# ASU Round 8 vs. Whitman BM (Aff)

## 1AC

#### Same as Round 4.

## 2AC

### Warming

#### No guarantee that Geoengineering solves – even supporters are wary.

Specter, staff writer at The New Yorker since 1998, ‘12

[Michael, “THE CLIMATE FIXERS”, 5-14-12, The New Yorker,

<http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2012/05/14/120514fa_fact_specter>, RSR]

For years, even to entertain the possibility of human intervention on such a scale—geoengineering, as the practice is known—has been denounced as hubris. Predicting long-term climatic behavior by using computer models has proved difficult, and the notion of fiddling with the planet’s climate based on the results generated by those models worries even scientists who are fully engaged in the research. “There will be no easy victories, but at some point we are going to have to take the facts seriously,’’ David Keith, a professor of engineering and public policy at Harvard and one of geoengineering’s most thoughtful supporters, told me. “Nonetheless,’’ he added, “it is hyperbolic to say this, but no less true: when you start to reflect light away from the planet, you can easily imagine a chain of events that would extinguish life on earth.”

### Solvency

#### In the short term US nuclear waste is stored on-site.

Galbraith 11 (Kate, Staff Writer, “A New Urgency to the Problem of Storing Nuclear Waste”, New York Times, 11-27-11, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/28/business/energy-environment/a-new-urgency-to-the-problem-of-storing-nuclear-waste.html, RSR)

Other countries are also looking at waste in new ways in the post-Fukushima world. Right now, worldwide, most spent fuel waste is stored on the site of the facility that produced it, in spent-fuel pools and, after it eventually cools, dry casks. Experts say dispersed storage is expensive and that central storage would be more secure. Few countries , apart from Sweden and Finland, have moved forward on centralized disposal sites, deep in the earth, designed to hold the waste permanently. France is evaluating a permanent disposal site for spent fuel , near the remote northeastern village of Bure.

#### Waste storage is the biggest risk of accidents.

Kinitisch 11 (Eli, Reporter at Science Magazine, “Waste Panel Expected To Back Interim Storage”, Science Magazine, Vol. 333, 7-8-11, RSR)

In any case, experts agree, some new plan for waste storage is essential. Waste currently stored in pools and casks at U.S. sites does not pose “unmanageable … safety or security risks,” says a subcommittee report. But every ton that stays at reactor sites makes those risks slightly greater. Fuel in U.S. spent fuel pools is packed four times as densely as it was 25 years ago, raising concerns about the risk of explosions or meltdown if the pools were to empty in an accident. The tsunami that devastated the Fukushima nuclear plant in Japan in March may have resulted in a loss of water in one of its ponds (Science, 1 April, p. 24). A draft commission report says the issue of the safety of keeping fuel densely packed in pools should be “reexamined,” although “it is still too early to draw deﬁ nitive conclusions” from the Fukushima accident. It calls for an expert panel at the National Academies to tackle the subject.

#### Reprocessing would remove the waste problem – the waste we currently store can be reused

Bastin 8 (Clinton, Former Chemical Engineer at the Atomic Energy Commission, 21st Century Science and Technology, “We Need to Reprocess Spent Nuclear Fuel, And Can Do It Safely, At Reasonable Cost”, 2008, [http://www.21stcenturysciencetech.com/Articles%202008/ Summer\_2008/Reprocessing.pdf](http://www.21stcenturysciencetech.com/Articles%202008/Summer_2008/Reprocessing.pdf), RSR)

The concept of used nuclear fuel as “nuclear waste” is a fiction created by the opponents of nuclear energy. Used nuclear fuel isn’t waste at all, but a renewable resource that can be reprocessed into new nuclear fuel and valuable isotopes. When we entered the nuclear age, the great promise of nuclear energy wasitsrenewability, making it an inexpensive and efficient way to produce electricity. It was assumed that the nations making use of nuclear energy would reprocess their spent fuel, completing the nuclear fuel cycle by recycling the nuclear fuel after it was burned in a reactor, to extract the 95 to 99 percent of unused uranium in it that can be turned into new fuel. This means that if the United States buries its 70,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel, we would be wasting 66,000 metric tons of uranium-28, which could be used to make new fuel. In addition, we would be wasting about 1,200 metric tons of fissile uranium-25 and plutonium-29, which can also be burned as fuel. Because of the high energy density in the nucleus, this relatively small amount of U.S. spent fuel (it would fit in one small house) is equivalent in energy to about 20 percent of the U.S. oil reserves. About 96 percent of the spent fuel the United States is now storing can be turned into new fuel. The 4 percent of the socalled waste that remains—2,500 metric tons—consists of highly radioactive materials, but these are also usable. There are about 80 tons each of cesium-17 and strontium-90 that could be separated out for use in medical applications, such as sterilization of medical supplies. Using isotope separation techniques, and fast-neutron bombardment for transmutation (technologies that the United States pioneered but now refuses to develop), we could separate out all sorts of isotopes, like americium, which is used in smoke detectors, or isotopes used in medical testing and treatment. Right now, the United Statesmust import 90 percent of its medical isotopes, used in 40,000 medical procedures daily. The diagram shows a closed nuclear fuel cycle. At present, the United States has no reprocessing, and stores spent fuel in pools or dry storage at nuclear plants. Existing nuclear reactors use only about 1 percent of the total energy value in uranium resources; fast reactors with fuel recycle would use essentially 100 percent, burning up all of the uranium and actinides, the long-lived fission products. In a properly managed and safeguarded system, the plutonium produced in fast reactors would remain in its spent fuel until needed for recycle.Thus, there need be no excess buildup of accessible plutonium. The plutonium could also be fabricated directly into new reactor fuel assemblies to be burned in nuclear plants.

#### Nuclear power plant explosion is impossible.

Morris, PhD in Science Education and retired Environmental Consultant, 2k

[Robert, The Environmental Case for Nuclear Power, 2000, pg 16-7]

In the 1970s, a number of anti-nuclear power organizations spread the idea that the chain reaction in a nuclear power plant might increase so rapidly that the reactor could explode, as the atomic bomb did. However, for a nuclear power reactor to undergo a nuclear explosion is, and has always been, a complete impossibility. To begin with, nuclear power reactors contain only 3 percent U235. Nuclear bombs must contain over 90 percent U235, or they don’t satisfy the first of several physical conditions which must be met before a nuclear explosion can occur. (Nor is it possible for a reactor which uses plutonium to explode as did the atomic bomb.) For those readers who might be thinking, “What about the Russian nuclear power plant at Chernobyl? Didn’t it explode?” The explosion at Chernobyl was a chemical or steam explosion, not a nuclear explosion. The fact that only two people were killed by the initial explosion is ample proof that a nuclear explosion did not occur at Chernobyl; a nuclear explosion would have killed thousands. Even at a primitive nuclear power plant like Chernobyl, a nuclear explosion is an impossibility. For the time being, suffice it to say that Chernobyl was such an unsafe design that it could never have been licensed to generate electricity in the U.S., or in any of the Western European nations. (More about Chernobyl appears in a later chapter.)

### States CP

#### Perm do both. Solves GOP backlash because thirty republican governors would all back reprocessing.

#### Information distortion means the CP links to politics

**Kiely, ‘12** [2/17/12, Eugene Kiely, Washington assignment editor USA today, “Did Obama ‘Approve’ Bridge Work for Chinese Firms?” http://www.factcheck.org/2012/02/did-obama-approve-bridge-work-for-chinese-firms/]

Who’s to blame, if that’s the right word, if the project ends up using manufactured steel from China? The National Steel Bridge Alliance [blames](http://americanmanufacturing.org/blog/shameful-use-taxpayer-dollars-alaska) the state railroad agency. The Alliance for American Manufacturing [says](http://americanmanufacturing.org/blog/alaskan-manufacturers-outraged-potential-%E2%80%9Cmade-china%E2%80%9D-railroad-bridge) the federal Buy American laws have been “weakened with loopholes and various exemptions that make it easier for bureaucrats to purchase foreign-made goods instead of those made in American factories with American workers.” So, how did Obama get blamed for the decisions by state agencies and for state projects that, in at least one case, didn’t even use federal funds? The answer is a textbook lesson in how information gets distorted when emails go viral. We looked at the nearly 100 emails we received on this subject and found that Obama wasn’t mentioned at all in the first few emails. Typical of the emails we received shortly after the ABC News report aired was this one from Oct. 11, 2011: “I just got an email regarding Diane Sawyer on ABC TV stating that U. S. Bridges and roads are being built by Chinese firms when the jobs should have gone to Americans. Could this possible be true?” The answer: Yes, it’s true. End of story, right? Wrong. Days later, emails started to appear in our inbox that claimed ABC News reported that Chinese firm were receiving stimulus funds to build U.S. bridges — even though the broadcast news story didn’t mention stimulus funds at all. (The report did include a clip of Obama delivering a speech on the need to rebuild America’s bridges and put Americans to work, but said nothing about the president’s $830 billion stimulus bill.) Still, we received emails such as this one on Nov. 4, 2011, that included this erroneous claim language: “Stimulus money meant to create U.S. jobs went to Chinese firms. Unbelievable….” It didn’t take long for Obama to be blamed. That same day — Nov. 4, 2011 — we received an email that made this leap to Obama: “SOME CHINESE COMPANIES WHO ARE BUILDING ‘OUR’ BRIDGES. (3000 JOBS LOST TO THE CHINESE FIRM)…..AND NOW OBAMA WANTS ‘MORE STIMULUS MONEY’…..THIS IS NUTS ! ! ! If this doesn’t make you furious nothing will….” This year, Obama’s name started to surface in the subject line of such critical emails — raising the attack on the president to yet another level and perhaps ensuring the email will be even more widely circulated. Since Jan. 17, we have gotten more than a dozen emails with the subject line, “ABC News on Obama/USA Infrastructure,” often preceded with the word “SHOCKING” in all caps. The emails increasingly contain harsh language about the president. Since Jan. 11, 23 emails carried this added bit of Obama-bashing: “I pray all the unemployed see this and cast their votes accordingly in 2012!” One of those emails — a more recent one from Feb. 8 — contained this additional line: “Tell me again how Obama’s looking out for blue collar guys. He cancels pipelines, and lets Chinese contractors build our bridges…” And so it goes, on and on. All from a news report that blamed state officials — not Obama — for spending taxpayer money on Chinese firms to build U.S. bridges.

#### CP can’t solve – federal investment is necessary to remove the perceptual ban on reprocessing.

Adams, ‘8

[Rod, “What Do You Do About the Waste? Recycle and Reuse”, Clean Technica, 5-29-2008,

<http://cleantechnica.com/2008/05/29/what-do-you-do-about-the-waste-recycle-and-reuse/>, RSR]

The US used to have a plan to recycle our fuel as well, but a great deal of marketing and pressure by people that do not like the idea of using plutonium as a source of commercial heat resulted in President Ford issuing a presidential order to temporarily halt nuclear fuel recycling in 1976. President Carter, a man who claimed to be a nuclear engineer, made that ban permanent in the hopes that forcing US companies to avoid fuel recycling would cause others to abandon the very logical idea. That effort did not work as planned, but the people who had invested large amounts of time and money into building three recycling plants in the US only to have them shut down with the stroke of a pen decided “once bitten, twice shy.” Though President Reagan removed the ban, President Clinton essentially reinstated it and no commercial company has been willing to build a facility and risk having it turn into a white elephant after an election.

#### Congress is necessary – overcomes regulatory process.

Fertel, Senior Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer at the Nuclear Energy Institute, ‘5

[Marvin, CQ Congressional Testimony, “NUCLEAR POWER'S PLACE IN A NATIONAL ENERGY POLICY,” 4/28, lexis]

Industry and government will be prepared to meet the demand for new emission-free baseload nuclear plants in the 2010 to 2020 time frame only through a sustained focus on the necessary programs and policies between now and then. As it has in the past, strong Congressional oversight will be necessary to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the federal government's nuclear energy programs, and to maintain America's leadership in nuclear technology development and its influence over important diplomatic initiatives like nonproliferation. Such efforts have provided a dramatic contribution to global security, as evidenced by the U.S.-Russian nonproliferation agreement to recycle weapons-grade material from Russia for use in American reactors. Currently, more than 50 percent of U.S. nuclear power plant fuel depends on converted Russian warhead material. Nowhere is continued congressional oversight more important than with DOE's program to manage the used nuclear fuel from our nuclear power plants. Continued progress toward a federal used nuclear fuel repository is necessary to support nuclear energy's vital role in a comprehensive national energy policy and to support the remediation of DOE defense sites. Since enactment of the 1982 Nuclear Waste Policy Act, DOE's federal repository program has repeatedly overcome challenges, and challenges remain before the Yucca Mountain facility can begin operation. But as we address these issues, it is important to keep the overall progress of the program in context. There is international scientific consensus that a deep geologic repository is the best solution for long-term disposition of used military and commercial nuclear power plant fuel and high-level radioactive byproducts. The Bush administration and Congress, with bipartisan support, affirmed the suitability of Yucca Mountain for a repository in 2002. Over the past three years, the Energy Department and its contractors have made considerable progress providing yet greater confirmation that this is the correct course of action and that Yucca Mountain is an appropriate site for a national repository. --During the past year, federal courts have rejected significant legal challenges by the state of Nevada and others to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act and the 2002 Yucca Mountain site suitability determination. These challenges questioned the constitutionality of the Yucca Mountain Development Act and DOE's repository system, which incorporates both natural and engineered barriers to contain radioactive material safely. In the coming year, Congress will play an essential role in keeping this program on schedule, by taking the steps necessary to provide increased funding for the project in fiscal 2006 and in future years. Meeting DOE's schedule for initial repository operation requires certainty in funding for the program. This is particularly critical in view of projected annual expenditures that will exceed $1 billion beginning in fiscal 2007. Meeting these budget requirements calls for a change in how Congress provides funds to the project from monies collected for the Nuclear Waste Fund. The history of Yucca Mountain funding is evidence that the current funding approach must be modified. Consumer fees (including interest) committed to the Nuclear Waste Fund since its f6rmation in 1983 total more than $24 billion. Consumers are projected to pay between $750 million to $800 million to the fund each year, based on electricity generated at the nation's 103 reactors. This is more than $2 million per day. Although about $8 billion has been used for the program, the balance in the fund is nearly $17 billion. In each of the past several years, there has been a gap between the annual fees paid by consumers of electricity from nuclear power plants and disbursements from the fund for use by DOE at Yucca Mountain. Since the fund was first established, billions of dollars paid by consumers of electricity from nuclear power plants to the Nuclear Waste Fund-intended solely for the federal government's used fuel program-in effect have been used to decrease budget deficits or increase surpluses. The industry believes that Congress should change the funding mechanism for Yucca Mountain so that payments to the Nuclear Waste Fund can be used only for the project and be excluded from traditional congressional budget caps. Although the program should remain subject to congressional oversight, Yucca Mountain appropriations should not compete each year for funding with unrelated programs when Congress directed a dedicated funding stream for the project. The industry also believes that it is appropriate and necessary to consider an alternative perspective on the Yucca Mountain project. This alternative would include an extended period for monitoring operation of the repository for up to 300 years after spent fuel is first placed underground. The industry believes that this approach would provide ongoing assurance and greater confidence that the repository is performing as designed, that public safety is assured, and that the environment is protected. It would also permit DOE to apply evolving innovative technologies at the repository. Through this approach, a scientific monitoring program would identify additional scientific information that can be used in repository performance models. The project then could update the models, and make modifications in design and operations as appropriate. Congressional committees like this one can help ensure that DOE does not lose sight of its responsibility for used nuclear fuel management and disposal, as stated by Congress in the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. The industry fully supports the fundamental need for a repository so that used nuclear fuel and the byproducts of the nation's nuclear weapons program are securely managed in an underground, specially designed facility. World-class science has demonstrated that Yucca Mountain is the best site for that facility. A public works project of this magnitude will inevitably face challenges. Yet, none is insurmountable. DOE and its contractors have made significant progress on the project and will continue to do so as the project enters the licensing phase. Congressional oversight also can play a key role in maintaining and encouraging the stability of the NRC's regulatory process. Such stability is essential for our 103 operating nuclear plants and equally critical in licensing new nuclear power plants. Congress played a key role several years ago in encouraging the NRC to move toward a new oversight process for the nation's nuclear plants, based on quantitative performance indicators and safety significance. Today's reactor oversight process is designed to focus industry and NRC resources on equipment, components and operational issues that have the greatest importance to, and impact on, safety. The NRC and the industry have worked hard to identify and implement realistic security requirements at nuclear power plants. In the three-and-a-half years since 9/11, the NRC has issued a series of requirements to increase security and enhance training for security programs. The industry complied-fully and rapidly. In the days and months following Sept. 11, quick action was required. Orders that implemented needed changes quickly were necessary. Now, we should return to the orderly process of regulating through regulations. The industry has spent more than $1 billion enhancing security since September 2001. We've identified and fixed vulnerabilities. Today, the industry is at the practical limit of what private industry can do to secure our facilities against the terrorist threat. NRC Chairman Nils Diaz and other commissioners have said that the industry has achieved just about everything that can be reasonably achieved by a civilian force. The industry now needs a transition period to stabilize the new security requirements. We need time to incorporate these dramatic changes into our operations and emergency planning programs and to train our employees to the high standards of our industry-and to the appropriately high expectations of the NRC. Both industry and the NRC need congressional oversight to support and encourage this kind of stability. CONCLUSION Electricity generated by America's nuclear power plants over the past half-century has played a key part in our nation's growth and prosperity. Nuclear power produces over 20 percent of the electricity used in the United States today without producing air pollution. As our energy demands continue to grow in years to come, nuclear power should play an even greater role in meeting our energy and environmental needs. The nuclear energy industry is operating its reactors safely and efficiently. The industry is striving to produce more electricity from existing plants. The industry is also developing more efficient, next-generation reactors and exploring ways to build them more cost-effectively. The public sector, including the oversight committees of the U.S. Congress, can help maintain the conditions that ensure Americans will continue to reap the benefits of our operating plants, and create the conditions that will spur investment in America's energy infrastructure, including new nuclear power plants. One important step is passage of comprehensive energy legislation that recognizes nuclear energy's contributions to meeting our growing energy demands, ensuring our nation's energy security and protecting our environment. Equally important, however, is the need to ensure effective and efficient implementation of existing laws, like the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, and to provide federal agencies with the resources and oversight necessary to discharge their statutory responsibilities in the most efficient way possible. The commercial nuclear power sector was born in the United States, and nations around the world continue to look to this nation for leadership in this technology and in the issues associated with nuclear power. Our ability to influence critical international policies in areas like nuclear nonproliferation, for example, depends on our ability to maintain a leadership role in prudent deployment, use and regulation of nuclear energy technologies here at home, in the United States, and on our ability to manage the technological and policy challenges-like waste management-that arise with all advanced technologies.

#### Lack of federal reprocessing hurts relations – cornerstone of relations.

Yurman, Staff Writer, ‘12

[Dan, “Revisiting Reprocessing in South Korea”, ANS Nuclear Café, 8-2-12,

<http://ansnuclearcafe.org/2012/08/02/revisiting-reprocessing-in-south-korea/>, RSR]

Comes now the request by the South Korean government, first aired in October 2010, to revise the bilateral cooperation treaty with the U.S. It has been in place for more than 40 years and it is a cornerstone of U.S./South Korean diplomatic relations. Many specialists in the field of nonproliferation see a “hard and fast” policy against any expansion of uranium enrichment and spent fuel reprocessing as a key to stopping states like North Korea from pursuing these activities. That strategy hasn’t worked and, as a result, South Korea wants relief from the restriction in the now-decades-old treaty. Negotiations over changes to the treaty have been going on since last December, but appear to be stalemated around a key set of issues. It is a delicate dance, as diplomats like to say, because if the U.S. leans too heavily on South Korea, it could sour relations between the two countries and spawn nationalist sentiment that might lead to a nuclear weapons program. Since the 1950s, South Korea has depended on the U.S. nuclear arsenal as a shield against aggression from its neighbor to the north.

#### US-SoKo relations k2 regional stability and global security

Clinton 10 [Hillary Rodham Clinton, “America’s Engagement in the Asia-Pacific”, October 28, 2010, http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/150141.htm]

This year also marked a milestone with another ally: the 60th anniversary of the start of the Korean War, which Secretary Gates and I commemorated in Seoul this past summer. And in two weeks, our presidents will meet in Seoul when President Obama travels there for the G-20 summit. Our two countries have stood together in the face of threats and provocative acts from North Korea, including the tragic sinking of the Cheonan by a North Korean torpedo. We will continue to coordinate closely with both Seoul and Tokyo in our efforts to make clear to North Korea there is only one path that promises the full benefits of engagement with the outside world – a full, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization.The alliance between South Korea and the United States is a lynchpin of stability and security in the region and now even far beyond. We are working together in Afghanistan, where a South Korean reconstruction team is at work in Parwan Province; in the Gulf of Aden, where Korean and U.S. forces are coordinating anti-piracy missions. And of course, beyond our military cooperation, our countries enjoy a vibrant economic relationship, which is why our two Presidents have called for resolving the outstanding issues related to the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement by the time of the G-20 meeting in Seoul.

#### East Asian instability leads to World War III

Knight Ridder 2k

(Jonathon S. Landay, “Top administration officials warn stakes for U.S. are high in Asian conflicts”, 3-11, L/N)

Few if any experts think China and Taiwan, North Korea and South Korea, or India and Pakistan are spoiling to fight. But even a minor miscalculation by any of them could destabilize Asia, jolt the global economy and even start a nuclear war. India, Pakistan and China all have nuclear weapons, and North Korea may have a few, too. Asia lacks the kinds of organizations, negotiations and diplomatic relationships that helped keep an uneasy peace for five decades in Cold War Europe. "Nowhere else on Earth are the stakes as high and relationships so fragile," said Bates Gill, director of northeast Asian policy studies at the Brookings Institution, a Washington think tank. "We see the convergence of great power interest overlaid with lingering confrontations with no institutionalized security mechanism in place. There are elements for potential disaster."

### Prolif DA

#### World of the aff is safer than the SQUO. On site storage vulnerable to terrorist theft – fewer security measures due to assumed radioactive safeguards.

Bunn 9 (Matthew, Associate Professor at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, “Reducing the greatest risks of nuclear theft & terrorism”, Daedalus, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Fall, RSR)

A building with nuclear material that terrorists could readily make into a nuclear bomb needs more security than a building with lower-quality material that would be very difficult for adversaries to use to make a bomb. But this sensible “graded safeguards” approach, used in national regulations and international recommendations around the world, must avoid slipping into what might be called “cliffed safeguards,” in which security falls off catastrophically if nuclear material is beyond some arbitrary threshold that has little relation to real risk. For example, under current Nuclear Regulatory Commission (nrc) rules in the United States, nuclear material that would normally require security measures costing millions of dollars a year requires none of that if it is radioactive enough to cause a radiation dose of one Sievert per hour at one meter– a level considered radioactive enough to make the material “self-protecting.” But studies at the national laboratories have shown that at this level of radiation, thieves who carried the material out to a waiting truck with their bare hands would not even receive a big enough dose of radiation to make them feel sick. In a world of suicidal terrorists, these rules–and similar, though less extreme, international rules– urgently need to be revised. More broadly, in-depth assessments of how different chemical, physical, isotopic, and radiological properties of a material affect the odds that adversaries would succeed in making a bomb from it should be used to determine how much security can be relaxed for particular types of material while keeping overall risks low. In making these assessments, it is important to remember that heu at enrichment levels far below the 90 percent U-235 level considered “weapons grade” can still readily be used in a bomb, at the cost of using somewhat more material. So past policies that have focused cooperative security upgrades only on sites whose heu is at least 80 percent U-235 should certainly be revised. Similarly, while weapons designers prefer weapons-grade plutonium, produced specifically to contain 90 percent or more Pu-239, the “reactor grade” plutonium produced in the spent fuel from typical power reactors can also be used to make fearsome explosives, despite the extra neutrons, heat, and radiation generated by the less desirable plutonium isotopes it contains. Indeed, repeated government studies have concluded that any state or group capable of making a bomb from weapons-grade plutonium would also be able to make a bomb from reactor-grade plutonium. 6

#### Plan solves that – Bastin on case.

#### No proliferation – global reprocessing now denies and US safeguards too strong.

Lee, 2010 Wise Intern at the American Nuclear Society, ‘12

[Nathan, WISE, “Sustainability Of U.S. Nuclear Energy: Waste Management And¶ The Question Of Reprocessing”, 2012,

<http://www.wise-intern.org/journal/2010/NathanLeeWISE2010.pdf>, RCM]

No matter how much some nuclear energy proponents might play down the dual purpose of nuclear technologies, as long as the fundamental driving force remains the splitting of the atom, so too will the risk of proliferating those technologies for use in an atom-splitting bomb. Seeking a proliferation-proof nuclear energy policy is futile; instead, a smart policy should aim to maximize proliferation resistance under the given circumstances.¶ In the case of reprocessing used nuclear fuel, the principal concern is over the isolation of plutonium in the product stream, which could then be converted for use in a bomb. Unprocessed used nuclear fuel is sufficiently secure against physical enemy intrusion due to the multiplicity of highly radioactive components it contains. Since plutonium itself is not highly radioactive, it becomes much easier to approach after separation. Although newer reprocessing technologies leave different radioactive contaminants in the product stream to offset the loss in proliferation resistance, none of them remain significantly “self-protecting” by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) standards (Fig. 10).¶ There are several avenues by which plutonium proliferation could occur. A terrorist group or rogue state could steal the plutonium from the product stream of another country’s reprocessing plant or could acquire the technology itself on the black market to isolate plutonium themselves. Another risk involves a state legally operating a reprocessing facility but illegally diverting plutonium from the product stream or operating a clandestine plant in parallel. Any of these scenarios could occur for all the reprocessing technologies considered. While the risk levels for one-pass Pu recycling and full actinide recycling would vary based on total material flow, amount of transport required, technology safeguards, and additional factors, the fundamental issue of plutonium isolation is the same.¶ President Carter’s decision to ban reprocessing in the U.S. was ostensibly motivated by this issue. It was supposed to deter other nuclear countries from reprocessing as well, thereby bolstering global nonproliferation. However, they did not follow suit; several countries now operate reprocessing facilities. Consequently, the proliferation ramifications of implementing reprocessing in the United States in the 21st century are no longer the same as perceived in the early stages of the nuclear industry. Not only has the international deterrent argument been largely discredited, but the marginal impact in the global proliferation risk from initiating reprocessing in the U.S. would be much less substantial now that there already exists an established international reprocessing market. Furthermore, by entering this market, some argue that the U.S. might actually slow the dissemination of reprocessing technology by providing the service to other countries that wish to reprocess their used nuclear fuel, making domestic development less economical.38¶ However U.S. reprocessing would affect the global interplay, by far the most critical factor for deciding whether to reprocess domestically would be our own ability to prevent direct proliferation. In this arena, the U.S. has proven over the last sixty years that it can effectively manage and safeguard large plutonium stockpiles and dangerous technologies.39 Moreover, improvements are already underway in utilizing real-time monitoring of material flows to detect and prevent proliferation attempts.40

#### No prolif concerns – new tech does not separate the plutonium preventing it from theft or usability.

Lagus, 2005 WISE Intern, ‘5

[Todd, University of Minnesota, WISE, “Reprocessing of Spent Nuclear Fuel: A Policy Analysis”

<http://www.wise-intern.org/journal/2005/lagus.pdf>, RSR]

In the case of the newer UREX+ technology, the long-lived fission products create more steps in weapons deployment. The new technologies for reprocessing including transmutation would not involve separating pure plutonium, but rather a plutonium/ actinide mixture that would increase the toxicity of the material and protect it from theft and handling. The International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) standard for self protection requires 1 Sievert/hr (100 rems/hr) at one meter. Five Sieverts is a median lethal dose. 45 This technology again has been demonstrated in laboratories, but a great deal of research is still underway. The actinides also contaminate the plutonium such that it would not be usable as a weapon without sophisticated chemical separation technologies, which few countries, if any, possess. 46 Some argue that there are many other weapons options which are cheaper and easier to fabricate should an enemy decide to strike. 47

### Coal DA

#### Coal is officially dead – new investment won’t resurrect projects because the economics no longer make sense.

Pope 12 (Carl Pope, 4-9-2012, Former chairman and executive director, Sierra Club, National Energy Journal, “KING COAL: HOIST ON HIS OWN PETARD,” <http://energy.nationaljournal.com/2012/04/whats-really-causing-coals-dec.php#2193151>)

Washington is in a tizzy about “who killed coal?” in the wake of EPA’s new air pollution standard for carbon pollution. That standard, which requires that new power plants be at least as clean as a new natural gas plant, has blocked a miniscule number of coal plants that were still proceeding – but observers are pointing out that almost all of the new coal plants being proposed five years ago had already been cancelled, because of underlying economic uncertainty, deployment of wind, and cheap gas. That doesn’t stop coal industry advocates from blaming EPA. Just before EPA issued the rule, coal industry allies in Congress wrote a letter referencing claims that EPA’s clean-air rulemaking in the last two years had already cost 1.4 million jobs. The American Clean Coal Council complained that EPA’s rules had already shut down 140 coal plants. But the back-story is not being told. It turns out that while Joshua Freed is correct in saying that “Blaming regulation for the decline of coal is like blaming cars for the demise of horse-drawn carriages”, coal actually laid the foundation for its own demise thirty years ago. In 1977, Congress proposed to require all power plants – regardless of when they were built or what they burned – to meet basic pollution control standards. Coal and its utility allies – led by the Southern Company – argued that they were about to shut down their fleet of old coal clunkers anyway, and that pollution controls would be a silly expense for assets that were about to be retired. Congress believed them, and even gave the Southern company a loophole that allowed it to “grandfather” and exempt from pollution controls coal power plants that came on line as late as a twelve years after the law was passed. And then, from 1977 until 2000, utility companies simply refused to upgrade their plants, allowing the entire fleet to continue, vampire like, as a seemingly immortal threat to the public health. Running for President, even George W. Bush implausibly promised to end the “grandfathering” scandal, only to back off once in the White House at the behest of Vice-President Cheney. Instead, coal companies and utilities promised a brand-new fleet of “clean” coal plants – if you didn’t count carbon pollution. A total of 180 was placed in the permit and finance queue – until, on close examination, it became clear that these new facilities would be neither clean or cheap – and one by one, they almost all were cancelled or abandoned. The few that opened almost broke the financial backs of the utilities that built them – forcing 25-50% rate increases on customers. And when the new plants didn’t materialize, and wind and natural gas got cheap, the utilities who, after all, are businessmen, not coal miners, simply dumped the dirty black rock. When EPA finally blew the whistle on pollutants like mercury, coal ash and particulates that legally should have been cleaned up in the decades from 1977 to 2008, the bill for upgrading old coal no longer made sense – even as the bill for deploying new coal had already gone through the roof. Coal it turned out was not only not clean – as Al Gore’s Reality campaign had already pointed out – worse, it was no longer cheap. And that has made all the difference. But it was a self-inflicted wound – because if the coal industry and its utility allies had really invested in cleaning up their plants from 1977-2000, when the economics still appeared to make sense, then even the arrival of cheap wind and gas wouldn’t have been able to knock them off their perch.

#### Nuclear renaissance now. Pistilli says nuclear is already receiving subsidies and building plants.

#### **Global nuclear expansion now.** Over 200 reactors are going to be constructed in the next five years. That’s 1AC Marketwire.

#### China is transitioning to a renewable grid now

Wong and Light 9 (China Begins Its Transition to a Clean-Energy Economy:

China’s Climate Progress by the Numbers, Julian Wong and Andrew Light, Center for American Progress, June 4, 2009)

China is keenly aware of the threats that climate change poses and the need to diversify its energy base away from coal and oil. The Renewable Energy Law of 2006 and subsequent Medium and Long-Term Renewable Energy Plan set a framework for ambitious targets to develop renewable energy sources in China.¶ ￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼￼¶ ￼3 = ￼• China has set a goal of generating 10 percent of its electricity from renewable energy sources by 2010, and 15 percent by 2020.¶ • China just tripled its 2020 target for installed wind capacity from 20 GW to 100 GW and has recently surpassed India as the fourth-largest installer of wind power.¶ • China’s 2020 target of building 1.8 GW of installed solar power capacity is expected to be increased at least fivefold to 10 GW. China was the world’s largest manufacturer of solar photovoltaic panels until recently, providing roughly 40 percent of the global mar- ket share in 2008. An overwhelming majority of those solar panels have been exported, but China’s domestic solar market is on the cusp of experiencing a boom thanks to new solar incentives announced this year that cut the cost of purchase and installation by as much as half.¶ • One in 10 Chinese households use solar thermal water heaters. China had deployed 40 million solar water heaters in 2007—two-thirds of the global market share. The country plans for 30 percent of its households to have installed solar water heaters by 2020.¶ • China has a target for 300 GW of installed hydropower by 2020, which is twice what it has now.¶ • China implemented a feed-in tariff for biomass power generation at the rate of 3.2 cents per kwh. This means that China essentially provides a preferential electricity tariff to bio- mass power producers of 3.2 cents per kwh over the tariff for conventional fossil fuels. It plans to install 30 GW of biomass power capacity by 2020.¶ • China aims to use 10 million tons of bioethanol and 2 million tons of biodiesel by 2020, replacing 10 million tons of petroleum-based fuel annually.

#### The CCP is immune to economic decline.

Pei 9 (Minxin, senior Associate in the China Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 3-12-9, Foreign Affairs, “Will the Chinese Communist Party Survive the Crisis?”,

http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64862/minxin-pei/will-the-chinese-communist-party-survive-the-crisis)

Economic crisis and social unrest may make it tougher for the CCP to govern, but they will not loosen the party's hold on power. A glance at countries such as Zimbabwe, North Korea, Cuba, and Burma shows that a relatively unified elite in control of the military and police can cling to power through brutal force, even in the face of abysmal economic failure. Disunity within the ruling elite, on the other hand, weakens the regime's repressive capacity and usually spells the rulers' doom. The CCP has already demonstrated its remarkable ability to contain and suppress chronic social protest and small-scale dissident movements. The regime maintains the People's Armed Police, a well-trained and well-equipped anti-riot force of 250,000. In addition, China's secret police are among the most capable in the world and are augmented by a vast network of informers. And although the Internet may have made control of information more difficult, Chinese censors can still react quickly and thoroughly to end the dissemination of dangerous news. Since the Tiananmen crackdown, the Chinese government has greatly refined its repressive capabilities. Responding to tens of thousands of riots each year has made Chinese law enforcement the most experienced in the world at crowd control and dispersion. Chinese state security services have applied the tactic of "political decapitation" to great effect, quickly arresting protest leaders and leaving their followers disorganized, demoralized, and impotent. If worsening economic conditions lead to a potentially explosive political situation, the party will stick to these tried-and-true practices to ward off any organized movement against the regime.

### Immigration DA

#### Doesn’t matter if the high skilled workers are in the US - foreign tech innovation doesn’t undermine heg – the U.S. is better positioned to profit from these developments

Princeton University Press 10 [“Amar Bhidé: The Venturesome Economy: How Innovation Sustains Prosperity in a More Connected World”, http://press.princeton.edu/titles/8731.html]

Many warn that the next stage of globalization--the offshoring of research and development to China and India--threatens the foundations of Western prosperity. But in The Venturesome Economy, acclaimed business and economics scholar Amar Bhidé shows how wrong the doomsayers are. Using extensive field studies on venture-capital-backed businesses to examine how technology really advances in modern economies, Bhidé explains why know-how developed abroad enhances--not diminishes--prosperity at home, and why trying to maintain the U.S. lead by subsidizing more research or training more scientists will do more harm than good.When breakthrough ideas have no borders, a nation's capacity to exploit cutting-edge research regardless of where it originates is crucial: "venturesome consumption"--the willingness and ability of businesses and consumers to effectively use products and technologies derived from scientific research--is far more important than having a share of such research. In fact, a venturesome economy benefits from an increase in research produced abroad: the success of Apple's iPod, for instance, owes much to technologies developed in Asia and Europe.

#### **PC fails —butterfly effect – only winners win.**

Hirsh 2/9 (Michael, chief correspondent for National Journal, previously served as the senior editor and national economics correspondent for Newsweek, 2/9/2013, “There’s No Such Thing as Political Capital,” <http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/there-s-no-such-thing-as-political-capital-20130207>, NP)

On Tuesday, in his State of the Union address, President Obama will do what every president does this time of year. For about 60 minutes, he will lay out a sprawling and ambitious wish list highlighted by gun control and immigration reform, climate change and debt reduction. In response, the pundits will do what they always do this time of year: They will talk about how unrealistic most of the proposals are, discussions often informed by sagacious reckonings of how much “political capital” Obama possesses to push his program through.¶ Most of this talk will have no bearing on what actually happens over the next four years.¶ Consider this: Three months ago, just before the November election, if someone had talked seriously about Obama having enough political capital to oversee passage of both immigration reform and gun-control legislation at the beginning of his second term—even after winning the election by 4 percentage points and 5 million votes (the actual final tally)—this person would have been called crazy and stripped of his pundit’s license. (It doesn’t exist, but it ought to.) In his first term, in a starkly polarized country, the president had been so frustrated by GOP resistance that he finally issued a limited executive order last August permitting immigrants who entered the country illegally as children to work without fear of deportation for at least two years. Obama didn’t dare to even bring up gun control, a Democratic “third rail” that has cost the party elections and that actually might have been even less popular on the right than the president’s health care law. And yet, for reasons that have very little to do with Obama’s personal prestige or popularity—variously put in terms of a “mandate” or “political capital”—chances are fair that both will now happen.¶ What changed? In the case of gun control, of course, it wasn’t the election. It was the horror of the 20 first-graders who were slaughtered in Newtown, Conn., in mid-December. The sickening reality of little girls and boys riddled with bullets from a high-capacity assault weapon seemed to precipitate a sudden tipping point in the national conscience. One thing changed after another. Wayne LaPierre of the National Rifle Association marginalized himself with poorly chosen comments soon after the massacre. The pro-gun lobby, once a phalanx of opposition, began to fissure into reasonables and crazies. Former Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., who was shot in the head two years ago and is still struggling to speak and walk, started a PAC with her husband to appeal to the moderate middle of gun owners. Then she gave riveting and poignant testimony to the Senate, challenging lawmakers: “Be bold.”¶ As a result, momentum has appeared to build around some kind of a plan to curtail sales of the most dangerous weapons and ammunition and the way people are permitted to buy them. It’s impossible to say now whether such a bill will pass and, if it does, whether it will make anything more than cosmetic changes to gun laws. But one thing is clear: The political tectonics have shifted dramatically in very little time. Whole new possibilities exist now that didn’t a few weeks ago.¶ Meanwhile, the Republican members of the Senate’s so-called Gang of Eight are pushing hard for a new spirit of compromise on immigration reform, a sharp change after an election year in which the GOP standard-bearer declared he would make life so miserable for the 11 million illegal immigrants in the U.S. that they would “self-deport.” But this turnaround has very little to do with Obama’s personal influence—his political mandate, as it were. It has almost entirely to do with just two numbers: 71 and 27. That’s 71 percent for Obama, 27 percent for Mitt Romney, the breakdown of the Hispanic vote in the 2012 presidential election. Obama drove home his advantage by giving a speech on immigration reform on Jan. 29 at a Hispanic-dominated high school in Nevada, a swing state he won by a surprising 8 percentage points in November. But the movement on immigration has mainly come out of the Republican Party’s recent introspection, and the realization by its more thoughtful members, such as Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida and Gov. Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, that without such a shift the party may be facing demographic death in a country where the 2010 census showed, for the first time, that white births have fallen into the minority. It’s got nothing to do with Obama’s political capital or, indeed, Obama at all.¶ The point is not that “political capital” is a meaningless term. Often it is a synonym for “mandate” or “momentum” in the aftermath of a decisive election—and just about every politician ever elected has tried to claim more of a mandate than he actually has. Certainly, Obama can say that because he was elected and Romney wasn’t, he has a better claim on the country’s mood and direction. Many pundits still defend political capital as a useful metaphor at least. “It’s an unquantifiable but meaningful concept,” says Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute. “You can’t really look at a president and say he’s got 37 ounces of political capital. But the fact is, it’s a concept that matters, if you have popularity and some momentum on your side.”¶ The real problem is that the idea of political capital—or mandates, or momentum—is so poorly defined that presidents and pundits often get it wrong. “Presidents usually over-estimate it,” says George Edwards, a presidential scholar at Texas A&M University. “The best kind of political capital—some sense of an electoral mandate to do something—is very rare. It almost never happens. In 1964, maybe. And to some degree in 1980.” For that reason, political capital is a concept that misleads far more than it enlightens. It is distortionary. It conveys the idea that we know more than we really do about the ever-elusive concept of political power, and it discounts the way unforeseen events can suddenly change everything. Instead, it suggests, erroneously, that a political figure has a concrete amount of political capital to invest, just as someone might have real investment capital—that a particular leader can bank his gains, and the size of his account determines what he can do at any given moment in history.¶ Naturally, any president has practical and electoral limits. Does he have a majority in both chambers of Congress and a cohesive coalition behind him? Obama has neither at present. And unless a surge in the economy—at the moment, still stuck—or some other great victory gives him more momentum, it is inevitable that the closer Obama gets to the 2014 election, the less he will be able to get done. Going into the midterms, Republicans will increasingly avoid any concessions that make him (and the Democrats) stronger.¶ But the abrupt emergence of the immigration and gun-control issues illustrates how suddenly shifts in mood can occur and how political interests can align in new ways just as suddenly. Indeed, the pseudo-concept of political capital masks a larger truth about Washington that is kindergarten simple: You just don’t know what you can do until you try. Or as Ornstein himself once wrote years ago, “Winning wins.” In theory, and in practice, depending on Obama’s handling of any particular issue, even in a polarized time, he could still deliver on a lot of his second-term goals, depending on his skill and the breaks. Unforeseen catalysts can appear, like Newtown. Epiphanies can dawn, such as when many Republican Party leaders suddenly woke up in panic to the huge disparity in the Hispanic vote.¶ Some political scientists who study the elusive calculus of how to pass legislation and run successful presidencies say that political capital is, at best, an empty concept, and that almost nothing in the academic literature successfully quantifies or even defines it. “It can refer to a very abstract thing, like a president’s popularity, but there’s no mechanism there. That makes it kind of useless,” says Richard Bensel, a government professor at Cornell University. Even Ornstein concedes that the calculus is far more complex than the term suggests. Winning on one issue often changes the calculation for the next issue; there is never any known amount of capital. “The idea here is, if an issue comes up where the conventional wisdom is that president is not going to get what he wants, and he gets it, then each time that happens, it changes the calculus of the other actors” Ornstein says. “If they think he’s going to win, they may change positions to get on the winning side. It’s a bandwagon effect.”

#### Obama is not key – bipartisan coalition being formed right now to formulate a bill

#### No comprehensive reform – House Republicans remain too divided on the issue.

NYT, 2-6

[The New York Times, “Immigration and the Middle Ground”, 2-6-13,

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/07/opinion/immigration-reform-and-the-false-middle-ground.html?\_r=0]

But House Republicans aren’t there yet. The tone at the hearing was set when the committee chairman, Representative Robert Goodlatte of Virginia, asked a witness: “Are there options that we should consider between the extremes of mass deportation and a pathway to citizenship for those not lawfully present in the United States?” The false middle ground he and others on the committee seemed to be seeking was limbo: legal status without hope of citizenship. Or, second-class noncitizens.¶ The witness, Mayor Julián Castro of San Antonio, responded that there was nothing extreme about turning immigrants into Americans. “If we look at our history,” he said, “Congress over time has chosen that option, that path to citizenship.”¶ Republicans have been so estranged from a reasonable immigration discussion that it’s not surprising they don’t know what one looks like. Since the last big bipartisan reform died in 2007, Republicans have dug into a trench on the far right, declaring that legalization in any form is anathema. The re-election of Mr. Obama and the dismal performance by Republicans among Hispanic voters rattled the party deeply and dislodged some Republicans from that noxious orthodoxy.¶ Judging from Tuesday’s hearing, many in the party still see immigrants as problems to be separated and contained. Republican committee members seemed willing only to discuss making Americans of small subsets, like “highly skilled” immigrants in technical fields, leaving aside most everyone else. Representative Spencer Bachus of Alabama and some like-minded witnesses dismissed citizenship as too “toxic” to discuss. Their defeatism was yet more evidence of a party deeply out of step with public opinion and American history, in which waves of newcomers have been absorbed into the republic without being forced into a permanent underclass.

#### Cantor and House Republicans support nuclear power

Politico 11 (Cantor: nuclear power 'essential' for U.S. energy needs, http://www.politico.com/blogs/glennthrush/0311/Cantor\_nuclear\_power\_essential\_for\_US\_energy\_needs.html)

House Majority Leader Eric Cantor defended nuclear energy production Monday, after a series of explosions at a nuclear reactor in Japan, calling it “essential” to meeting American energy needs. The problems at the Fukushima plant 150 miles north of Tokyo have reignited the debate over the safety of nuclear energy production. Cantor told reporters Monday that the tsunami that ravaged Japan last week is to blame, not the reactor itself. “As far as we know, this is the result of a tsunami,” he said. “Nuclear power is an essential mix of the energy economy in this country.” The tsunami caused technical problems at the Japanese plant, which left nuclear rods exposed, raising the specter of Chernobyl-style meltdown. The timing couldn’t have been worse for House Republican leaders, who demanded last week that President Barack Obama speed up approval of new nuclear energy facilities.

#### Obama needs to rally Democrats for immigration reform.

Feldmann, 2-7

[Linda, “Why Obama is on charm offensive with Democrats”, The Christian Monitor,

<http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Politics/2013/0207/Why-Obama-is-on-charm-offensive-with-Democrats>, RSR]

By making these visits, Obama was reinforcing a truism about the presidency: Rallying your own troops can be just as important as reaching out to the other side, particularly when at least one chamber is in the other party’s hands. And you can’t always count on members of your own party to be there for you.¶ During his first term, Obama faced criticism for being aloof and not reaching out to either side of the aisle, at times hurting his own cause. In his first two years in office, with Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress, Obama won significant legislative victories – including the biggest economic stimulus package in history, health-care reform, and financial reform. But the conservative backlash was fierce, and in the 2010 midterms, the Republicans swept into power in the House. Gridlock has stymied action since, exacerbated by Obama’s lack of close relationships on Capitol Hill, analysts say.¶ “Wooing of caucuses is something he didn’t do much in his first term, and it hurt him,” says Jennifer Duffy, a political analyst at the nonpartisan Cook Political Report. “Members of his own party felt very disconnected from him. I think in the second term, with some big agenda items, the White House has decided it’s time to engage and actively work those groups.”¶ One first-term example, she says, where some more schmoozing with Capitol Hill allies could have helped him avoid political and economic damage: the messy debt-ceiling negotiations in the summer of 2011, which led to the downgrading of the nation’s credit rating.

#### Senate democrats love nuclear power – perceived safer than alternatives, public backs it and Fukushima doesn’t matter.

Bartash, ‘11

[Jeffry, “Democrats warm to nuclear, domestic drilling”, 4-15-11, Marketwatch

<http://articles.marketwatch.com/2011-04-15/economy/30789692_1_nuclear-power-nuclear-plants-nuclear-energy>, RSR]

WASHINGTON (MarketWatch) — At a hearing this week, Democratic Sen. Tom Carper of Delaware asked one of the nation’s top regulators how many Americans have been killed by nuclear power. ”There are no known fatalities in the U.S. from the use of nuclear energy,” replied Gregory Jaczko, chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. Carper then turned to Lisa Jackson, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. He asked her how many people have been killed or had their lives shortened by the use of pollution-emitting fossil fuels. Tens of thousands, she said. The senator sat back in his chair and nodded. “All sources of energy involve risks,” he said. Carper, a longtime supporter of nuclear power, is not the only Democrat who’s weighing every option available on how to fuel the massive U.S. economy. Many other members of his party are as well — no doubt egged on by soaring gas prices and public discontent. And while Democrats aren’t chanting “drill, baby, drill,” they appear to be concluding that nuclear power and more domestic drilling, once anathema, are vital to America’s energy future. At several hearings this week, nary a word was said about abolishing nuclear power despite the recent disaster in Japan. And Democrats say the are open to drilling for more natural gas in the continental U.S. despite growing concerns over an extraction practice called “fracking.”

## 1AR

### Politics

#### Warming is the only scenario for extinction --- absent multipliers, nuclear war won’t happen.

The New York End Times 6 The New York End Times is a non-partisan, non-religious, non-ideological, free news filter. We monitor world trends and events as they pertain to two vital threats - war and extinction. We use a proprietary methodology to quantify movements between the extremes of war and peace, harmony and extinction. http://newyorkendtimes.com/extinctionscale.asp

We rate Global Climate Change as a greater threat for human extinction in this century. Most scientists forecast disruptions and dislocations, if current trends persist. The extinction danger is more likely if we alter an environmental process that causes harmful effects and leads to conditions that make the planet uninhabitable to humans. Considering that there is so much that is unknown about global systems, we consider climate change to be the greatest danger to human extinction. However, there is no evidence of imminent danger. Nuclear war at some point in this century might happen. It is unlikely to cause human extinction though. While several countries have nuclear weapons, there are few with the firepower to annihilate the world. For those nations it would be suicidal to exercise that option. The pattern is that the more destructive technology a nation has, the more it tends towards rational behavior. Sophisticated precision weapons then become better tactical options. The bigger danger comes from nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists with the help of a rogue state, such as North Korea. The size of such an explosion would not be sufficient to threaten humanity as a whole. Instead it could trigger a major war or even world war. Under this scenario human extinction would only be possible if other threats were present, such as disease and climate change. We monitor war separately. However we also need to incorporate the dangers here .

#### Winners win – it’s fast.

Halloran, Reporter for NPR, ‘10

[Liz, “For Obama, What A Difference A Week Made”, National Public Radio, 4-6, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125594396>, RSR]

Halloran 10 (Liz, Reporter – NPR, “For Obama, What A Difference A Week Made”, National Public Radio, 4-6, http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=125594396)

Amazing what a win in a major legislative battle will do for a president's spirit. (Turmoil over spending and leadership at the Republican National Committee over the past week, and the release Tuesday of a major new and largely sympathetic book about the president by New Yorker editor David Remnick, also haven't hurt White House efforts to drive its own, new narrative.) Though the president's national job approval ratings failed to get a boost by the passage of the health care overhaul — his numbers have remained steady this year at just under 50 percent — he has earned grudging respect even from those who don't agree with his policies. "He's achieved something that virtually everyone in Washington thought he couldn't," says Henry Olsen, vice president and director of the business-oriented American Enterprise Institute's National Research Initiative. "And that's given him confidence." The protracted health care battle looks to have taught the White House something about power, says presidential historian Gil Troy — a lesson that will inform Obama's pursuit of his initiatives going forward. "I think that Obama realizes that presidential power is a muscle, and the more you exercise it, the stronger it gets," Troy says. "He exercised that power and had a success with health care passage, and now he wants to make sure people realize it's not just a blip on the map." The White House now has an opportunity, he says, to change the narrative that had been looming — that the Democrats would lose big in the fall midterm elections, and that Obama was looking more like one-term President Jimmy Carter than two-termer Ronald Reagan, who also managed a difficult first-term legislative win and survived his party's bad showing in the midterms. Those watching the re-emergent president in recent days say it's difficult to imagine that it was only weeks ago that Obama's domestic agenda had been given last rites, and pundits were preparing their pieces on a failed presidency. Obama himself had framed the health care debate as a referendum on his presidency. A loss would have "ruined the rest of his presidential term," says Darrell West, director of governance studies at the liberal-leaning Brookings Institution. "It would have made it difficult to address other issues and emboldened his critics to claim he was a failed president." The conventional wisdom in Washington after the Democrats lost their supermajority in the U.S. Senate when Republican Scott Brown won the Massachusetts seat long held by the late Sen. Edward Kennedy was that Obama would scale back his health care ambitions to get something passed. "I thought he was going to do what most presidents would have done — take two-thirds of a loaf and declare victory," says the AEI's Olsen. "But he doubled down and made it a vote of confidence on his presidency, parliamentary-style." "You've got to be impressed with an achievement like that," Olsen says. But Olsen is among those who argue that, long-term, Obama and his party would have been better served politically by an incremental approach to reworking the nation's health care system, something that may have been more palatable to independent voters Democrats will need in the fall. "He would have been able to show he was listening more, that he heard their concerns about the size and scope of this," Olsen says. Muscling out a win on a sweeping health care package may have invigorated the president and provided evidence of leadership, but, his critics say, it remains to be seen whether Obama and his party can reverse what the polls now suggest is a losing issue for them.

#### Inaction also drains political capital—must act to maintain it.

Hunter, Daily KOS Contributing Editor, ‘10

[“Political death by a thousand cuts”, 11-17-10,

<http://www.dailykos.com/storyonly/2010/11/17/921164/-Political-death-by-a-thousand-cuts>, RSR]

It may be a petty, minor thing, but this is getting to the point where Obama is looking weak in many, many separate situations, and it's becoming a car wreck for the White House. Having him doing public post-election soul searching; having him give repeated noises in the press about preemptively caving on whatever it is the GOP might be asking for: it's a messaging/political disaster. He took a stout midterm loss and turned it into his own midterm disaster. At some point someone in this White House has to start figuring out that, screw actual policy, they're getting their asses kicked purely on the PR front, and Obama's not going to get reelected if he looks like a quivering pushover. We know from the healthcare fiasco that there's a bunch of folks in this White House who care more about protecting Obama's image than actually getting useful stuff done: well, image-hoarders, now might be the perfect time to pay attention to what the nice news channels are telling you. Instead, this is rapidly becoming another perfect example of being so miserly with your "limited" political capital that you end up losing all of it. Obama is keeping his powder so dry that he's losing battles without firing a shot. Long story short, if McConnell or Boehner can't find time to meet at the president's convenience, Obama should just call off the meeting and be done with it. When you're President of the United States you shouldn't be losing pissant little power plays .