key defense planners, offered a public summary of the results from a series of classified recent war games. Their bottom line, in Ochmanek's words: "When we fight Russia and China, 'blue' [the United States] gets its ass handed to it." As The New York Times summarized, "In 18 of the last 18 Pentagon war games involving China in the Taiwan Strait, the U.S. lost."

Russia is a different matter. Whatever President Vladimir Putin might want, Russia will never again be his father's Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union dissolved, the resulting Russian state was left with less than half the GDP and half the population and saw its borders rolled back to the days before Catherine the Great. Yet Russia remains a nuclear superpower with an arsenal that is functionally equivalent to that of the United States; it has a defense industry that produces weapons the world is eager to buy (as India and Turkey have demonstrated in the past year); and it boasts military forces that can fight and win—as they have demonstrated repeatedly in Chechnya, Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria. On a continent where most of the other nations imagine that war has become obsolete, and maintain military forces more for ceremonial than combat operations, military prowess may now be Russia's major comparative advantage.

BACK TO BASICS

The claim that spheres of influence had been consigned to the dustbin of history assumed that other nations would simply take their assigned places in a U.S.-led order. In retrospect, **that assumption seems worse than naive.** Yet because many U.S. analysts and policymakers still cling to images of China and Russia formed during this bygone era, their views about what the United States should and should not do continues to reflect a world that has vanished.

Hegemony Impact Defense

Robust studies and empirics disprove US heg – their authors are biased hacks.

Fettweis '17 (Christopher; 5/8/17; Ph.D. in IR and Comparative Politics from the University of Maryland, B.A. in History from the University of Notre Dame, Associate Professor of Political Science at Tulane University; Security Studies, Vol. 26 “Unipolarity, Hegemony, and the New Peace,” p. 423-451)

Conflict and Hegemony by Region Even the most ardent supporters of the hegemonic-stability explanation do not contend that US influence extends equally to all corners of the globe. The United States has concentrated its policing in what George Kennan used to call “strong points,” or the most important parts of the world: Western Europe, the Pacific Rim, and Persian Gulf.⁶⁴ By doing so, Washington may well have contributed more to great power peace than the overall global decline in warfare. If the former phenomenon contributed to the latter, by essentially providing a behavioral model for weaker states to emulate, then perhaps this lends some support to the hegemonic-stability case.⁶⁵ During the Cold War, the United States played referee to a few intra-West squabbles, especially between Greece and Turkey, and provided Hobbesian reassurance to Germany’s nervous neighbors. Other, equally plausible explanations exist for stability in the first world, including the presence of a common enemy, democracy, economic interdependence, general war aversion, etc. The looming presence of the leviathan is certainly among these plausible explanations, but only inside the US sphere of influence. Bipolarity was bad for the nonaligned world, where Soviet and Western intervention routinely exacerbated local conflicts. Unipolarity has generally been much better, but whether or not this was due to US action is again unclear. Overall US interest in the affairs of the Global South has dropped markedly since the end of the Cold War, as has the level of violence in almost all regions. There is less US intervention in the political and military affairs of Latin America compared to any time in the twentieth century, for instance, and also less conflict. Warfare in Africa is at an all-time low, as is relative US interest outside of counterterrorism and security assistance.⁶⁶ Regional peace and stability exist where there is US active intervention, as well as where there is not. No direct relationship seems to exist across regions. If intervention can be considered a function of direct and indirect activity, of both political and military action, a regional picture might look like what is outlined in Table 1. These assessments of conflict are by necessity relative, because there has not been a “high” level of conflict in any region outside the Middle East during the period of the New Peace. Putting aside for the moment that important caveat, some points become clear. The great powers of the world are clustered in the upper right quadrant, where US intervention has been high, but conflict levels low. US intervention is imperfectly correlated with stability, however. Indeed, it is conceivable that the relatively high level of US interest and activity has made the security situation in the Persian Gulf and broader Middle East worse. In recent years, substantial hard power investments (Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq), moderate intervention (Libya), and reliance on diplomacy (Syria) have been equally ineffective in stabilizing states torn by conflict. While it is possible that the region is essentially unpacifiable and no amount of police work would bring peace to its people, it remains hard to make the case that the US presence has improved matters. In this “strong point,” at least, US hegemony has failed to bring peace. In much of the rest of the world, the United States has not been especially eager to enforce any particular rules. Even rather incontrovertible evidence of genocide has not been enough to inspire action. Washington’s intervention choices have at best been erratic; Libya and Kosovo brought about action, but much more blood flowed uninterrupted in Rwanda, Darfur, Congo, Sri Lanka, and Syria. The US record of peacemaking is not exactly a long uninterrupted string of successes. During the turn-of-the-century conventional war between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a highlevel US delegation containing former and future National Security Advisors (Anthony Lake and Susan Rice) made a half-dozen trips to the region, but was unable to prevent either the outbreak or recurrence of the conflict. Lake and his team shuttled back and forth between the capitals with some frequency, and President Clinton made repeated phone calls to the leaders of the respective countries, offering to hold peace talks in the United States, all to no avail.⁶⁷ The war ended in late 2000 when Ethiopia essentially won, and it controls the disputed territory to this day. The Horn of Africa is hardly the only region where states are free to fight one another today without fear of serious US involvement. Since they are choosing not to do so with increasing frequency, something else

is probably affecting their calculations. Stability exists even in those places where the potential for intervention by the sheriff is minimal. Hegemonic stability can only take credit for influencing those decisions that would have ended in war without the presence, whether physical or psychological, of the United States. It seems hard to make the case that the relative peace that has descended on so many regions is primarily due to the kind of heavy hand of the neoconservative leviathan, or its lighter, more liberal cousin. Something else appears to be at work. Conflict and US Military Spending How does one measure polarity? Power is traditionally considered to be some combination of military and economic strength, but despite scores of efforts, no widely accepted formula exists. Perhaps overall military spending might be thought of as a proxy for hard power capabilities; perhaps too the amount of money the United States devotes to hard power is a reflection of the strength of the unipole. When compared to conflict levels, however, there is no obvious correlation, and certainly not the kind of negative relationship between US spending and conflict that many hegemonic stability theorists would expect to see. During the 1990s, the United States cut back on defense by about 25 percent, spending \$100 billion less in real terms in 1998 than it did in 1990.⁶⁸ To those believers in the neoconservative version of hegemonic stability, this irresponsible “peace dividend” endangered both national and global security. “No serious analyst of American military capabilities doubts that the defense budget has been cut much too far to meet America’s responsibilities to itself and to world peace,” argued Kristol and Kagan at the time.⁶⁹ The world grew dramatically more peaceful while the United States cut its forces, however, and stayed just as peaceful while spending rebounded after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The incidence and magnitude of global conflict declined while the military budget was cut under President Clinton, in other words, and kept declining (though more slowly, since levels were already low) as the Bush administration ramped it back up. Overall US military spending has varied during the period of the New Peace from a low in constant dollars of less than \$400 billion to a high of more than \$700 billion, but war does not seem to have noticed. The same nonrelationship exists between other potential proxy measurements for hegemony and conflict: there does not seem to be much connection between warfare and fluctuations in US GDP, alliance commitments, and forward military presence. There was very little fighting in Europe when there were 300,000 US troops stationed there, for example, and that has not changed as the number of Americans dwindled by 90 percent. Overall, there does not seem to be much correlation between US actions and systemic stability. Nothing the United States actually does seems to matter to the New Peace. It is possible that absolute military spending might not be as important to explain the phenomenon as relative. Although Washington cut back on spending during the 1990s, its relative advantage never wavered. The United States has accounted for between 35 and 41 percent of global military spending every year since the collapse of the Soviet Union.⁷⁰ The perception of relative US power might be the decisive factor in decisions made in other capitals. One cannot rule out the possibility that it is the perception of US power—and its willingness to use it—that keeps the peace. In other words, perhaps it is the grand strategy of the United States, rather than its absolute capability, that is decisive in maintaining stability. It is that to which we now turn. Conflict and US Grand Strategy The perception of US power, and the strength of its hegemony, is to some degree a function of grand strategy. If indeed US strategic choices are responsible for the New Peace, then variation in those choices ought to have consequences for the level of international conflict. A restrained United States is much less likely to play the role of sheriff than one following a more activist approach. Were the unipole to follow such a path, hegemonic-stability theorists warn, disaster would follow. Former National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski spoke for many when he warned that “outright chaos” could be expected to follow a loss of hegemony, including a string of quite specific issues, including new or renewed attempts to build regional empires (by China, Turkey, Russia, and Brazil) and the collapse of the US relationship with Mexico, as emboldened nationalists south of the border reassert 150-year-old territorial claims. Overall, without US dominance, today’s relatively peaceful world would turn “violent and bloodthirsty.”⁷¹ Niall Ferguson foresees a post-hegemonic “Dark Age” in which “plunderers and pirates” target the big coastal cities like New York and Rotterdam, terrorists attack cruise liners and aircraft carriers alike, and the “wretchedly poor citizens” of Latin America are unable to resist the Protestantism brought to them by US evangelicals. Following the multiple (regional, fortunately) nuclear wars and plagues, the few remaining airlines would be forced to suspend service to all but the very richest cities.⁷² These are somewhat extreme versions of a central assumption of all hegemonic-stability theorists: a restrained United States would be accompanied by utter disaster. The “present danger” of which Kristol, Kagan, and their fellow travelers warn is that the United States “will shrink its responsibilities and—in a fit of absentmindedness, or parsimony, or indifference—allow the international order that it created and sustains to collapse.”⁷³ Liberals fear restraint as well, and also warn that a militarized version of primacy would be counterproductive in the long run. Although they

believe that the rule-based order established by United States is more durable than the relatively fragile order discussed by the neoconservatives, liberals argue that Washington can undermine its creation over time through thoughtless unilateral actions that violate those rules. Many predicted that the invasion of Iraq and its general contempt for international institutions and law would call the legitimacy of the order into question. G. John Ikenberry worried that Bush's "geostrategic wrecking ball" would lead to a more hostile, divided, and dangerous world.⁷⁴ Thus while all hegemonic stability theorists expect a rise of chaos during a restrained presidency, liberals also have grave concerns regarding primacy. Overall, if either version is correct and global stability is provided by US hegemony, then maintaining that stability through a grand strategy based on either primacy (to neoconservatives) or "deep engagement" (to liberals) is clearly a wise choice.⁷⁵ If, however, US actions are only tangentially related to the outbreak of the New Peace, or if any of the other proposed explanations are decisive, then the United States can retrench without fear of negative consequences. The grand strategy of the United States is therefore crucial to beliefs in hegemonic stability. Although few observers would agree on the details, most would probably acknowledge that post-Cold War grand strategies of American presidents have differed in some important ways. The four administrations are reasonable representations of the four ideal types outlined by Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross in 1996.⁷⁶ Under George H. W. Bush, the United States followed the path of "selective engagement," which is sometimes referred to as "balance-of-power realism"; Bill Clinton's grand strategy looks a great deal like what Posen and Ross call "cooperative security," and others call "liberal internationalism"; George W. Bush, especially in his first term, forged a strategy that was as close to "primacy" as any president is likely to get; and Barack Obama, despite some early flirtation with liberalism, has followed a restrained realist path, which Posen and Ross label "neo-isolationism" but its proponents refer to as "strategic restraint." ⁷⁷ In no case did the various anticipated disorders materialize. As Table 2 demonstrates, armed conflict levels fell steadily, irrespective of the grand strategic path Washington chose. Neither the primacy of George W. Bush nor the restraint of Barack Obama had much effect on the level of global violence. Despite continued warnings (and the high-profile mess in Syria), the world has not experienced an increase in violence while the United States chose uninvolvedness. If the grand strategy of the United States is responsible for the New Peace, it is leaving no trace in the evidence. Perhaps we should not expect a correlation to show up in this kind of analysis. While US behavior might have varied in the margins during this period, neither its relative advantage over its nearest rivals nor its commitments waivered in any important way. However, it is surely worth noting that if trends opposite to those discussed in the previous two sections had unfolded, if other states had reacted differently to fluctuations in either US military spending or grand strategy, then surely hegemonic stability theorists would argue that their expectations had been fulfilled. Many liberals were on the lookout for chaos while George W. Bush was in the White House, just as neoconservatives have been quick to identify apparent worldwide catastrophe under President Obama.⁷⁸ If increases in violence would have been evidence for the wisdom of hegemonic strategies, then logical consistency demands that the lack thereof should at least pose a problem. As it stands, the only evidence we have regarding the relationship between US power and international stability suggests that the two are unrelated. The rest of the world appears quite capable and willing to operate effectively without the presence of a global policeman. Those who think otherwise have precious little empirical support upon which to build their case. Hegemonic stability is a belief, in other words, rather than an established fact, and as such deserves a different kind of examination. The Political Psychology of Unipolarity Evidence supporting the notion that US power is primarily responsible for the New Peace is slim, but belief in the connection is quite strong, especially in policy circles. The best arena to examine the proposition is therefore not the world of measurable rationality, but rather that of the human mind. Political psychology can shed more light on unipolarity than can any collection of data or evidence. Just because an outcome is primarily psychological does not mean that it is less real; perception quickly becomes reality for both the unipolar state and those in the periphery. If all actors believe that the United States provides security and stability for the system, then behavior can be affected. Beliefs have deep explanatory power in international politics whether they have a firm foundation in empirical reality or not. Like all beliefs, faith in the stability provided by hegemony is rarely subjected to much analysis.⁷⁹ Although they almost always have some basis in reality, beliefs need not pass rigorous tests to prove that they match it. No amount of evidence has been able to convince some people that vaccines do not cause autism, for example, or that the world is more peaceful than at any time before, or that the climate is changing due to human activity. Ultimately, as Robert Jervis explains, "we often believe as much in the face of evidence as because of it." ⁸⁰ Facts may change, but beliefs remain the same.

AT transition wars

transition now key to ensure peaceful transition to multipolarity – prolonged transition causes great power wars

Cambanis 20 (Thanassis Cambanis, a Senior Fellow at the Century Foundation, “The End of American Exceptionalism: What the United States Should Learn From Its Peers,” Foreign Affairs, February 28, 2020, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-02-28/end-american-exceptionalism>, WC)

The United States should not completely retrench from the world; neither should it forswear military power. But what’s best for the United States and for the world would entail a sizable shift in priority and investment away from military power. Such a shift would mean giving up on having an American say over every troubling policy or security dilemma worldwide. The United States would lose some of the benefits of primacy. A downsized Pentagon would be able to deter threats against the United States but not all threats everywhere against U.S. interests and those of its partners. Washington would thereby accept a meaningful loss of power, but better to do so by choice now than later by force of circumstance.

Such a fundamental reorientation in U.S. foreign policy seems far-fetched only to Americans who have forgotten history and mistake today’s dysfunctional political paralysis for destiny. The United States has undergone many profound transformations since its founding. The Gilded Age gave way to the New Deal. Jim Crow yielded to the civil rights movement. One period of interventionist excesses in Latin America and Vietnam was followed by the Church Committee and a brief consensus on placing some limits on the United States’ unique powers.

A similar moment of transition presents itself now. After World War II, Washington’s closest allies fashioned radical new social compacts and resolved conflicts that were far more violent and entrenched than those facing the United States today—interwar Europe experienced tumultuous domestic strife that pitted leftists, communists, and anarchists against oligarchs and titans of industry. The result, after World War II, was social democracy, which through progressive taxation and a profound investment in a social safety net preserved much of what is good about capitalism while resolving the root inequalities that still plague the United States.

The **belief in American exceptionalism** can discourage comparisons with other countries, suggesting that the United States cannot learn from others. But Americans are exceptional only in the sense that they have their own history and culture. The United States is not an aberration: it doesn’t stand outside of history.

The truly radical change in the United States’ orientation will come when the country repositions itself as one that is great for its citizens and residents by investing in a real egalitarian democracy that protects Americans from homelessness, illness, and poor education just as eagerly as it purports to protect them from foreign “terror.” The United States cannot transform itself at home without changing the way it operates in the world. It should return to the ideals of 1945, when the United States led the formation of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions on the principle of serving as a responsible pillar in a global order that benefits all. Today, in a multipolar age, the country should recommit to those ideals, while adopting a restraint based on its new status as a leading member of a community of powerful nations, not a lone superpower.

Chauvinists, know-nothings, and those Americans directly invested in the military-industrial economy might deride such a mindset as “weak” or “un-American.” But whether they like it or not, circumstances will reduce the United States to a diminished international role. It would be far better for the country to choose to transform itself before it’s forced to.

AT overwhelming deterrence

Overwhelming deterrence is wrong – primacy generates antagonists which drive endless war and great power wars

Wertheim 20 (Stephen Wertheim, Deputy Director of Research and Policy at the Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft and a Research Scholar at the Arnold A. Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University, “The Price of Primacy: Why America Shouldn’t Dominate the World,” Foreign Affairs, March/April 2020, https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2020-02-10/price-primacy?fa_package=1125551, WC)

Both champions and critics of U.S. grand strategy after the Cold War have christened the project “liberal hegemony.” But American objectives and methods were always more hegemonic than liberal. Despite diverging over whether and how to promote liberalism, U.S. policymakers have for nearly three decades converged around the premise that Pentagon planners set forth in 1992: the United States should maintain a military superiority so overwhelming that it would dissuade allies and rivals alike from challenging Washington’s authority. That **superiority quickly became an end unto itself.** By seeking dominance instead of merely defense, the strategy of primacy plunged the United States into a downward spiral: American actions generated antagonists and enemies, who in turn made primacy more dangerous to pursue.

For most of the 1990s, the costs of this strategy remained somewhat hidden. With Russia flattened and China poor, the United States could simultaneously reduce its defense spending and expand NATO, launch military interventions in the former Yugoslavia and for the first time station tens of thousands of troops in the Middle East. Yet by the end of the decade, U.S. dominance had begun to generate blowback. Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda terrorist group declared war on the United States in 1996, citing the U.S. military’s presence in Saudi Arabia as their top grievance; two years later, al Qaeda bombed the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, killing 224 people. U.S. policymakers, for their part, were already exaggerating the threat posed by weak “rogue states” and gearing up for ambitious military interventions to promote democracy and human rights. These pathologies shaped Washington’s overly militarized reaction to the 9/11 attacks, as the United States entered into successive conflicts in which its capabilities and interests did not exceed those of local actors. **The result was endless war.**

Now, as the United States struggles to extricate itself from the Middle East, China is growing into an economic and political powerhouse and Russia is asserting itself as a spoiler. That outcome is exactly what primacy was supposed to prevent. The rise of a near-peer competitor does not necessarily pose a grave danger to the United States, whose nuclear deterrent secures it from attack. But clinging to the dream of never-ending primacy will ensure trouble, mandating the containment of rivals and provoking insecurity and aggression in return. China has yet to undertake a costly bid for military dominance in East Asia, let alone the world, but **U.S. actions could push Beijing in that direction.**

--- Impact – Warming ---

AT Paris Agreement—Cant Solve Warming

Paris Agreement cant stop warming – emissions targets are too conservative and no one is following through

Teirstein 2019 – staffwriter

(By Zoya Teirstein on Nov 26, 2019 “Paris Agreement targets need to be 5 times stronger to actually work” <https://grist.org/article/paris-agreement-targets-need-to-be-5-times-stronger-to-actually-work/>) IB

In almost exactly a year’s time, nearly 200 countries will have the chance to go back to the drawing board and make revisions to their Paris Agreement commitments. It sounds boring, but those voluntary commitments are pretty much the only global tool humanity currently has at its disposal to fight the looming climate crisis. What these countries decide to do when they get together in Glasgow next November to update their commitments will quite literally determine whether the planet devolves into a climate-wrecked hellscape or starts tracking a far more livable course. A new U.N. report published on Tuesday, a week before many of those nations gather in Madrid for an annual climate change conference, shows exactly what the world needs to do to avoid catastrophic warming. **Spoiler alert: it will not be easy.** The report says that nations need to make their emissions-reductions goals **five times more ambitious** in order to limit warming to 1.5 degrees C — the threshold scientists say is the danger line for global warming. **Even if all of the countries involved in the Paris Agreement bring emissions down to the levels they initially pledged to meet, the world would still be on track for 3.2 degrees C of warming.** That’s 5.76 degrees F, a scenario that would make the wildfires, hurricanes, heat waves, and droughts of 2019 look like child’s play. The worse news is that many of **the world’s biggest emitters aren’t even on track to meet their Paris accord pledges.** Members of the G20, which includes 19 countries and the EU, produce 78 percent of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions. **Of those countries, only China, the EU, India, Mexico, Russia, and Turkey are on track to meet their nationally determined contributions to the Paris Agreement.** Meanwhile, Australia, Brazil, Japan, Canada, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, and the United States of America — which is in the process of pulling out of the agreement — need to take stronger action to achieve the targets that they voluntarily set in 2016. (There’s conflicting data on whether the remaining G20 members are on or off track.) All these countries need to revise their targets significantly in 2020 and then start actually meeting their targets to “close the emissions gap” and avoid a terrible warming scenario. Inger Andersen, the executive editor of the U.N. Environment Programme and the lead author of the report, gives humanity two options: “set in motion the radical transformations we need now, or face the consequences of a planet radically altered by climate change.” Those radical transformations she’s talking about involve cutting emissions 7.6 percent every year between 2020 and 2030 if we want to limit warming to 1.5 degrees, or 2.7 percent per year if we’re willing to resign ourselves to 2 degrees of warming.

Even if countries get on board 2020 is too late to turn it around

Bruan 2019 – staffwriter

(Stuart Braun 05.11.2019 “Paris climate pledges 'far too little, too late'” <https://www.dw.com/en/paris-climate-pledges-far-too-little-too-late/a-51110205>) IB

A flag stating 'Don't Nuke the Climate' (picture-alliance/dpa/E. Laurent) Scientists are warning that climate change could soon reach a point of no return. And while the timing of this tipping point remains a source of disagreement in the scientific community, there is a consensus about the best way to prevent it: Rapidly cut global greenhouse emissions (GHG). But the primary vehicle to achieve emission reductions, the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, which aims to keep warming below 2 C above pre-industrial levels — and preferably to limit temperature increase even further to 1.5 Celsius — **is proving to be woefully inadequate**. According to a new report by the Universal Ecological Fund (UEF), **around 75% of 184 Paris Agreement pledges have been judged insufficient to slow climate change**. Worse still, **some these pledges are not even being implemented**. 'Far too little, too late' The UEF report is timed to coincide with the upcoming COP climate summit (to take place in Madrid after host Chile cancelled) where signatories to the Paris agreement can make new pledges with steeper emission cuts. Since the Paris accord was ratified in 2016, only six countries have actually reviewed their pledges, with four upping their cuts and two weakening their pledges. "Other than a handful of the pledges, namely the European Union and seven other countries, **the pledges are quite inadequate**," Sir Robert Watson, former chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and co-author of the report, told DW. According to Watson, the pledges won't keep temperatures from rising by 2 Celsius, much less the more ambitious target of 1.5 Celsius. "Simply, **the pledges are far too little, too late**," he added. "We wanted to push for much stronger pledges as soon as possible." Also on Tuesday, a paper published in Bioscience Magazine involving more than 11,000 scientists from 153 countries declared a climate emergency that could bring "untold suffering" unless urgent action was taken. Ban Ki Moon and Francois Hollande at the COP21 Climate Conference in France (Getty Images/AFP/F. Guillot) Then Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon (2-L) and French President Francois Hollande (r) were among those hailing the signing of the historic Paris climate agreement in 2015. But pledges are falling well short to meet targets. Chance to stay below 2 C already lost? This isn't the first time that the failures of the so-called nationally determined contributions (NDCs) that are at the heart of the Paris Agreement have been highlighted. A landmark September "United in Science" report that synthesizes climate research by major partner organizations including UN Environment, the Global Carbon Project and the IPCC, said that the Paris pledges need to be tripled to avert catastrophic warming. If implemented, current pledges will achieve closer to 3 C warming at the end of this century, Pep Canadell, Executive Director Global Carbon Project and a report co-author, told DW of the Paris targets. More concerning perhaps, he believes **the chance to limit warming below 1.5 C has already passed** and that unless we reach peak emissions before 2030, "the chances to stay below 2 C will be also largely lost." One problem, according to the UEF report, is that emerging economies China and India, who are among the world's biggest GHG emitters, have only pledged to reduce their emissions "intensity" relative to GDP by 2030. Ongoing economic growth will cause their emissions to increase in the coming decades, meaning these huge polluters have a long way to go to meet the Paris targets.

Even the most optimistic reductions cant stop feedback loops – makes warming inevitable

Wecker 2018 – staffwriter

(Katharina Wecker 06.08.2018 "Domino effect could heat up Earth by 5 degrees Celsius — despite Paris climate deal" <https://www.dw.com/en/domino-effect-could-heat-up-earth-by-5-degrees-celsius-despite-paris-climate-deal/a-44968248>) IB

A joint study by international climate scientists from Germany, Sweden, Denmark and Australia presents a bleak prognosis: **Even if the goals of the Paris climate agreement are achieved and global warming is limited to maximum 2 degrees Celsius** (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) compared to pre-industrial levels, **the climate system could still pass a devastating tipping point**. "Human emissions of greenhouse gas are not the sole determinant of temperature on Earth," said Will Steffen, lead author of the study and climate researcher at the Australian National University and the Swedish research institute Stockholm Resilience Centre. "Our study suggests that human-induced global warming of 2 degrees Celsius may trigger other Earth system processes, often called 'feedbacks,' that can drive further warming — **even if we stop emitting greenhouse gases**," he said. The global average temperature in such a case would in the long term settle between 4 to 5 degrees warmer compared to pre-industrial levels, their study found. Sea levels would rise 10 to 60 meters (33 to 197 feet), flooding numerous islands and coastal cities such as Venice, New York, Tokyo and Sydney. Such major population centers would have to be abandoned. Scientists call this a "hothouse Earth" climate scenario. Read more: The global heat wave that's been killing us A man sitting on a park bench in Lisbon, Portugal THE HEAT WAVE GOES ON ... AND ON Portugal: Sitting is good ... This man in the Portuguese capital, Lisbon, seems to be enjoying the feeling of sun on his face. And Portugal has been having plenty of it, as the Iberian Peninsula bakes in warmth coming over from North Africa. The country has already had near-record temperatures this year, but nothing yet to break the 47.3° C (117.1° F) recorded in 2003 in Amareleja. Still, large parts are on red alert. 1234567891011 Climate domino effect In the study published Monday in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), the international research team analyzed the complete climate system of a 2-degree warmer world across several models. Interactions and chain reactions among melting glaciers, thawing permafrost, bacteria in the oceans and weakened carbon sinks were discovered. Read more: When nature harms itself — five scary climate feedback loops As a result of these feedback processes and tipping points that lead to abrupt changes in the climate system, forests and permafrost transform themselves from "friends" that store CO2 and other greenhouse gases like methane into "enemies" that uncontrollably release stored emissions into the atmosphere. As such, the individual feedback processes could potentially snowball, explained Johan Rockström, executive director of the Stockholm Resilience Centre and incoming co-director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK). Nagaragawa River is swollen due to heavy rain in Nagara City, Gifu Prefecture on July 6, 2018 (picture alliance/AP Images/Y. Shimbun) Extreme weather is one consequence of climate change that is becoming ever more palpable "These tipping elements can potentially act like a row of dominos. Once one is pushed over, it pushes Earth toward another. **It may be very difficult or impossible to stop the whole row of dominoes from tumbling over**," he said. The Earth would then warm at an accelerating tempo — even if humans stopped producing greenhouse gases entirely. "Places on Earth will become uninhabitable if 'hothouse Earth' becomes the reality," Rockström added. Read more: Current heat waves are linked to climate change, scientists confirm Minimizing 'self-amplifying' change While the 2015 Paris Agreement, agreed to by 197 nations, settled on a 2-degree target, it is unclear whether this is enough to avert a climate catastrophe, warned Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, director of PIK and co-author of the study.

AT Paris Agreement—Status Quo Solves

Status quo solves – US withdrawal is motivating states and the private sector to shift to zero carbon emissions

Bruan 2019 – staffwriter

(Stuart Braun 05.11.2019 “Paris climate pledges 'far too little, too late'” <https://www.dw.com/en/paris-climate-pledges-far-too-little-too-late/a-51110205>) IB

One rare ray of hope is the 28 Member State EU, which is expected to cut GHG emissions by 58% below 1990 levels by 2030. Infographic: How do we reduce greenhouse gas emissions? Zero emissions Part of the problem with the Paris pledges, according to Dr Niklas Höhne, a founding partner of the Germany-based NewClimate Institute, is that such non-binding "bottom-up" commitments are not consistent with the broader goals. As an antidote, he says that nations need to immediately set a timetable to reach and sustain net-zero CO2 emissions. "It's no longer about small pledges," Höhne said of a net-zero CO2 emissions policy that the UK Labour Party has already committed to by 2030, as have Democratic Party sponsors of the Green New Deal in the US. Watson agrees that net zero emissions needs to be the target by 2050, which would mean electricity, at the least, should be 100% renewable. How will US withdrawal impact targets? The US, historically the world's biggest GHG emitter, has complicated matters when President Donald Trump's administration this week confirmed its withdrawal from the Paris Agreement. Combined with Trump's rollbacks of major federal climate regulations, the Obama Administration-made pledge to reduce emissions by 26-28% by 2025 will now likely not be met. "We definitely regard this as a dangerous decision," said Sven Harmeling, a climate expert at CARE, a Holland-based NGO helping vulnerable communities adapt to the climate crisis, in response to the US withdrawal. "We call on other countries, but also stakeholders in the US, whether cities, whether business, to not get distracted by the isolating step of the US administration but to step up the fight against climate change," he told DW. Watch video00:48 Trump withdraws from Paris climate accord Offsetting failed national pledges Watson sees potential to meet the Paris targets with or without Trump as state governments and private industry set their own decarbonization targets: "There are some sparks of hope that even in the US, in the absence of leadership from the administration and from Congress, some of the US states and industries are trying to go to low carbon," said Watson. California, for example — which would be the 5th largest economy in the world in terms of GDP — has set itself a net zero emissions target by 2045. "That is a huge step forward and a very encouraging signal," said Höhne. Read more: Climate action made in America — despite Trump Indeed, the Trump administration's Paris exit and climate policy roll back has not stopped the fast decline of coal-fired power and the rise of cheap renewables, according to a Climate Action Tracker (CAT) report released this month. US emissions in 2030 are expected to be 4% lower than projected when Trump came to power, representing an overall — yet inadequate — cut of 13% below 2005 levels, according to the CAT report.

AT Warming—Adaptation

No impact – adaptation solves

Revkin 2019 – the Strategic Adviser for Environmental and Science Journalism at the National Geographic Society and has written on global warming for 30 years

(Andrew Revkin Published January 9, 2019 “Once derided, ways of adapting to climate change are gaining steam” <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/01/communities-adapt-to-changing-climate-after-fires-floods-storms/>) IB

From chronically flooded Midwestern towns to fire-charred California suburbs, from Bangladesh’s sodden delta to low island nations facing rising seas, a long-underplayed strategy for cutting risks related to human-driven climate change is coming to the fore—adaptation. through 30 years of efforts to limit global warming, the dominant goal was cutting emissions of heat-trapping gases, most importantly carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels. Efforts to adapt communities or agriculture to warming and the related rise in seas and other impacts were often seen as a copout. The spotty nature of adaptation efforts so far can be seen in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael—where one reinforced, raised home famously survived, nearly alone, along Mexico Beach, Florida, after the strongest Panhandle hurricane in at least 155 years. In the Camp Fire that devastated Paradise, California, and killed 85 people, a sprinkling of houses built and maintained to withstand embers survived, but—again—were the rare exception. But signs are emerging that a significant shift is under way, dividing the climate challenge into two related, but distinct, priorities: working to curb greenhouse gases to limit odds of worst-case outcomes later this century while boosting resilience to current and anticipated climatic and coastal hazards with just as much fervor. There’s action from the top down, and—perhaps more significant in the long run—from the bottom up. The most prominent signs of the rising profile of adaptation came with the launch in October of a Global Commission on Adaptation and a December commitment of \$200 billion in climate finance over five years by the World Bank and partners. TODAY’S POPULAR STORIES HISTORY 11,000-year-old mine in underwater cave surprises archaeologists SCIENCE Some trees may 'social distance' to avoid disease SCIENCE Coronavirus in the U.S.: Where cases are growing and declining The commission is led by former United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, philanthropist and entrepreneur Bill Gates, and the World Bank’s chief executive officer, Kristalina Georgieva. This was a particularly significant move for Gates, whose philanthropic work and personal investments on climate had so far focused on breakthrough clean-energy technologies. (Learn more about this effort.) The commission’s first task is to produce a report on innovative approaches to spreading and financing climate adaptation, to be presented at a United Nations climate summit in late September. There are plenty of questions. For example, some climate adaptations can worsen climate change—with energy-thirsty air conditioning the simplest example. But other adaptations, like restoring stripped land to forest or planting coastal mangroves can have the triple benefit of buffering floods, absorbing carbon dioxide, and providing habitat for wildlife. And sometimes climate benefits can come from restoring wildlife, as is happening with beaver introduction in southern Utah and central Washington State, for example, under a Climate Adaption Fund managed by the Wildlife Conservation Society. In its December announcement of climate financing for developing countries, the World Bank stressed that, for the first time, its \$100-billion portion would be evenly split between investments cutting emissions and boosting resilience. “We must fight the causes, but also adapt to the consequences that are often most dramatic for the world’s poorest people,” said Georgieva, the bank’s leader. Adaptation – “a kind of laziness”? It wasn’t always this way. As early as the 1990s, and then in climate-treaty talks in 2002, there was talk of the need to adapt to a changing climate even as nations struggled to curb emissions. But what some called the “A” word was anathema to many global warming campaigners, who saw efforts to adapt to climate extremes as capitulation and a distraction from the need to curb emissions from fossil-fueled smokestacks and tailpipes, cattle pens, cement factories, and felled forests. The shift toward accepting parallel efforts to cut our rising influence on the climate system and its threatening influence on us has been building for several years. Picture of lightning striking beneath a picturesque supercell thunderstorm Picture of A gondola from Sugarbush Resort takes skiers to the top of a peak 1/13 VIEW SLIDESHOW A supercell thunderstorm strikes in South Dakota. Among the most severe storms, supercells can bring strong winds, hail, and even tornadoes. (See more extreme weather pictures.) PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM REED, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC A gondola carries skiers to the top of Lincoln Peak in Green Mountain National Forest, Vermont. This icy scene ran in a 1967 issue of National Geographic. PHOTOGRAPH BY B. ANTHONY STEWART, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION A man rides through four inches of rain in downtown Nairobi, Kenya, in this photo from a 1969 issue of National Geographic. PHOTOGRAPH BY BRUCE DALE, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Women shield themselves against strong winds that precede the monsoon in Rajasthan, India, in this 1984 National Geographic photo.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE MCCURRY, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION Lightning strikes the Sand Hills of Ogallala, Nebraska, in 1990. PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM RICHARDSON, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION Farmers watch growing storm clouds in the Sand Hills of Ogallala, Nebraska, in 2003. PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM RICHARDSON, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION Rain clouds roll over a caramel-colored river in Wyndham, Australia. PHOTOGRAPH BY RANDY OLSON, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION Hurricane Dennis whipped Key West, Florida, with winds up to 90 miles an hour in 2005. PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE THEISS, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION This photo from a 2006 issue of National Geographic shows Hurricane Rita's destruction in Holly Beach, Louisiana. The vacation spot was completely leveled by the storm. PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BURNETT, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION A rainstorm drenches the streets of Dharavi, India, in 2006. PHOTOGRAPH BY JONAS BENDIKSEN, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION A thunderstorm pelts the Flint Hills in Strong City, Kansas. PHOTOGRAPH BY JIM RICHARDSON, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION Yaks graze during a spring snowstorm along the Yalong River in China. PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL YAMASHITA, NAT GEO IMAGE COLLECTION Sledders climb a hill during a snowstorm in Flagstaff, Arizona. PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN BURNETT, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC In his 2013 book *The Future*, former Vice President Al Gore acknowledged that he made a mistake in 1992 by disparaging adaptation as a "kind of laziness" in *Earth in the Balance*, his bestselling manifesto for climate action. His revised view? Those resisting action on emissions were wrong to tout adaptation alone, Gore wrote. But he said he was "wrong in not immediately grasping the moral imperative of pursuing both policies simultaneously, in spite of the difficulty that poses." The 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change was the first pact in a quarter century of climate diplomacy to include a global goal on adaptation aimed at "strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change." Since then a steady string of fiery, stormy, costly climatic calamities has vividly illustrated the price of unaddressed vulnerability, and fresh reports from the United Nations and independent researchers have meanwhile charted the unrelenting rise in greenhouse emissions. The day after Thanksgiving, the Trump administration released the latest section of [a periodic National Climate Assessment](#) pointing to a role for global warming in everything from heat waves to gully-washing downpours. Media coverage tended to focus on the contrast between dismissive statements on climate change by President Donald Trump and the report's compendium of evidence of enormous risk. Largely missed was the assessment's [argument for building adaptable, resilient communities, institutions and businesses](#). At the same time, the report warned that the enormous momentum in the climate system guarantees no quick benefit from even a heroic global cut in emissions—leaving many vulnerable people at risk. Benefits of resilience There is also a more practical rationale for boosting resilience. It almost always amounts to a bargain. As the Fourth National Assessment put it, ["Proactive adaptation initiatives—including changes to policies, business operations, capital investments, and other steps—yield benefits in excess of their costs in the near term, as well as over the long term."](#) In an interview last weekend, Katharine Hayhoe, a lead author of this and the previous U.S. climate assessment, released in 2014, cited another welcome aspect of the adaptation side of building a sustainable relationship with climate: It's a pursuit that she has found resonates in sectors of society across the political spectrum. "I speak frequently to water planners, farmers, ranchers, and they all get it," said Hayhoe, who directs the Climate Science Center at Texas Tech University and is well known for speaking of her Christian beliefs and climate science concerns. [The argument for a big boost in adaptation work, along with cutting emissions, she said, comes from robust science showing many places are already deeply vulnerable and an unabated rise in greenhouse gas levels tips the odds steadily toward further trouble.](#) "If I could pick a single way to explain climate change to everyone it would be threat multiplier," she said. "It's not either-or." Hayhoe said [an encouraging sign of community efforts on adaptation emerged during the drafting of the latest report](#). In the 2014 assessment, the team had planned to include case studies from around the country, but had a tough time finding good ones. This time [there was no trouble peppering the report with examples of what's possible](#). You can explore some at this link. From preventing wildfire to living with it [In the combustible West, groups offering assistance to towns seeking to coexist with wildfire rather than try in vain to suppress it say they've seen a substantial burst of interest. As of 2017, only two California communities at risk from wildfire](#), Mammoth Lakes and San Diego, had signed on for help from a Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire program—run by two nonprofit groups and supported by a foundation and the U.S. Forest Service. The small organization helps municipal planners and fire agencies shape long-term development strategies in ways that allow fire to do what it has long done in such ecosystems—a sharp shift in culture from the days of aggressive fire suppression. In 2018, 14 of the 27 communities that applied for help were from California, said Molly Mowery, the president of Wildfire Planning International, one of the partners in the effort. Two new projects are getting under way, she said, both in communities that experienced bad fires—Redding and Mariposa County. Play Video [HIS HOUSE SURVIVED A DEVASTATING WILDFIRE. NOW, IT'S AN ISLAND IN THE ASHES](#). Given the rising interest in resilience and adaptation among both homeowners and community officials in fire country, many working to boost sustainability lament that relevant budgets, at both the federal and state level, are grossly insufficient to enable more work. In late November, a Washington Post story touched on two examples, reporting that the University of California's extension program, which provides outreach to homeowners on wildfire risk reduction, has seen its budget cut almost in half. The budget crunch isn't limited to regions facing fire risk. The Federal Emergency Management Agency this year is offering nearly \$400 million in grants for efforts to cut flood risk and general "pre-disaster mitigation" by towns, states, and tribal or territorial governments. But that's a fraction of what's needed, by a host of accounts. (The deadline for applications is January 31.) A

Match.com for flooded towns and scientists One low-budget path toward resilience evolved as community activists in flooded towns connected with volunteer scientists. Several years ago, Helen Lekavich, a hair stylist and massage therapist in Midlothian, Illinois, on the southern fringe of Chicago, got fed up with chronic rain-fed flooding, recruited neighbors into a group called the “Floodlothian Five” and successfully pushed for a comprehensive “RainReady” flood-reduction plan, designed with the help of a Chicago nonprofit, the Center for Neighborhood Technology (see video). There is now a national organization, Flood Forum USA, working to help other communities build resilience in the same way. On the website, concerned citizens can sign up to be a “flood reporter,” join an existing community’s forum (here’s a map), or build a network around their own flooding issue. One critical need is scientific advice, and that’s where another partner, the American Geophysical Union, comes in. Five years ago, the professional society for earth scientists launched what it calls Thriving Earth Exchange, essentially a Match.com for communities facing resilience issues and volunteers from its membership with skills in relevant fields, like hydrology or remote sensing. In Bangladesh, long the symbol of human vulnerability to flooding, engineers and officials have been testing ways to build up lands by better managing the huge flows of sediment and water washing from the Himalaya through the country’s great deltas. There are challenges but there is also clearly a chance to sustain livelihoods and limit dangers even as sea level rises, according to a recent report in Science magazine. Elsewhere, as the BBC recently reported, farmers have expanded a traditional method of growing a range of vegetable crops on long floating mats of woven hyacinth plants that remain productive even when heavy monsoons make conventional farming impossible. Enduring islands, managed retreat Some small island nations are in deep trouble, literally, even at a mid-range projection for sea-level rise by 2100. But others are exploring ways to keep up with the rising waters as much as possible. In the Marshall Islands, long among the small island states most threatened by rising seas, leaders have called for rich countries to ramp up emissions reductions but are also exploring home-grown solutions like dredging sand from a lagoon to help build up the capital atoll, Majuro. Play Video DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF SEA LEVEL RISE IN FLORIDA In some situations, there’s evidence that low reef-fringed islands can persist and even enlarge—even in parts of the world where local sea levels are rising faster than the global average. Paul Kench, a geographer at the University of Auckland, has published research over 15 years showing this effect in both the Indian Ocean and Pacific. In his latest paper, Kench used satellite imagery to track 40 years of change in all 101 islands comprising the Pacific atoll nation Tuvalu. Three quarters of the islands gained area, showing that islands are dynamic features. (Read more about island resiliency.) The bigger challenge, of course, is that people crave coasts and, in this case, development would need to be focused in the interior to maintain the dynamics necessary for persistence. The lure of the shore is the same whether on scattered oceanic islands or Long Island, New York, where local communities’ quest for economic growth has slowed efforts to build and plan with a long-term view, in which rising seas are the norm, with only the rate uncertain. The term of art for reconfiguring communities to leave room for coastal dynamics, storms, and projected sea-level rise is “managed retreat.” Adapt Virginia, a hub for resilient planning in that state, has compiled a detailed set of case studies in managed retreat, from New York City’s Staten Island to Ventura, California. It’s costly, often involving government buyouts of coastal properties. But the calculation remains that in most cases the long-term benefits, which include restored ecosystems, outweigh the up-front cost. More reasons for urgency In the meantime, a string of studies, along with an October special report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, have increasingly linked human-driven global warming to the intensity and size of heat waves, potent downpours, coral reef die-offs, some aspects of hurricanes in some regions, coastal flooding, the spread of tropical diseases, and other hazards. Another source of concern is accumulating research revealing patterns of extraordinarily extreme weather through the last several thousand years in places now heavily built and populated. Scientists dissecting cores of layered ancient marsh and lake mud and other clues to past climate conditions have revealed spasms of frequent, powerful hurricanes even in past cooler periods around Puerto Rico, extreme hill-scouring rainstorms in Vermont, and century-long megadroughts in Ghana—meaning calamities that might be perceived as “unprecedented” are in fact simply rare, and thus unmeasured, threats. All of this reinforces the reality that vulnerability reduction is essential with or without global warming, said Richard J.T. Klein, a longtime analyst of climate risk and policy options at the Stockholm Environment Institute. “There is momentum developing and it’s long overdue,” said Klein, who signed on this fall to direct science and innovation at the Global Center on Adaptation, which is managing the adaptation commission’s work along with the World Resource Institute. “This is about a current risk that’s bad enough to take action to start with, and that is already increasing.”

AT Warming—No Impact

Extinction scenarios are based on outdated models

Johnson 2020 – staffwriter

By Nathanael Johnson on Feb 4, 2020 “That dystopian hellscape keeping you up at night? It’s less likely than you think” <https://grist.org/climate/that-dystopian-hellscape-keeping-you-up-at-night-its-less-likely-than-you-think/>) IB

Some of **the apocalyptic predictions about climate change you’ve heard about were likely based on a scenario which many scientists say is no longer probable**. Take the best-selling book, *The Uninhabitable Earth*. his terrifying look at the consequences of climate change, David Wallace Wells writes that 5 degrees Celsius of warming means “whole parts of the globe could be literally unsurvivable for humans.” Studies and news articles have suggested that we’re on course to filling the atmosphere with enough greenhouse gases to make that living nightmare possible — or worse over coming centuries. But there’s an emerging consensus, articulated by a recent commentary in the journal *Nature*, **that this kind of hothouse earth is an unlikely worst case scenario**, rather than the most probable future. Get Grist in your inbox Always free, always fresh The Beacon Other choices Ask your climate scientist if Grist is right for you. See our privacy policy “You are not going to find climate scientists who disagree with that, or at least you are not going to find many,” said Benjamin Cook, a climate researcher at Columbia University’s Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. The way it’s usually described, getting to this nightmare requires taking a “business as usual” path, meaning that the world dramatically increases burning coal and other fossil fuels without worrying about the consequences. Among climate scientists, it’s called by the catchy “Representative Concentration Pathway 8.5” – referring to the most dire scenario for greenhouse gas concentrations considered by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Imagine a dystopia with no effort to curb emissions and 5 degrees Celsius of warming by 2100. “Happily — and that’s a word we climatologists rarely get to use — **the world imagined** in RCP8.5 **is** one that, in our view, becomes **increasingly implausible with every passing year**,” scientists Zeke Hausfather, and Glen Peters wrote in the *Nature* commentary. Hausfather hails from the Breakthrough Institute, a California climate think tank, and Peters from Norway’s the CICERO Center for International Climate Research. So how did “business as usual” become an unlikely worst-case scenario? Well, business as usual has changed. Back in the 2000s, the possibility that the world would start burning more and more coal with every passing year seemed plausible, so scientists working on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change decided to create RCP 8.5, a vision of the future with a much bigger influx of greenhouse gases than we’d seen in the past. But that unfettered mess of fossil fuel burning hasn’t materialized: Coal use has flattened around the world, and it’s dying in the United States.

No impact – IPCC Agrees

Allen 2019 - lead author of the 2018 IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, Professor of Geosystem Science, Leader of ECI Climate Research Programme, University of Oxford

(Myles Allen 4-18-2019, "Why protesters should be wary of '12 years to climate breakdown' rhetoric," Conversation, <https://theconversation.com/why-protesters-should-be-wary-of-12-years-to-climate-breakdown-rhetoric-115489>) IB

My biggest concern is with the much-touted line that “the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says we have 12 years” before triggering an irreversible slide into climate chaos. Slogan writers are vague on whether they mean climate chaos will happen after 12 years, or if we have 12 years to avert it. But both are misleading. As the relevant lead author of the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, I spent several days last October, literally under a spotlight, explaining to delegates of the world’s governments what we could, and could not, say about how close we are to that level of warming. Using the World Meteorological Organisation’s definition of global average surface temperature, and the late 19th century to represent its pre-industrial level (yes, all these definitions matter), we just passed 1°C and are warming at more than 0.2°C per decade, which would take us to 1.5°C around 2040. That said, these are only best estimates. We might already be at 1.2°C, and warming at 0.25°C per decade – well within the range of uncertainty. That would indeed get us to 1.5°C by 2030: 12 years from 2018. But an additional quarter of a degree of warming, more-or-less what has happened since the 1990s, is not going to feel like Armageddon to the vast majority of today’s striking teenagers (the striving taxpayers of 2030). And what will they think then? I say the majority, because there will be unfortunate exceptions. One of the most insidious myths about climate change is the pretence that we are all in it together. People ask me whether I’m kept awake at night by the prospect of five degrees of warming. I don’t think we’ll make it to five degrees. I’m far more worried about geopolitical breakdown as the injustices of climate change emerge as we steam from two to three degrees. So please stop saying something globally bad is going to happen in 2030. Bad stuff is already happening and every half a degree of warming matters, but the IPCC does not draw a “planetary boundary” at 1.5°C beyond which lie climate dragons. Get angry, but for the right reasons. What about the other interpretation of the IPCC’s 12 years: that we have 12 years to act? What our report said was, in scenarios with a one-in-two to two-in-three chance of keeping global warming below 1.5°C, emissions are reduced to around half their present level by 2030. That doesn’t mean we have 12 years to act: it means we have to act now, and even if we do, success is not guaranteed. And if we don’t halve emissions by 2030, will we have lost the battle and just have to hunker down and survive? Of course not. The IPCC is clear that, even reducing emissions as fast as possible, we can barely keep temperatures below 1.5°C. So every year that goes by in which we aren’t reducing emissions is another 40 billion tonnes of CO₂ that we are expecting today’s teenagers to clean back out of the atmosphere in order to preserve warm water corals or Arctic ice.

Warming wont cause extinction – scientific consensus

Piper 2019 – staffwriter

(By Kelsey Piper Updated Jun 28, 2019, 2:49pm EDT Is climate change an “existential threat” — or just a catastrophic one? <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/2019/6/13/18660548/climate-change-human-civilization-existential-risk>) IB

Six climate scientists reviewed the accuracy of the report and Vice’s write-up at Climate Feedback, a nonprofit that works to improve climate reporting by getting comments from scientists on striking claims in the press. Their responses were scathing. “This is a classic case of a media article over-stating the conclusions and significance of a non-peer reviewed report that itself had already overstated (and indeed misrepresented) peer-reviewed science,” wrote Richard Betts, who chairs the department for climate impact research at the University of Exeter and leads the European Union project that studies the impacts of extreme global warming. The Breakthrough report does indeed gather claims from other papers, climate leaders, and thinkers. But it selected many of the scariest and most speculative papers and presented them without being clear about how plausible they are. And some of its most outrageous claims are just wrong. The report argues that if temperatures continue to rise, “fifty-five percent of the global population are subject to more than 20 days a year of lethal heat conditions beyond that which humans can survive.” That’d be terrifying. But Betts points out that this is based on the definition of a “deadly heat wave” from a paper that defined a deadly heat wave as one above a threshold where at least one person is expected to die (based on historical data). And some of the temperatures identified as deadly are as low as 86 degrees Fahrenheit (30 degrees Celsius) with high humidity — hot, but not what comes to mind from the phrase “lethal heat conditions

beyond what humans can survive.” “The report’s authors have merely read (or possibly seen without actually reading) a few of the scariest papers they could find, misunderstood (or not read properly) at least one of them, and presented unjustified statements,” Betts added. **“The scenario constructed in this report does not have a ‘high likelihood’ of occurring,”** wrote Andrew King, a research fellow at the University of Melbourne. Spratt says that it needn’t be likely to be an important focus. “Sensible risk management is to look at what are the worst feasible options and take actions to stop them occurring,” he told me. “In risk management, we ask what is the worst possible outcome and avoid it. We don’t assume that middle-of-the-road outcomes are the worst thing around, because that’d be disastrous.” That said, he agreed that much of the media coverage, including the viral Vice article, was “over-the-top and often misleading.” But the scientists who reviewed the article didn’t just object to the headlines. They **felt that the core claim — that 3 or 4 degrees of warming could destroy civilization — was also deeply unlikely.** “While there is plenty of scientific evidence that climate change will pose increasingly existential threats to the most vulnerable individuals in society and to key global ecosystems,” wrote UCLA researcher Daniel Swain, **“even these dire outcomes aren’t equivalent to the ‘annihilation of intelligent life,’ as is claimed in the report.”** One important thing here is that “suicide,” “catastrophic,” and “end of civilization” are all nontechnical terms, and people may have very different things in mind when they use them — especially if we’re looking at interviews rather than at papers. I also talked to some researchers who study existential risks, like John Halstead, who studies climate change mitigation at the philanthropic advising group Founders Pledge, and who has a detailed online analysis of all the (strikingly few) climate change papers that address existential risk (his analysis has not been peer-reviewed yet). Halstead looks into the models of potential temperature increases that Breakthrough’s report highlights. The models show a surprisingly large chance of extreme degrees of warming. Halstead points out that in many papers, this is the result of the simplistic form of statistical modeling used. Other papers have made a convincing case that **this form of statistical modeling is an irresponsible way to reason about climate change, and that the dire projections rest on a statistical method that is widely understood to be a bad approach for that question.** Further, “the carbon effects don’t seem to pose an existential risk,” he told me. “People use 10 degrees as an illustrative example” — of a nightmare scenario where climate change goes much, much worse than expected in every respect — “and looking at it, **even 10 degrees would not really cause the collapse of industrial civilization,**” though the effects would still be pretty horrifying. (On the question of whether an increase of 10 degrees would be survivable, there is much debate.)