# 1NC

## off

#### The aff’s invocation of death impacts is necrophilia, a blind obsession with body counts that ends in extinction. Vote neg to reject death impacts—this is a gateway issue—if they win death impacts are good, the rest of the 1NC applies—we won’t cross-apply to prove links

Erich **Fromm 64**, PhD in sociology from Heidelberg in 1922, psychology prof at MSU in the 60’s, “Creators and Destroyers”, The Saturday Review, New York (04. January 1964), pp. 22-25

People are aware of the possibility of nuclear war; they are aware of the destruction such a war could bring with it--and yet they seemingly make no effort to avoid it. Most of us are puzzled by this behavior because we start out from the premise that people love life and fear death. Perhaps we should be less puzzled if we questioned this premise. Maybe there are many people who are indifferent to life and many others who do not love life but who do love death. There is an orientation which we may call love of life (biophilia); it is the normal orientation among healthy persons. But there is also to be found in others a deep attraction to death which, following Unamuno's classic speech made at the University of Salamanca (1938), I call necrophilia. It is the attitude which a Franco general, Millán Astray, expressed in the slogan "Long live death, thus provoking Unamuno’s protest against this "necrophilous and senseless cry." Who is a necrophilous person? He is one who is attracted to and fascinated by all that is not alive, to all that is dead; to corpses, to decay, to feces, to dirt. Necrophiles are those people who love to talk about sickness, burials, death. They come to life precisely when they can talk about death. A clear example of the pure necrophilous type was Hitler. He was fascinated by destruction, and the smell of death was sweet to him. While in the years of success it may have appeared that he wanted only to destroy those whom he considered his enemies, the days of the Götterdämmerung at the end showed that his deepest satisfaction lay in witnessing total and absolute destruction: that of the German people, of those around him, and of himself. The necrophilous dwell in the past, never in the future. Their feelings are essentially sentimental; that is, they nurse the memory of feelings which they had yesterday--or believe that they had. They are cold, distant, devotees of "law and order." Their values are precisely the reverse of the values we connect with normal life; not life, but death excites and satisfies them. If one wants to understand the influence of men like Hitler and Stalin, it lies precisely in their unlimited capacity and willingness to kill. For this they' were loved by the necrophiles. Of the rest, many were afraid of them and so preferred to admire, rather than to be aware of, their fear. Many others did not sense the necrophilous quality of these leaders and saw in them the builders, saviors, good fathers. If the necrophilous leaders had not pretended that they were builders and protectors, the number of people attracted to them would hardly have been sufficient to help them seize power, and the number of those repelled by them would probably soon have led to their downfall. While life is characterized by growth in a structured, functional manner, the necrophilous principle is all that which does not grow, that which is mechanical. The necrophilous person is driven by the desire to transform the organic into the inorganic, to approach life mechanically, as if all living persons were things. All living processes, feelings, and thoughts are transformed into things. Memory, rather than experience--having, rather than being--are what counts. The necrophilous person can relate to an object--a flower or a person--only if he possesses it; hence, a threat to his possession is a threat to himself; if he loses possession he loses contact with the world. That is why we find the paradoxical reaction that he would rather lose life than possession, even though, by losing life, he who possesses has ceased to exist. He loves control, and in the act of controlling he kills life. He is deeply afraid of life, because it is disorderly and uncontrollable by its very nature. The woman who wrongly claims to be the mother of the child in the story of Solomon's judgment is typical of this tendency; she would rather have a properly divided dead child than lose a living one. To the necrophilous person justice means correct division, and they are willing to kill or die for the sake of what they call, justice. "Law and order" for them are idols, and everything that threatens law and order is felt as a satanic attack against their supreme values. The necrophilous person is attracted to darkness and night. In mythology and poetry (as well as in dreams) he is attracted to caves, or to the depth of the ocean, or depicted as being blind. (The trolls in Ibsen's Peer Gynt are a good example.) All that is away from or directed against life attracts him. He wants to return to the darkness {23} of the womb, to the past of inorganic or subhuman existence. He is essentially oriented to the past, not to the future, which he hates and fears. Related to this is his craving for certainty. But life is never certain, never predictable, never controllable; in order to make life controllable, it must be transformed into death; death, indeed, is the only thing about life that is certain to him. The necrophilous person can often be recognized by his looks and his gestures. He is cold, his skin looks dead, and often he has an expression on his face as though he were smelling a bad odor. (This expression could be clearly seen in Hitler's face.) He is orderly and obsessive. This aspect of the necrophilous person has been demonstrated to the world in the figure of Eichmann. Eichmann was fascinated by order and death. His supreme values were obedience and the proper functioning of the organization. He transported Jews as he would have transported coal. That they were human beings was hardly within the field of his vision; hence, even the problem of his having hated or not hated his victims is irrelevant. He was the perfect bureaucrat who had transformed all life into the administration of things. But examples of the necrophilous character are by no means to be found only among the inquisitors, the Hitlers and the Eichmanns. There are any number of individuals who do not have the opportunity and the power to kill, vet whose necrophilia expresses itself in other and (superficially seen) more harmless ways. An example is the mother who will always be interested in her child's sickness, in his failures, in dark prognoses for the future; at the same time she will not be impressed by a favorable change nor respond to her child's joy, nor will she notice anything new that is growing within him. We might find that her dreams deal with sickness, death, corpses, blood. She does not harm the child in any obvious way, yet she may slowly strangle the child's joy of life, his faith--in growth, and eventually infect him with her own necrophilous orientation. My description may have given the impression that all the features mentioned here are necessarily found in the necrophilous person. It is true that such divergent features as the wish to kill, the worship of force, the attraction to death and dirt, sadism, the wish to transform the organic into the inorganic through "order" are all part of the same basic orientation. Yet so far as individuals are concerned, there are considerable differences with respect to the strength of these respective trends. Any one of the features mentioned here may be more pronounced in one person than in another. Furthermore, the degree to which a person is necrophilous in comparison with his biophilous aspects and the degree to which a person is aware of necrophilous tendencies and rationalizes them vary considerably from person to person. Yet the concept of the necrophilous type is by no means an abstraction or summary of various disparate behavior trends. Necrophilia constitutes a fundamental orientation; it is the one answer to life that is in complete opposition to life; it is the most morbid and the most dangerous among the orientations to life of which man is capable. It is true perversion; while living, not life but death is loved--not growth, but destruction. The necrophilous person, if he dares to be aware of what he feels, expresses the motto of his life when he says: "Long live death!" The opposite of the necrophilous orientation is the biophilous one; its essence is love of life in contrast to love of death. Like necrophilia, biophilia is not constituted by a single trait but represents a total orientation, an entire way of being. It is manifested in a person's bodily processes, in his emotions, in his thoughts, in his gestures; the biophilous orientation expresses itself in the whole man. The person who fully loves life is attracted by the process of life in all spheres. He prefers to construct, rather than to retain. He is capable of wondering, and he prefers to see something new to the security of finding the old confirmed. He loves the adventure of living more than he does certainty. His approach to life is functional rather than mechanical. He sees the whole rather than only the parts, structures rather than summations. He wants to mold and to influence by love, by reason, by his example--not by force, by cutting things apart, by the bureaucratic manner of administering people as if they were things. He enjoys life and all its manifestations, rather than mere excitement. Biophilic ethics has its own principle of good and evil. Good is all that serves life; evil is all that serves death. Good is reverence for life (this is the main thesis of Albert Schweitzer, one of the great representatives of the love of life--both in his writings and in his person), and all that enhances life. Evil is all that stifles life, narrows it down, {24} cuts it into pieces. Thus it is from the standpoint of life-ethics that the Bible mentions as the central sin of the Hebrews: "Because thou didst not serve thy Lord with joy and gladness of heart in the abundance of all things." The conscience of the biophilous person is not one of forcing oneself to refrain from evil and to do good. It is not the superego described by .Freud, a strict taskmaster employing sadism against oneself for the sake of virtue. The biophilous conscience is motivated by its attraction to life and joy; the moral effort consists in strengthening the life loving side in oneself. For this reasons the biophile does not dwell in remorse and guilt, which are, after all, only aspects of self-loathing and sadness. He turns quickly to life and attempts to do good. Spinoza's Ethics is a striking example of biophilic morality. "Pleasure," he says, "in itself is not bad but good; contrariwise, pain in itself is bad." And in the same spirit: "A free man thinks of death least of all things; and his wisdom is a meditation not of death but of life." Love of life underlies the various versions of humanistic philosophy. In various conceptual forms these philosophies are in the same vein as Spinoza's; they express the principle that the same man loves life; that man's aim in life is to be attracted by all that is alive and to separate himself from all that is dead and mechanical. The dichotomy of biophilia-necrophilia is the same as Freud's life-and-death instinct. I believe, as Freud did, that this is the most fundamental polarity that exists. However, there is one important difference. Freud assumes that the striving toward death and toward life are two biologically given tendencies inherent in all living substance that their respective strengths are relatively constant, and that there is only one alternative within the operation of the death instinct--namely, that it can be directed against the outside world or against oneself. In contrast to these assumptions I believe that necrophilia is not a normal biological tendency, but a pathological phenomenon--in fact, the most malignant pathology that exists in mail. What are we, the people of the United States today, with respect to necrophilia and biophilia? Undoubtedly our spiritual tradition is one of love of life. And not only this. Was there ever a culture with more love of "fun" and excitement, or with greater opportunities for the majority to enjoy fun and excitement? But even if this is so, fun and excitement is not the same as joy and love of life; perhaps underneath there is indifference to life, or attraction to death? To answer this question we must consider the nature of our bureaucratized, industrial, mass civilization. Our approach to life becomes increasingly mechanical. The aim of social efforts is to produce things, and. in the process of idolatry of things we transform ourselves into commodities. The question here is not whether they are treated nicely and are well fed (things, too, can be treated nicely); the question is whether people are things or living beings. People love mechanical gadgets more than living beings. The approach to man is intellectualabstract. One is interested in people as objects, in their common properties, in the statistical rules of mass behavior, not in living individuals. All this goes together with the increasing role of bureaucratic methods. In giant centers of production, giant cities, giant countries, men are administered as if they were things; men and their administrators are transformed into things, and they obey the law of things. In a bureaucratically organized and centralized industrialism, men's tastes are manipulated so that they consume maximally and in predictable and profitable directions. Their intelligence and character become standardized by the ever-increasing use of tests, which select the mediocre and unadventurous over the original and daring. Indeed, the bureaucratic-industrial civilization that has been victorious in Europe and North America has created a new type of man. He has been described as the "organization man" and as homo consumens. He is in addition the homo mechanicus. By this I mean a "gadget man," deeply attracted to all that is mechanical and inclined against all that is alive. It is, of course, true that man's biological and physiological equipment provides him with such strong sexual impulses that even the homo mechanicus still has sexual desires and looks for women. But there is no doubt that the gadget man's interest in women is diminishing. A New Yorker cartoon pointed to this very amusingly: a sales girl trying to sell a certain brand of perfume to a young female customer recommends it by remarking, "It smells like a new sports car." Indeed, any observer of men's behavior today will confirm that this cartoon is more than a clever joke. There are apparently a great number of men who are more interested in sports-cars, television and radio sets, space travel, and any number of gadgets than they are in women, love, nature, food; who are more stimulated by the manipulation of non-organic, mechanical things than by life. Their attitude toward a woman is like that toward a car: you push the button and watch it race. It is not even too farfetched to assume that homo mechanicus has more pride in and is more fascinated by, devices that can kill millions of people across a distance of several thousands of miles within minutes than he is frightened and depressed by the possibility of such mass destruction. Homo mechanicus still likes sex {25} and drink. But all these pleasures are sought for in the frame of reference of the mechanical and the unalive. He expects that there must be a button which, if pushed, brings happiness, love, pleasure. (Many go to a psychoanalyst under the illusion that he can teach them to find the button.) The homo mechanicus becomes more and more interested in the manipulation of machines, rather than in the participation in and response to life. Hence he becomes indifferent to life, fascinated by the mechanical, and eventually attracted by death and total destruction. This affinity between the love of destruction and the love of the mechanical may well have been expressed for the first time in Marinetti's Futurist Manifesto (1909). "A roaring motor-car, which looks as though running on a shrapnel is more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace. … We wish to glorify war--the only health-giver of the world-militarism, patriotism, the destructive arm of the Anarchist, the beautiful Ideas that kill the contempt for woman." Briefly then, intellectualization, quantification, abstractification, bureaucratization, and reification--the very characteristics of modern industrial society--when applied to people rather than to things are not the principles of life but those of mechanics. People living in such a system must necessarily become indifferent to life, even attracted to death. They are not aware of this. They take the thrills of excitement for the joys of life and live under the illusion that they are very much alive when they only have many things to own and to use. The lack of protest against nuclear war and the discussion of our "atomologists" of the balance sheet of total or half-total destruction show how far we have already gone into the "valley of the shadow of death."1 To speak of the necrophilous quality of our industrial civilization does not imply that industrial production as such is necessarily contrary to the principles of life. The question is whether the principles of social organization and of life are subordinated to those of mechanization, or whether the principles of life are the dominant ones. Obviously, the industrialized world has not found thus far an answer, to the question posed here: How is it possible to create a humanist industrialism as against the bureaucratic mass industrialism that rules our lives today? The danger of nuclear war is so grave that man may arrive at a new barbarism before he has even a chance to find the road to a humanist industrialism. Yet not all hope is lost; hence we might ask ourselves whether the hypothesis developed here could in any way contribute to finding peaceful solutions. I believe it might be useful in several ways. First of all, an awareness of our pathological situation, while not yet a cure, is nevertheless a first step. If more people became aware of the difference between love of life and love of death, if they became aware that they themselves are already far gone in the direction of indifference or of necrophilia, this shock alone could produce new and healthy reactions. Furthermore, the sensitivity toward those who recommend death might be increased. Many might see through the pious rationalizations of the death lovers and change their admiration for them to disgust. Beyond this, our hypothesis would suggest one thing to those concerned with peace and survival: that every effort must be made to weaken the attraction of death and to strengthen the attraction of life. Why not declare that there is only one truly dangerous subversion, the subversion of life? Why do not those who represent the traditions of religion and humanism speak up and say that there is no deadlier sin than love for death and contempt for life? Why not encourage our best brains--scientists, artists, educators--to make suggestions on how to arouse and stimulate love for life as opposed to love for gadgets? I know love for gadgets brings profits to the corporations, while love for life requires fewer things and hence is less profitable. Maybe it is too late. Maybe the neutron bomb, which leaves entire cities intact, but without life, is to be the symbol of our civilization. But again, those of us who love life will not cease the struggle against necrophilia.

## off

#### The plan gives investors a new toy to facilitate extraction – REITs expand corporate gentrification into new arenas

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(Sònia Vives, “Producing a ‘Successful City,’” *Urban Studies Research*, http://www.hindawi.com/journals/usr/2011/989676/)

At the global level, within the neoliberal urban scenario, local governments have had to find their particular way in order to insert themselves in the systemic logics. In this sense, local authorities ensure that cities take the “road to success”. **The adoption of** urban **policies within this logic** corresponds to what Harvey and Smith [17] have termed as the entrepreneurial turn. This **consists in the realignment of the governance practices by which** local **governments adopt regulations that facilitate surplus extraction**. Most of European and North American cities have adopted the entrepreneurial turn, and, consequently, **it has entailed the detriment of the redistributive approach that was prominent before the neoliberal hegemony**. The redistributive approach states that local governments’ main duty is the provision of municipal collective services. Additionally, the activity of local councils in urban policy has become increasingly oriented to “scale” positions in the global urban ranking [20].

When analyzing the processes of political and spatial urban transformation, it is essential to understand that although the neoliberal discourse has become hegemonic, every city has its particular way of inserting into the neoliberal urban transformations. Furthermore, the consensus of urban competitiveness has been constructed around a set of particular elements in each place. In short, it is not that cities receive passively capitalist globalization, but they reproduce and amplify it. In this new form of neoliberal urban governance, **the state at all levels**—local, regional, state—**takes an active role as a promoter**. In fact, the local administration does not withdraw but is redesigned as a major agent in sustaining the market [16].

2.3. Gentrification and the Tourist City

The concept of gentrification has been analyzed from two main theoretical currents: the supply-side and the demand-side [23]. Nevertheless, both currents converge in understanding the centrality of class in any explanation of gentrification [24, page 110].

The supply-side approach, being Neil Smith the author who has made a wider contribution, understands the gentrification as a product of the oligopolistic accumulation of the urban rent in a context of market economy [14]. According to Smith, gentrification is a social process connected to the social, economic, and political restructuring of cities [24, page 114].

According to this current, the rent gap has been characterized as one of the central mechanisms behind the gentrification process. Nonetheless, the rent gap is a necessary condition but not sufficient [24, page 112]. Smith [12] asserts that when neighborhoods suffer from a lack of investment, the rent that can be earned from the land falls and property purchase and rental prices drop. With a continued lack of investment into the area, the gap between the rental price of the land and the rent that could be obtained if the area were to be redeveloped grows to the point where it begins to be profitable to reinvest in the area. Although this rent gap can occur purely as a result of market activity, public policies often prove essential, since they encourage or discourage a lack of investment or reinvestment. The relevance of the rent gap theory remains in the fact that it reveals the “the social bases, economic workings and socio-spatial results of class power in one specific instance, the rent gap is an expression of class power within urban land market” [24, page 114].

On the other hand, the demand-side approach states that the main driving forces of gentrification result from sociocultural and occupational structure changes, with an increase of the advance services employments, as it has occurred in many postindustrial cities of the advanced capitalist countries [23, page 156]. The most important authors within the demand approach are Lees, and Ley [25] and Hamnett [26, 27]. Hamnett advocates that gentrifiers are the centerpiece of gentrification [28]. According to this approach, Hamnett and Whitelegg [29] expose, for the general process of transformation from commercial and industrial buildings and zones to residential, that gentrification is understood “as part and parcel of this process in that the transition from industrial to post-industrial society is associated in part with a process of upwards social class change, and associated shifts in housing demand which is particularly marked in central and inner-city areas. The attraction of converting old, centrally located, industrial, office, and warehouse buildings for residential accommodation is that they offer large spaces in unusual buildings, in close proximity to the city center which appeal to a new type of buyer who highly value centrality and accessibility both to work and to social facilities” [29, page 122].

Finally, after the controversy among Hamnett, Smith and Clark [30], it could be accepted that these approaches are more complementary than they were supposed, being Smith research on the Lower East Side gentrification an example of the integration of the two currents [12].

Literature on gentrification exposes that the evolution of gentrification has been developed in three waves. The first wave of gentrification took place during the late seventies in certain global cities, at the neighborhood scale. This was promoted by public policies, under the premise to combat urban decay, aimed at creating a “good climate” for real estate business [23]. During the second wave, from the eighties to mid-nineties, **gentrification became part of larger economic development strategies with global financial capital involved**. This stage is characterized by the formation of public-private partnerships and the rise of urban entrepreneurialism and spatially affected inner city areas. Since the early 1990s recession, researchers have defined a “third wave” of gentrification in many cities, **which consists in a** “**restructuring**” **of the gentrification process itself with a myriad of spatial forms**—neighborhood reconstruction, new build gentrification, commercial areas, and so on—**and includes the formation of new alliances between** private **developers and** local **government** [31–35]. In this sense, **the growth of** large corporate developers, Real Estate Investment Trusts (**REIT**), and mortgage brokers of new networks **is creating new forms of** “**corporatised gentrification**” **and it has turned into an urban global strategy** [35–37].

#### The system’s nsustainable – debt, offshoring, financialization, eco – only shift from EMPIRE to MULTITUDES averts extinction

Shor 10

<http://www.stateofnature.org/locatingTheContemporary.html>

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Attributing the debilitation of the U.S. economy to a mortgage crisis or the collapse of the housing market misses the truly epochal crisis in the world economy and, indeed, in capitalism itself. As economist Michael Hudson contends, "the financial 'wealth creation' game is over. Economies emerged from World War II relatively free of debt, but the 60-year global run-up has run its course. Financial capitalism is in a state of collapse, and marginal palliatives cannot revive it." According to Hudson, among those palliatives is an ironic variant of the IMF strategies imposed on developing nations. "The new twist is a variant on the IMF 'stabilization' plans that lend money to central banks to support their currencies - for long enough to enable local oligarchs and foreign investors to move their savings and investments offshore at a good exchange rate." The continuity between these IMF plans and even the Obama administration's fealty to Wall Street can be seen in the person of Lawrence Summers, now the chief economic advisor to Obama. As further noted by Hudson, "the Obama bank bailout is arranged much like an IMF loan to support the exchange rate of foreign currency, but with the Treasury supporting financial asset prices for U.S. banks and other financial institutions ... Private-sector debt will be moved onto the U.S. Government balance sheet, where "taxpayers" will bear losses." [4] So, here we have another variation of the working poor getting sapped by the economic elite! In fact, one estimate of U.S. federal government support to the elite financial institutions is in the range of $10 trillion dollars, a heist of unimaginable proportions. [5] Given the massive indebtedness of the United States, its reliance of foreign support of that debt by countries like China, which has close to $2 trillion tied up in treasury bills and other investments, a long-term crisis of profitability, overproduction, and offshoring of essential manufacturing, it does not appear that the United States and, perhaps, even the capitalist system can avoid collapse. Certainly, there are Marxist economists and world-systems analysts who are convinced that the collapse is inevitable, albeit it may take several generations to complete. The question becomes whether a dying system can be resuscitated or, if something else can be put in its place. One of the most prominent world systems scholars, Immanuel Wallerstein, puts the long-term crisis of capitalism and the alternatives in the following perspective: Because the system we have known for 500 years is no longer able to guarantee long-term prospects of capital accumulation, we have entered a period of world chaos. Wild (and largely uncontrollable) swings in the economic, political, and military situations are leading to a systemic bifurcation, that is, to a world collective choice about the kind of new system the world will construct over the next fifty years. The new system will not be a capitalist system, but it could be one of two kinds: a different system that is equally or more hierarchical and inequalitarian, or one that is substantially democratic and equalitarian. [6] What Wallerstein overlooks is the possibility that a global crisis of capitalism with its continuous overexploitation and maldistribution of essential resources, such as water, could lead to a planetary catastrophe. [7] While Wallerstein and many of the Marxist critics of capitalism correctly identify the long-term structural crisis of capitalism and offer important insights into the need for more democratic and equalitarian systems, they often fail to realize other critical predicaments that have plagued human societies in the past and persist in even more life-threatening ways today. Among those predicaments are the power trips of civilization and environmental destructiveness. Such power trips can be seen through the sedimentation of power-over in the reign of patriarchal systems and an evolutionary selection for that power-over which contaminates society and social relationships. Certainly, many of those predicaments can also be attributed to a 5000 year history of the intersection of empire and civilization. Anthropologist Kajsa Ekholm Friedman analyzes that intersection and its impact in the Bronze Age as an "imperialist project..., dependent upon trade and ultimately upon war." [8] However, over the long rule of empire and especially within the last 500 years of the global aspirations of various empires, "no state or empire," observes historian Eric Hobsbawm, "has been large, rich, or powerful enough to maintain hegemony over the political world, let alone to establish political and military supremacy over the globe." [9] While war and trade still remain key components of the imperial project today and pretensions for global supremacy persist in the United States, what is just as threatening to the world as we know it is the overexploitation and abuse of environmental resources. Jared Diamond brilliantly reveals how habituated attitudes and values precluded the necessary recognition of environmental degradation which, in turn, led to the collapse of vastly different civilizations, societies, and cultures throughout recorded history. [10] He identifies twelve contemporary environmental challenges which pose grave dangers to the planet and its inhabitants. Among these are the destruction of natural habitats (rainforests, wetlands, etc.); species extinction; soil erosion; depletion of fossil fuels and underground water aquifers; toxic pollution; and climate change, especially attributable to the use of fossil fuels. [11] U.S. economic imperialism has played a direct role in environmental degradation, whether in McDonald's resource destruction of rainforests in Latin America, Coca-Cola's exploitation of underground water aquifers in India, or Union Carbide's toxic pollution in India. Beyond the links between empire and environmental destruction, unless we also clearly understand and combat the connections between empire and unending growth with its attendant "accumulation by dispossession", we may very well doom ourselves to extinction. According to James Gustave Speth, Dean of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, the macro obsession with growth is also intimately related to our micro habituated ways of living. "Parallel to transcending our growth fetish," Speth argues, "we must move beyond our consumerism and hyperventilating lifestyles ... This reluctance to challenge consumption has been a big mistake, given the mounting environmental and social costs of American "affluenza," extravagance and wastefulness." [12] Of course, there are significant class and ethnic/racial differences in consumerism and lifestyle in the United States. However, even more vast differences and inequities obtain between the U.S. and the developing world. It is those inequities that lead Eduardo Galeano to conclude that "consumer society is a booby trap. Those at the controls feign ignorance, but anybody with eyes in his head can see that the great majority of people necessarily must consume not much, very little, or nothing at all in order to save the bit of nature we have left." [13] Finally, from Vandana Shiva's perspective, "unless worldviews and lifestyles are restructured ecologically, peace and justice will continue to be violated and, ultimately, the very survival of humanity will be threatened." [14] For Shiva and other global agents of resistance, the ecological and peace and justice imperatives require us to act in the here and now. Her vision of "Earth Democracy" with its emphasis on balancing authentic needs with a local ecology provides an essential guidepost to what we all can do to stop the ravaging of the environment and to salvage the planet. As she insists, "Earth Democracy is not just about the next protest or next World Social Forum; it is about what we do in between. It addresses the global in our everyday lives, our everyday realities, and creates change globally by making change locally." [15] The local, national, and transnational struggles and visions of change are further evidence that the imperial project is not only being contested but also being transformed on a daily basis. According to Mark Engler, "The powerful will abandon their strategies of control only when it grows too costly for them to do otherwise. It is the concerted efforts of people coming together in local communities and in movements spanning borders that will raise the costs. Empire becomes unsustainable ... when the people of the world resist." [16] Whether in the rural villages of Brazil or India, the jungles of Mexico or Ecuador, the city squares of Cochabama or Genoa, the streets of Seattle or Soweto, there has been, and continues to be, resistance around the globe to the imperial project. If the ruling elite and many of the citizens of the United States have not yet accepted the fact that the empire is dying and with it the concentric circles of economic, political, environmental, and civilizational crises, the global multitudes have been busy at work, digging its future grave and planting the seeds for another possible world. [17]

#### Reject the aff’s neoliberal ideology

#### Energy debates should focus on CRITIQUE of broad structures INSTEAD of producitivist fixes. Our ROLE OF THE BALLOT is best EVEN IF they win some truth claims – we must SHIFT THE FRAME

Zehner 12

Green illusions,

Ozzie Zehner is the author of Green Illusions and a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. His recent publications include public science pieces in Christian Science Monitor, The American Scholar, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, The Humanist, The Futurist, and Women’s Studies Quarterly. He has appeared on PBS, BBC, CNN, MSNBC, and regularly guest lectures at universities. Zehner’s research and projects have been covered by The Sunday Times, USA Today, WIRED, The Washington Post, Business Week and numerous other media outlets. He also serves on the editorial board of Critical Environmentalism. Zehner primarily researches the social, political and economic conditions influencing energy policy priorities and project outcomes. His work also incorporates symbolic roles that energy technologies play within political and environmental movements. His other research interests include consumerism, urban policy, environmental governance, international human rights, and forgeries. Zehner attended Kettering University (BS -Engineering) and The University of Amsterdam (MS/Drs – Science and Technology Studies). His research was awarded with honors at both institutions. He lives in San Francisco.

Since this book represents a critique of alternative energy, it may seem an unlikely manual for alternative-energy proponents. But it is. Building alternative-energy infrastructure atop America's present economic, social, and cultural landscape is akin to building a sandcastle in a rising tide. A taller sand castle won't help. The first steps in this book sketch a partial blueprint for making alternative-energy technologies relevant into the future. Technological development alone will do little to bring about a durable alternative-energy future. Reimagining the social conditions of energy use will. Ultimately, we have to ask ourselves if environmentalists should be involved in the business of energy production (of any sort) while so many more important issues remain vastly underserved. Over the next several decades, it's quite likely that our power production cocktail will look very much like the mix of today, save for a few adjustments in market share. Wind and biofuel generation will become more prevalent and the stage is set for nuclear power as well, despite recent catastrophes. Nevertheless, these changes will occur over time—they will seem slow. Every power production mechanism has side effects and limitations of its own, and a global shift to new forms of power production simply means that humanity will have to deal with new side effects and limitations in the future. This simple observation seems to have gotten lost in the cheerleading for alternative-energy technologies. The mainstream environmental movement should throw down the green energy pom-poms and pull out the bifocals. It is entirely reasonable for environmentalists to criticize fossil-fuel industries for the harms they instigate. It is, however, entirely unreasonable for environmentalists to become spokespeople for the next round of ecological disaster machines such as solar cells, ethanol, and battery-powered vehicles. Environmentalists pack the largest punch when they instead act as power production watchdogs (regardless of the production method); past environmentalist pressures have cleaned the air and made previously polluted waterways swimmable. This watchdog role will be vital in the future as biofuels, nuclear plants, alternative fossil fuels, solar cells, and other energy technologies import new harms and risks. Beyond a watchdog role, environmentalists yield the greatest progress when addressing our social fundamentals, whether by supporting human rights, cleaning up elections, imagining new economic structures, strengthening communities, revitalizing democracy, or imagining more prosperous modes of consumption. Unsustainable energy use is a symptom of suboptimal social conditions. Energy use will come down when we improve these conditions: consumption patterns that lead to debt and depression; commercials aimed at children; lonely seniors stuck in their homes because they can no longer drive; kids left to fend for themselves when it comes to mobility or sexuality; corporate influence trumping citizen representation; measurements of the nation's health in dollars rather than well-being; a media concerned with advertising over insight, and so on. These may not seem like environmental issues, and they certainly don't seem like energy policy issues, but in reality they are the most important energy and environmental issues of our day. Addressing them won't require sacrifice or social engineering. They are congruent with the interests of many Americans, which will make them easier to initiate and fulfill. They are entirely realistic (as many are already enjoyed by other societies on the planet). They are, in a sense, boring. In fact, the only thing shocking about them is the degree to which they have been underappreciated in contemporary environmental thought, sidelined in the media, and ignored by politicians. Even though these first steps don't represent a grand solution, they are necessary preconditions if we intend to democratically design and implement more comprehensive solutions in the future. Ultimately, clean energy is less energy. Alternative-energy alchemy has so greatly consumed the public imagination over recent decades that the most vital and durable environmental essentials remain overlooked and underfunded. Today energy executives hiss silver-tongued fairy tales about clean-coal technologies, safe nuclear reactors, and renewable sources such as solar, wind, and biofuels to quench growing energy demands, fostering the illusion that we can maintain our expanding patterns of energy consumption without consequence. At the same time, they claim that these technologies can be made environmentally, socially, and politically sound while ignoring a history that has repeatedly shown otherwise. If we give in to accepting their conceptual frames, such as those pitting production versus production, or if we parrot their terms such as clean coal, bridge fuels, peacetime atom, smart growth, and clean energy, then we have already lost. We forfeit our right to critical democratic engagement and instead allow the powers that be to regurgitate their own terms of debate into our open upstretched mouths. Alternative-energy technologies don't clean the air. They don't clean the water. They don't protect wildlife. They don't support human rights. They don't improve neighborhoods. They don't strengthen democracy. They don't regulate themselves. They don't lower atmospheric carbon dioxide. They don't reduce consumption. They produce power. That power can lead to durable benefits, but only given the appropriate context. Ultimately, it's not a question of whether American society possesses the technological prowess to construct an alternative-energy nation. The real question is the reverse. Do we have a society capable of being powered by alternative energy? The answer today is clearly no. But we can change that. Future environmentalists will drop solar, wind, biofuels, nuclear, hydrogen, and hybrids to focus instead on women's rights, consumer culture, walkable neighborhoods, military spending, zoning, health care, wealth disparities, citizen governance, economic reform, and democratic institutions. As environmentalists and global citizens, it's not enough to say that we would benefit by shifting our focus. Our very relevance depends on it.

## off

#### Obama will solve fiscal cliff in the lame duck

Marcus, staff writer for the Washington Post, 10/27/2012

(Ruth, “How will fiscal cliff get fixed? It depends on who wins,” http://azstarnet.com/news/opinion/how-will-fiscal-cliff-get-fixed-it-depends-on-who/article\_32ad6002-981e-52fd-abbb-597f60771dec.html)

Betting on Congress to do something - anything - is, as Samuel Johnson said of second marriages, the triumph of hope over experience. Betting on a lame-duck Congress to do anything of consequence is even more foolhardy.

Yet the Congress that limped back to town after the 2010 election was surprisingly fruitful. It extended expiring tax cuts, lifted the ban on gays in the military, and ratified a nuclear arms treaty.

**Could the 2012 lame duck be similarly productive?** **I'm uncharacteristically optimistic** - especially if President Obama is re-elected.

This is not a partisan assessment. Congress' primary post-election task will be to screech to a halt **before plunging off the fiscal cliff** of expiring tax cuts and looming budgetary sequester.

If Mitt Romney is elected, the well-honed instinct of Congress will be to do what it does best: punt. Romney has already said he would not want to see the lame-duck session try to craft some kind of grand bargain on taxes and spending.

Rather, he would prefer a reprieve of some months - extending the tax cuts, postponing the sequester - to come up with his own plan. Would an exiting Obama really veto an extension? Would he have the remaining juice to force a bargain? It's hard to see either happening.

Can-kicking in the event of a Romney victory is the safest bet, and in some ways the fairest outcome. The voters will have spoken. Let the new president and the new Congress deal with the problem.

**The calculus is different if Obama is re-elected**. The composition of Congress probably won't change much; if anything, Republicans are apt to have a narrower House majority, providing **an incentive for cooperation** while the GOP retains greater leverage.

There are four pieces of evidence to support this admittedly rosy scenario:

First, a bipartisan group of senators has been working intensively to craft a deal along the lines suggested by the Simpson-Bowles debt commission, a stew of revenue increases, tax reform, spending cuts and entitlement changes.

Second, **the administration has been working on a parallel track**, **with a debt-reduction plan to be unveiled soon after Election Day**. **Obama almost made it to the mountaintop once before** with Speaker John Boehner. Whatever the reasons that deal unraveled - did Obama chicken out? did Boehner balk? - both men see a budget deal as a legacy moment.

#### Plan kills Obama

Petroleum Intelligence Weekly, 1/9/12, Obama Plays Safe on Energy Policy, Lexis

With less than a year to go **until he faces re-election**, US President Barack **Obama is trying to avoid controversial energy policy decisions**, postponing the finalization of restrictions on oil refinery and power plant emissions and delaying the approval of a major crude pipeline project. The president’s caution will prolong the status quo on issues where the industry both opposes and supports the administration’s plans, and also illustrates what's at stake for energy policy depending on whether or not Obama is given another four years in office. Most of Obama's original campaign **pledges on promoting alternatives to fossil fuels** and tackling climate change **have not passed muster with Congress**, most notably an ambitious plan for national carbon controls, a subsequent toned-down clean energy standard floated after the carbon legislation failed, and repeated efforts to repeal $30 billion-$40 billion worth of oil industry tax deductions over 10 years ( PIW May9'11 ). The one exception has been the passage of $90 billion in clean energy funding as part of an economic stimulus bill passed early in Obama's term, but **the White House has been unable to repeat** this **success in other energy policy areas** ( PIW Feb.23'09 ).

#### Successful Obama honeymoon is make or break for the economy

Newman, chief business correspondent for U.S. News & World Report, 10/26/2012

(Rick, “The Fiscal Cliff Masks an Improving Economy,” http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/rick-newman/2012/10/26/the-fiscal-cliff-masks-an-improving-economy)

If President Barack Obama wins a second term, he may **enjoy the kind of honeymoon he didn't get the first time around**. And if Republican challenger Mitt Romney wins, he may wonder why Obama got all that gray hair.

At the moment, economists, politicos and pundits are obsessed with the looming election, to be followed by a tense lame-duck session in which Congress and the president must figure out what to do about the "fiscal cliff." If all of the tax hikes and spending cuts set to go into effect at the end of the year actually do, **it could torpedo economic growth and cause another recession**. Congress could also delay those big decisions or dicker indefinitely, **with the economy shackled to political ineptitude**.

But if Congress does its job, and legislates some kind of compromise, the prospects for the economy could brighten considerably in 2013. "Assuming the fiscal cliff is resolved in a relatively benign manner, a post-resolution rebound is likely," Bank of America Merrill Lynch advised in a recent report. There are several reasons for optimism:

Housing seems to have turned around for good. After a six-year housing bust, prices seemed to have stopped falling in most markets, and mortgage rates remain near record lows. A variety of indicators show that real estate agents, home builders and even buyers are increasingly bullish. That could turn housing from a drag on the economy into a driver of growth. "The odds are strong that housing will resume its long-absent role as a key contributor to GDP growth," says Bernard Baumohl, chief global economist of the Economic Outlook Group.

Consumers are surprisingly upbeat. Confidence surveys show an unusual divergence between business leaders, who have been getting gloomier, and ordinary people, who have been feeling better. The gap might exist because business leaders get paid to worry about problems like the fiscal cliff and the European debt crisis, while regular people may be tuning out such worries. If the economy manages to bypass the cliff, rising consumer confidence could generate a kind of self-sustaining lift.

Car sales are robust. Auto sales have become one of the stronger segments of the economy, despite higher gas prices and a weak job market. That suggests a few important things: Credit is loosening up, including subprime lending; many consumers feel confident enough to make big purchases; and the Federal Reserve's low-interest-rate policy may actually be working, at least in the car market.

Business spending is poised to pick up. CEOs have increasingly voiced their concern over political gridlock in Washington, deferring plans to invest or hire. That's probably slowing the economy today, which partly explains anemic growth of just 2 percent. But that might also indicate pent-up demand. "Corporations have accumulated profits and increased cash, suggesting they are primed for greater investment," according to Merrill Lynch. And with nearly $2 trillion of cash on hand, corporations have the means to administer quite a jolt to the economy, if their leaders choose to.

#### Extinction

Kemp 10

Geoffrey Kemp, Director of Regional Strategic Programs at The Nixon Center, served in the White House under Ronald Reagan, special assistant to the president for national security affairs and senior director for Near East and South Asian affairs on the National Security Council Staff, Former Director, Middle East Arms Control Project at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2010, The East Moves West: India, China, and Asia’s Growing Presence in the Middle East, p. 233-4

The second scenario, called Mayhem and Chaos, is the opposite of the first scenario; everything that can go wrong does go wrong. The world economic situation weakens rather than strengthens, and India, China, and Japan suffer a major reduction in their growth rates, further weakening the global economy. As a result, energy demand falls and the price of fossil fuels plummets, leading to a financial crisis for the energy-producing states, which are forced to cut back dramatically on expansion programs and social welfare. That in turn leads to political unrest: and nurtures different radical groups, including, but not limited to, Islamic extremists. The internal stability of some countries is challenged, and there are more “failed states.” Most serious is the collapse of the democratic government in Pakistan and its takeover by Muslim extremists, who then take possession of a large number of nuclear weapons. The danger of war between India and Pakistan increases significantly. Iran, always worried about an extremist Pakistan, expands and weaponizes its nuclear program. That further enhances nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, with Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Egypt joining Israel and Iran as nuclear states. Under these circumstances, the potential for nuclear terrorism increases, and the possibility of a nuclear terrorist attack in either the Western world or in the oil-producing states may lead to a further devastating collapse of the world economic market, with a tsunami-like impact on stability. In this scenario, major disruptions can be expected, with dire consequences for two-thirds of the planet’s population.

## off

#### Obama narrowly ahead in Ohio and it will determine the election—mobilizing voters and winning independents key—votes can still switch based on issues

Koff, 10/28

(Plain Dealer Washington Bureau Chief, Ohio Presidential Poll: Presidential race in battleground Ohio is dead even

http://www.cleveland.com/open/index.ssf/2012/10/ohio\_presidential\_poll.html)

Without winning Ohio, it will be hard for either candidate to amass the electoral votes necessary for the presidency. It hasn't been done in 52 years. "Absent any more twists and turns, a remarkable presidential campaign may end with the campaign that executes the best ground game, narrowly delivering Ohio for the next president of the United States," said Eric Rademacher, co-director of the University of Cincinnati's Institute for Policy Research. The institute conducted the poll for a consortium that includes The Plain Dealer, Columbus Dispatch, Cincinnati Enquirer and other newspapers. In this and a number of recent polls, Romney tightened or closed the lead that Obama had coming out of the Democratic convention and into the candidates' debates in early October. In the previous Ohio Newspaper Poll, released Sept. 23, Obama had a five-point lead over his challenger. But **the odds still may be in Obama's favor, according to several other polls released last week**. A CNN poll in Ohio had Obama leading Romney by four points. A Time magazine poll in the state showed Obama beating Romney by five. Yet a Rasmussen Reports poll in Ohio had the race tied. In several other battleground states, including Virginia and Florida, the October momentum has moved Romney slightly ahead of of Obama, although still in the range of a statistical tie, according to polling averages tracked by the website Real Clear Politics. The same trend has occurred in national polls. But national popularity does not crown the winner. It takes winning a majority of the nation's 538 electoral votes. Factoring for states in each candidate's column already – New York for Obama, for instance, Utah for Romney – that leaves the election's outcome in the hands of a small group of states including Ohio, Wisconsin and Iowa. Florida, Virginia and Colorado could still swing the pendulum one way or the other, but **Ohio is widely acknowledged as the ultimate prize.** Political scientists and analysts say it would be very hard to win 270 electoral votes, a bare majority, without Ohio and its 18 electoral votes that go to the victor. Since 1860, when Abraham Lincoln won, every Republican who won the presidency has done so with the help of Ohio. And John F. Kennedy was the last Democrat who won the presidency without taking Ohio. That was in 1960. Obama lost ground in a variety of polls after his languid performance in the first candidates' debate on Oct. 3. Romney appeared confident and commanding. The presidential candidates have debated twice more since then, and their running mates debated once. A majority in the new Ohio Newspaper Poll, 62 percent, said that the debates would not make a difference in their vote, while a sizeable minority, 23 percent, said the presidential debates would make them more likely to vote for Romney. A large share of the voters answering that way, however, were self-identified Republicans. The poll's responses in general showed strong partisan tendencies – 93 percent of voters who said they were Democrats said they would vote for Obama, and 94 percent who said they were Republicans said they would vote for Romney. This suggests the debates may have validated more opinions than changed them. The poll of 1,015 likely voters, reached by land lines and cell phones, was conducted between Oct. 18 and Oct. 23. A number of respondents were called before the final presidential debate on Oct. 22. The last debate, however, did not appear to have a strong winner or loser and did not move the numbers significantly in other polls taken later in the week. The Ohio Newspaper Poll had a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. Nearly one-fifth of respondents indicated they had already voted. Obama and Democrats have been aggressive in urging supporters to vote early. Obama voted early himself, in his home state of Illinois. That likely explains Obama's big lead over Romney, 63 to 36, among early voters. More Democrats than Republicans said in the poll that they will definitely vote or have already voted. Some, though not all, Republican officials have not disputed the early Obama voting lead but characterize it as a tactical choice with dwindling returns. The Republican National Committee said in a blog post late last week that while Democrats have been persuading their loyal voters to go to the polls early, Republicans are lining up "low-propensity voters," or those who do not vote as regularly, to join legions of other Republicans who will make their selections on election day. Rich Beeson, Romney's national political director, and Scott Jennings, the campaign's state director, said separately in a memo on Thursday, "We have knocked on 21 times as many doors and made three times as many phone calls in Ohio compared to 2008. Sometime this week we'll knock on the two millionth door and make our sixth millionth voter contact since May." Furthermore, more Romney voters than Obama voters, 54-45, characterized themselves as "very enthusiastic" about this election, an indication of their strong desire for change at the White House. Men prefer Romney and his running mate, Paul Ryan, by a 12-point margin, while women prefer Obama and Vice President Joe Biden by 11 points, the poll showed. That's a change since late September, when Romney and Obama ran much closer among men, said Rademacher. Votes on Nov. 6, election day, are likely to follow Ohio's political-geographic traditions, according to this poll's results. Obama had a nine-point edge in Northeast Ohio, considered Ohio's Democratic sweet spot, while Romney had an 11-point lead in Southwest Ohio, a conservative region that Clevelanders often don't understand. In Central Ohio, a key region to watch on election night, Obama had a 4-point lead. Polls are a snapshot in time, and turnout in any region can change the race's outcome. If a candidate gets 60 percent of the vote in a county that normally gives 64 percent to that party, it can spell trouble. Still, polls this close to the election provide a valuable view of each candidate's strengths and weaknesses, not only on political geography but also on issues. And they can help voters understand why candidates are visiting their state so often and **focusing on specific issues or groups.** The Ohio Newspaper Poll queried likely voters on several issues: Fifty percent of voters said Obama would do the best job handling foreign policy, compared with 46 percent for Romney. Fifty-one percent said Romney would do the best job handling the economy, compared with 45 percent for Obama. Fifty-four percent of Democrats said the Obama administration's loans to the auto industry will make them more likely to vote for the incumbent, while only 3 percent of Republicans gave that response – and 39 percent of them said it would make them less likely to support him. The largest share of Republicans, 57 percent, said the auto loans would make no difference in deciding for or against Obama. Fifty-four percent of all likely voters said Romney's controversial comments about Democratic voters and people dependent on government help – his "47 percent" remarks – would make no difference in how they vote. Romney, according to video obtained by the magazine Mother Jones, said Obama's supporters represent 47 percent of the country who "believe that they are victims" and "entitled" to government assistance. But that, too, broke along party lines: 59 percent of Democrats said Romney's remarks made them more likely to vote for Obama. Conversely, more than one in four Republicans – 28 percent – said those remarks made them more likely to vote for Romney. **A key constituency in this election is independent voters**. Poll respondents who said they were independents represented a relatively small number in the poll: 96 likely voters, compared with 460 who said they were Democrats and 432 who said they were Republicans. That resulted in a high statistical margin of error, 10 percent, for independents. This makes it difficult to divine much meaning from poll questions that resulted in narrow answers, such as whether independents would vote for Obama or Romney if the election were held today. Independents gave the edge to Obama -- but by only 2 points, way too small to interpret because of the large margin of error. But **on issues**, the candidates' positions created a big enough split among independents to provide some insights – and they may help show where the key to this election lies, says Rademacher.

#### Clean energy push dooms Obama in Ohio—viewed as a threat to mining jobs

Rogers, 10/26

(Columnist-Mercury News, Obama and Romney on environmental issues: A Grand Canyon of difference, http://www.mercurynews.com/science/ci\_21858644/obama-and-romney-environmental-issues-grand-canyon-difference)

Critics of new climate laws, however, say green groups are out of touch with an American public that suffered during the recession, and they look warily at rules that could raise electricity or gas prices. "**The Obama administration is worried about the perception in certain states that there are people who believe environmentalists take their jobs -- in mining states**, in logging states, places that make cars," said Kenneth Green, resident scholar in energy and the environment at the American Enterprise Institute, a free-market think tank in Washington, D.C. Over time, some of Romney's views on environmental issues have changed. As Massachusetts governor a decade ago, Romney opposed new offshore oil drilling, pushed for tax credits for hybrid cars and expanded recycling laws. In 2003, he denied a request from a coal plant in Salem for more time to meet toxic air pollution rules. "If the choice is between dirty power plants or protecting the health of the people of Massachusetts, I will always come down on the side of public health," he said then. This fall, however, his campaign has launched a full-throated defense of the coal industry, which has been hurt by cheap natural gas and tougher EPA rules. "We have 250 years of coal. Why wouldn't we use it?" Romney said in one ad, flanked by Ohio coal miners.

#### That flips it

Cohn, 10/25

(Election Expert-The New Republic, “The Road to Victory in Ohio,” http://www.tnr.com/blog/electionate/109150/the-road-victory-in-ohio)

For the second time in eight years, the Buckeye State is poised to **offer the decisive electoral votes** to reelect an incumbent president. The polls show Obama with a lead of around 2 or 3 points, **enough to make him a favorite but not enough to assure victory**, especially since he remains beneath 49 percent of the vote. At first glance, Obama’s resilience in the Buckeye State seems to defy partisan history and demographics. It’s about the only state where Obama is doing so well where his chances depend on maintaining gains among white working-class voters who voted for Bush in 2004. But Obama’s success among African Americans and postgraduates has shifted the state toward Democrats, forcing Romney to compensate with white working class Kerry voters. And although there are clear opportunities for Romney to make gains in southern and southeastern Ohio, the Obama campaign’s strategy is **perfectly suited to deny him the gains he needs.** But Obama’s road to victory in Ohio starts with a strong showing among the African American voters that provided Bush with reelection eight years ago. It’s often overlooked just how much Obama gains over Kerry’s performance just by winning an outsized share of African Americans. According to the 2004 exit polls, Bush’s concerted efforts to appeal to African American voters—mainly on cultural issues—held Kerry to just 84 percent of the black vote. African American voters predictably swung decisively toward Obama, offering him 97 percent of the vote on Election Day with an additional point of black turnout. In 2004, Bush won Ohio by 118,000 votes, but Obama’s gains among African American voters are sufficient to erase Kerry’s deficit without any changes in the composition of the electorate. The exit polls show that approximately 550,000 African American voters cast ballots in Ohio and offered Kerry a margin of approximately 380,000 votes. If Kerry had won 97 percent of the black vote, as Obama did, then Kerry would have won black voters by a 530,000 vote margin. Thus, changes in black vote preference alone is sufficient to swing Ohio by 150,000 votes—enough to overcome Bush’s 118,000 vote victory. Obama makes additional gains from increased African American turnout. The 2008 exit polls showed African Americans increasing from 10 percent in 2004 to 11 percent in 2012, increasing his margin among African Americans by an additional 60,000 votes. If Obama can maintain elevated black turnout and support, he would transform Kerry’s 118,000 vote deficit into a 92,000 vote lead without persuading a single white Bush voter. These numbers aren’t exact, but they do show that Obama’s support among African Americans is enough to turn a lean-Republican state like Ohio into a true toss-up that might even tilt-Democratic without commensurate losses among white voters. Obama ultimately won by 262,000 voters in Ohio and many of his additional gains came from rural northwest Ohio and the Columbus metropolitan area. Like many other white, moderate, but traditionally Republican areas in the northwestern part of the country (think Indiana, northeast Wisconsin, North Dakota), Obama’s performance in many parts of rural northwest Ohio was the best by any Democrat since 1964. Obama’s gains in the relatively affluent and well-educated Columbus metropolitan area were similar to his gains in other post-industrial metropolitan areas like Raleigh, Washington, and Denver—Bush won Ohio’s postgraduate voters by 2 points in 2004, but Obama would win them by 10 points. These gains were felt most clearly in Columbus, where Obama netted an additional 65,000 votes over Kerry’s performance. Elsewhere in Ohio, Obama made relatively small gains with white voters and actually did worse than Kerry in the Mahoning and Ohio River valleys of southeastern Ohio. But these losses weren’t nearly enough to overcome Obama’s huge gains in northwest Ohio, Columbus, and among African Americans. Romney’s road to victory starts by undoing Obama’s gains in rural northwest Ohio, where Obama outperformed reasonable Democratic benchmarks by a substantial margin. But Obama seems likely to hold onto many of his gains Franklin County and African Americans, leaving Romney with a deficit in the state. Resurgent Republican enthusiasm can probably make up some ground, but Romney **would still need to persuade plenty of white** Kerry or Obama **voters to overcome persistent Democratic strength in Franklin County** and among African Americans, where Obama is all but assured to outperform Kerry’s total. Where can the Romney campaign make up ground among Kerry voters? **His best chance is the traditionally Democratic stretch of** southern and **southeastern Ohio**, where Democrats long held the allegiance of working class voters **tied to the coal industry**. If you’ve been wondering why Romney likes talking about coal so much, this is why: there are many socially conservative but Democratic-leaning voters in southeastern Ohio who have never especially liked the president and where the so-called ‘**war on coal’ is a pocket book issue**. If one excludes the northern cities of Akron, Canton, Youngstown, and Warren, the coal producing stretch of Ohio holds nearly 700,000 voters or about 12 percent of the Ohio electorate. Obama only won 45 percent of the vote in this traditionally Democratic but socially conservative region, but that still **leaves plenty of room for Romney to make additional gains**. If Romney could reduce Obama’s share of the vote to 40 percent, he would net 75,000 additional votes. Smaller gains across the rest of Ohio, where Obama picked up support over Kerry’s performance, could **plausibly put him over the top**. But coal country is not populous enough for anything short of big gains to flip the state. But Romney isn’t assured of the gains necessary to overcome Obama’s advantage in the big cities. In 2008, Obama performed poorly in the industrial northeastern part of Ohio, but it’s conceivable that he could match or even exceed his ’08 totals in places like Youngstown, where Obama did worse than Kerry and the auto-bailout and shale oil boom have rejuvenated a struggling manufacturing hub. The Obama campaign has attacked Romney for arguing that a Massachusetts coal plant “kills,” undermining Romney’s ability to completely exploit the so-called ‘war on coal.” And Obama’s broader strategy to depict Romney as an out of touch plutocrat bent on outsourcing middle class jobs resonates across eastern and southeastern Ohio. These populist and working class areas were once Democratic for a reason and the Obama campaign’s caricature of Romney helps remind them why. Romney will still do better than McCain in southern and southeast Ohio, but “better” isn’t enough, with Obama starting well above Kerry’s performance among African Americans and postgraduate voters around Columbus. **Absent a strong enough counter-veiling force**, Obama’s improvements among these two groups are sufficient to overcome Ohio’s traditional Republican-lean. To compensate, Romney needs to **run up the score among voters who have traditionally voted for Democrats in** southern and **southeast Ohio**, but the Obama campaign has **developed a messaging strategy** **perfectly suited to blocking his route to victory**. With twelve days to go, the polls show that the Obama campaign’s approach is succeeding.

#### Romney’s reaction to unpredictable crises makes nuclear war inevitable

Stein, former chairman of the American Society of Magazine Editors, predicted the run to the Iraq War in the New York Times, veteran of World War II, 10/19/2012

(Robert, <http://ajliebling.blogspot.com/2012/10/doubts-about-romneys-nuclear-trigger.html>)

**Doubts About Romney's Nuclear Trigger Finger**

At Harvard today scholars commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis, 13 days when the world held its breath in the shadow of a nuclear war that John F. Kennedy said could have led to “**ultimate destruction of the human race**.”

In interviews afterward, the President told me, “Too many people want to blow up the world...In Cuba, a lot of people thought we should take more drastic action. I think we did the right thing. More drastic action would have increased the possibility of nuclear exchange. The real question now is to meet conflicts year after year without having to escalate."

**Half a century later**, it still is and, even in the academic colloquy over the Missile Crisis, **doubts arise about the fitness of Mitt Romney to follow in JFK’s footsteps**.

“Of the two candidates this year,” **one Harvard scholar asks**, “does Obama or Romney have the better command of history, **coolness under pressure**, and good sense to make the right choice for all of us **when the next crisis occurs?**

“Obama has demonstrated some of these qualities in his adept isolation of Iran, his largely skillful handling of the Arab uprisings, and his bridge-building to allies and partners that has rebuilt U.S. credibility in Europe, especially.

“Romney’s big foreign policy speech...illuminated the challenge he has had in making an impact in foreign policy. His back-to-the-future evocation of American leadership seems right for the Cold War but not nearly sophisticated enough for our very different **21st-century world**.”

**As Mitt Romney blusters about confrontations with China**, **Iran and other adversaries**, his sound-bite posturing may be effective in debates, campaign ads and comic relief, but how safe would we be if he moved into the Oval Office?

Two years ago, in putting Tehran "on notice," President Obama invoked the carrot-and-stick formula JFK used and, just as Kennedy ignored military advice to "bomb Cuba back into the Stone Age," rejected the notion of "victory" in today's crisis.

"This isn't a football game," he said. "So I'm not interested in victory, I'm interested in solving the problem."

#### Obama win key to US-Russia relations

CSM 12

(“Obama asks Russia to cut him slack until reelection” By Fred Weir, Correspondent / March 26, 2012 , http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2012/0326/Obama-asks-Russia-to-cut-him-slack-until-reelection)

Russian experts say there's little doubt the Kremlin would like to see Obama re-elected. Official Moscow has been pleased by Obama's policy of "resetting" relations between Russia and the US, which resulted in the new START treaty and other cooperation breakthroughs after years of diplomatic chill while George W. Bush was president. The Russian media often covers Obama's lineup of Republican presidential challengers in tones of horror, and there seems to be a **consensus** among Russian pundits that **a Republican president would put a quick end to the Obama-era thaw in relations**. "The Republicans are active critics of Russia, and they are extremely negative toward Putin and his return to the presidency," says Dmitry Babich, a political columnist with the official RIA-Novosti news agency. "Democrats are perceived as more easygoing, more positive toward Russia and Putin." Speaking on the record in Seoul, Mr. Medvedev said the years since Obama came to power "were the best three years in the past decade of Russia-US relations.… I hope this mode of relations will maintain between the Russian Federation and the United States and between the leaders." During Putin's own election campaign, which produced a troubled victory earlier this month, he played heavily on anti-Western themes, including what he described as the US drive to attain "absolute invulnerability" at the expense of everyone else. But many Russian experts say that was mostly election rhetoric, and that in office Putin will seek greater cooperation and normal relations with the West. "Russian society is more anti-American than its leaders are," says Pavel Zolotaryov, deputy director of the official Institute of USA-Canada Studies in Moscow. "Leaders have to take popular moods into account. But it's an objective fact that the US and Russia have more points in common than they have serious differences. If Obama wins the election, it seems likely the reset will continue."

#### Great power wars

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(Stephen, has served as the Strategic Studies Institute’s expert on the Soviet bloc and the post- Soviet world since 1989. Prior to that he was Associate Professor of Soviet Studies at the Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education, Maxwell Air Force Base “PROSPECTS FOR RUSSO-AMERICAN COOPERATION IN HALTING NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION”, March, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB892.pdf>)

Another reason for cooperation relates to the regional rivalries between Moscow and Washington (the same can apply as we shall see to Beijing). Today, as during the Cold War, we see intensifying regional rivalries between America and Russia throughout Asia from the Middle East to the Pacific Ocean. Both these states tend to support governments which have, by their proliferation activities, intensified tensions, e.g., America’s support for Pakistan and Russia’s earlier support for North Korea and present support for Iran. The reasons for this support often have to do with quite classical concepts of national interest which in Russia’s case relate to material interests, recovering its great power status, and checking American power. For example, Gleb Ivashentsov, then Director of the Second Asia Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, told a Liechtenstein Colloquium on Iran in 2005 that, Iran today is probably the only country in the greater Middle East that, despite all of its internal and external difficulties, is steadily building up its economic, scientific, technological, and military capability (what about Israel?—author). Should this trend continue, Iran—with its seventy million population, which is fairly literate, compared to neighboring states, and ideologically consolidated, on the basis of islamic and nationalist values; with a highly intellectual elite; with more than 11 percent of the world’s oil and 18 percent of natural gas reserves; with more than 500,000 strong armed forces and with a strategic geographic position enabling it to control sea and land routes between Europe and Asia—is destined to emerge as a regional leader. This means that the Islamic Republic of Iran will be playing an increasing role in resolving problems not only in the Middle East and Persian Gulf area but also in such regions that are rather sensitive for Russia as Transcaucasia, Central Asia, and the Caspian region. This is why dialogue with Iran and partnership with it on a bilateral and regional as well as a broad international basis is objectively becoming one of the key tasks of Russia’s foreign policy.180 Unfortunately such support for regional partners, if not allies, often ends up (as in 1914) with the greater power being drawn into the smaller partner’s conflicts because it fears it cannot afford to lose its partner or ally to the other side. The result is often heightened conflict, and today those crises often revolve around proliferation. Thus when Israel bombed an alleged North Korean-built reactor in Syria in September 2007, it reflected what could happen when states like Syria and North Korea strike out on their own in the belief that they can rely on a protector like Moscow or in Israel’s case, Washington. As Yitzhak Shichor writes, Most likely, Pyongyang had failed to consult with either Moscow or Beijing prior to its decision to engage in some kind of “illicit” strategic or nuclear cooperation with Syria, although both may have become aware of this activity at a certain point of time. This failure reflects not only North Korea’s inflated nationalism but also its belief that whatever misunderstandings and disagreements it has with Russia and China—quite a few are known— both will continue their commitment and support and the same goes for Syria.181 Furthermore, as Shichor notes, such crises are likely because such states often have no other way to pursue their vital interests other than by interesting great powers in their survival. While such support may preserve these states, it hardly advances their overall cause of changing the status quo. “Unable to use diplomacy and not allowed to hold negotiations, apparently the only way open to settle their respective conflicts is by using threats, sponsoring terrorism, and building up the infrastructure for future violence.”182 If there were more effective great power cooperation on both regional security and nonproliferation, then the scope for such provocative behaviors would be correspondingly restricted. But since there is presently no such effective cooperation either on regional security or nonproliferation, Russia also values the Iranian connection because its support for an anti-American Iran helps Moscow restrain U.S. power in the Middle East, makes it a player or “great power” in the same region, and allows it to gain influence with other Gulf states who see it as having influence on Iran. Thus, during Putin’s Februry 2007 tour of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Qatar, he offered all these states major energy deals, arms sales, and even nuclear power, ostensibly for peaceful purposes, but in reality signifying his efforts and theirs to balance what they all realize is Iran’s refusal to stop its nuclear program and put it under effective IAEA supervision.183 In fact, Russia is offering up to 13 Arab states nuclear technologies of one sort or another. Russia is even launching Saudi satellites and undertaking major business initiatives with Saudi Arabia, even as it assists Iran’s space program.184 This posture once again reflects Russia’s wholly instrumental approach to questions of proliferation of nuclear technologies, discerning no real threat from the spread of nuclear power in the Middle East if it checks Iran and makes it remember who its patrons are. The many reports speculating about possible Saudi nuclear ambitions evidently have made little impression upon Putin and his subordinates.

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#### The 50 states should issue tax breaks and credits equivalent to monetary payments issued to a real estate investment trust qualified asset class energy sources. The 50 states should issue substantial grants for solar power production.

States have a range of options to use tax incentives to spur energy production

Ralis, 6

(Sr. Regulatory Counsel-National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, “Congress Got it Right: There’s No Need to Mandate Renewable Portfolio Standards,” 27 Energy L. J. 451)

State incentives, like their federal counterparts, provide critical benefits for renewable resources that do not distinguish among consumer groups. Many states offer tax credits/rebates to various taxpayer groups. For instance, residential consumers in Idaho, North Carolina, North Dakota, and Utah can receive personal tax credits on equipment and installation costs for renewable heating and/or electric generation. n74 In New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, and Oklahoma, commercial and industrial consumers can receive corporate tax credits on property using renewable systems. n75 The credits can be focused on those renewable technologies that are available in individual states. Likewise, manufacturers of renewable equipment in North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Washington can receive corporate tax credits, which can be used to attract manufacturing jobs to the state, and can also be focused on manufacturers locating in depressed communities within the state. n76 Renewable systems in Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, and Tennessee may be eligible for special property assessments to reduce the tax burden on those who make significant capital investments in renewable technologies. n77 Purchasers of renewable equipment and systems in Florida, Idaho, and Nevada can receive rebates on sales taxes, lowering the up-front cost of renewable energy technologies, which is often the greatest barrier to investment. n78 Similarly, in states such as California, Illinois, and Rhode Island, purchasers of renewable equipment and systems can receive state rebates on a percentage of the actual equipment or system costs or on a MWh basis, which also serves to lower the up-front costs of investment in renewable energy technologies. n79

## 1

Status quo solves: IRS will make the ruling after the election

Konrad, PhD, CFA, financial analyst and portfolio manager, 10/21/2012

(Tom, “Why Solar REITs Are A Better Way To Invest In Solar,” http://seekingalpha.com/article/937181-why-solar-reits-are-a-better-way-to-invest-in-solar)

No one was able to tell me anything definite, but there are rumors that a request for an IRS revenue ruling is imminent. In June, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) issued a report, "The Technical Qualifications for Treating Photovoltaic Assets as Real Property by Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs)." **The report concluded that PV meets** many of **the important criteria** to be considered "real property" and hence a proper asset class **for** investment by **REITs**.

The fact that NREL issued this report **suggests that someone in the government is working to prepare the way for a favorable revenue ruling**. David Feldman, an NREL analyst and co-author of the report, said:

We're not trying to make the decision - the Internal Revenue Service will do that. We're giving them the technical information they need to make the decisions.

But somebody asked them to write the report.

Sturtevant says:

My pulse of the situation suggests that there are parties who are moving to place a request to the IRS by election time. If such a request were successful, it could be less than two quarters before a company claiming REIT status is developing solar.

Jabusch has also heard rumors predicting everything "**from year end this year to Q2 2013**."

UPDATE: The Renewable Energy Trust Capital, Inc., a San Francisco, CA based mission-driven company founded in 2011 to "facilitate the transition to a clean and sustainable economy" apparently **already has ruling request** "**on file with the IRS**." I'm seeking an interview with RET to determine if this is a request for a private-letter ruling (most likely since this is not a government entity) and when the request was filed. 10/12: I've published an article about Renewable Energy Trust's request based on my interview here.

Will the IRS Rule in Favor of Solar REITs?

**If there has already been a request to the IRS** for a revenue ruling on PV as real property, **the odds are good that the ruling will be favorable for** those of us who would like to see **Solar REITs**. **According to Sturtevant, enough political will would be sufficient to guarantee a favorable ruling**. **The political will is likely to depend on the outcome of the election on November 6th**.

Giving solar a similarly advantageous investment structure to the MLPs enjoyed by investors in fossil fuels should be a "politically neutral concept," as Sturtevant puts it. Obama has long been in favor of leveling the playing field between alternative energy and fossil fuels, while allowing Solar REITs is seemingly in line with Romney's expressed belief that alternative energy should sink or swim on its own merits: Investors would evaluate each deal on its investment merits, as both Hansen and Schalkwijk implied above. **On the other hand**, Romney has repeatedly called green jobs "fake" or "illusory" while championing the fossil industries, and has plans to sharply cut funding for clean energy. He may have already concluded that PV has no "merits," and hence **might see little point in giving it similar privileges to the extractive industries he promises to promote** in the name of energy independence.

#### Plan not necessary – REIT investment is already possible

Konrad, PhD, CFA, financial analyst and portfolio manager, 10/21/2012

(Tom, “Why Solar REITs Are A Better Way To Invest In Solar,” http://seekingalpha.com/article/937181-why-solar-reits-are-a-better-way-to-invest-in-solar)

A few REITs have dabbled with solar already as a revenue enhancement. **IRS rules allow them to generate up to 25% of their income from sources other than real property**, and this allows some scope for solar on REIT-owned buildings, for instance. Some solar developers are even specifically targeting the traditional REIT market. However, few REITs are likely to use this option to obtain more than a few percent of their income from solar because " the IRS tends to be very wary of anything that doesn't smell right in the context of REITs" and " leads to wariness and conservatism by many REIT managers," according to Sturtevant. REIT managers generally feel that a little extra revenue is not worth risking greater IRS scrutiny.

The conservatism of REIT managers has most likely already proven a barrier to some potential solar installations on REIT property, and a positive revenue ruling would have the added advantage of giving a green light for existing REITs to install solar on their property.

ProLogis, Inc. (PLD) is one of the few REITs not waiting for a ruling. ProLogis had installed 75 MW of solar on its buildings by the end of 2011, and claims to be "just getting started." According to my calculations (using aggressive assumptions of a 20% capacity factor and $0.10 per kWh electricity price), even 75 MW of PV would generate only $13 million in annual revenue, or 0.85% of ProLogis's 2011 total revenue.

Another REIT which might be expected to take advantage of a positive revenue ruling in a big way is Power REIT (PW). Power REIT invests in the embedded real estate of transportation infrastructure and renewable energy installations. PW currently owns only railroad real estate, but its CEO, David Lesser, plans to acquire real estate underlying renewable energy generation (most likely a wind or solar farm) in the near future.

Talking 'Bout a Revolution

ProLogis and Power REIT will undoubtedly continue investing in renewable energy in any case. Lesser says:

**We believe that that there is an attractive investment role** for Power REIT to **play in the renewable energy space with or without a clarification of PV being included as a real estate asset for REIT purposes**.

#### Solar’s too expensive even if we give away the panels

Zehner 12

Green illusions,

Ozzie Zehner is the author of Green Illusions and a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. His recent publications include public science pieces in Christian Science Monitor, The American Scholar, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, The Humanist, The Futurist, and Women’s Studies Quarterly. He has appeared on PBS, BBC, CNN, MSNBC, and regularly guest lectures at universities. Zehner’s research and projects have been covered by The Sunday Times, USA Today, WIRED, The Washington Post, Business Week and numerous other media outlets. He also serves on the editorial board of Critical Environmentalism.

Zehner primarily researches the social, political and economic conditions influencing energy policy priorities and project outcomes. His work also incorporates symbolic roles that energy technologies play within political and environmental movements. His other research interests include consumerism, urban policy, environmental governance, international human rights, and forgeries.

Zehner attended Kettering University (BS -Engineering) and The University of Amsterdam (MS/Drs – Science and Technology Studies). His research was awarded with honors at both institutions. He lives in San Francisco.

Free Panels, Anyone? Among the ceos and chief scientists in the solar industry, there is surprisingly little argument that solar systems are expensive.46 Even an extreme drop in the price of polysilicon, the most expensive technical component, would do little to make solar cells more competitive. Peter Nieh, managing director of Lightspeed Venture Partners, a multibillion-dollar venture capital firm in Silicon Valley, contends that cheaper polysilicon won't reduce the overall cost of solar arrays much, even if the price of the expensive material dropped to zero.47 Why? Because the cost of other materials such as copper, glass, plastics, and aluminum, as well as the costs for fabrication and installation, represent the bulk of a solar system's overall price tag. The technical polysilicon represents only about a fifth of the total. Furthermore, Keith Barnham, an avid solar proponent and senior researcher at Imperial College London, admits that unless efficiency levels are high, "even a zero cell cost is not competitive."48 In other words, even if someone were to offer you solar cells for free, you might be better off turning the offer down than paying to install, connect, clean, insure, maintain, and eventually dispose of the modules—especially if you live outside the remote, dry, sunny patches of the planet such as the desert extending from southeast California to western Arizona. In fact, the unanticipated costs, performance variables, and maintenance obligations for photovoltaics, too often ignored by giddy proponents of the technology, can swell to unsustainable magnitudes. Occasionally buyers decommission their arrays within the first decade, leaving behind graveyards of toxic panels teetering above their roofs as epitaphs to a fallen dream. Premature decommissioning may help explain why American photovoltaic electrical generation dropped during the last economic crisis even as purported solar capacity expanded.49 Curiously, while numerous journalists reported on solar infrastructure expansion during this period, I was unable to locate a single article covering the contemporaneous drop in the nation's solar electrical output, which the Department of Energy quietly slid into its annual statistics without a peep.

#### Complex state and local regulation overwhelms any Federal incentives-discourages solar projects

Walsh 11

Bryan, Energy: The Obstacles to Scaling Up Solar Power, senior writer for TIME and TIME.com, focuses on environmental issues, general interest and national stories

<http://science.time.com/2011/01/31/energy-the-obstacles-to-scaling-up-solar-power/>

President Obama laid down a bold challenge to America in his State of the Union speech last week: get to 80% clean energy by 2035. Clean energy is a deliberately vague goal, since it will likely include nuclear, natural gas and (not really existing) clean coal in the mix. But traditional renewable energy like wind and solar will need to be a big part of the American clean energy transition Obama is planning. In a speech at NDN today (which used to stand for New Democrat Network but now stands for…nothing, as far as I can tell), Democratic Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico reiterated his support for Obama’s energy goals, and raised hopes that a bill with a clean energy standard might be resurrected in this Congress. (Bingaman last year pushed a bill focused on a national renewable energy standard, but with much of the legislative focus placed on a carbon cap bill, Bingaman’s work never earned much momentum.) But he warned that it won’t be easy. “Perhaps no topic garnered more scrutiny during the 2009 markup in our committee than the renewable electricity standard,” he said. But there’s a lot more holding back renewable power in the U.S. than gridlock in Congress. One of the biggest obstacles to scaling up solar power in particular is regulation—not just from the federal government, but at the state, city and even community level. Rules on installing solar systems differ from town to town, and the work of researching and filling out permits adds to the cost of solar power across the country. According to a study by the solar installer SunRun, struggles over permits adds an average of $2,500 to the costs of each solar installation—while an effort to streamline regulations could provide a $1 billion stimulus to the residential and commercial solar markets over the next five years. “The costs to the solar market are really staggering,” says Ed Fenster, CEO of SunRun. SunRun compared U.S. regulations to those in more friendly markets for solar, like Germany and Japan. They found that Germany—which has more streamlined regulations for solar installation, as well as more generous government subsidies—keeps solar installation costs 40% lower than those in the U.S. Not coincidentally, one million new homes have gone solar in Germany over the past two years, while only about 80,000 homes in total have solar in the U.S. “Regulation is a major issue that’s holding us back,” says Lyndon Rive, the CEO of SolarCity, a major California-based solar installer. SolarCity’s experience is constructive. The company—which coves solar installation from design to financing to monitoring—has grown at a healthy clip, employing over 1,000 people and expanding from its base in California to Maryland and Washington, DC. But Rive says that the variety of regulations for solar installation are a major bottleneck on growth. It takes SolarCity a few days at most to actually install a solar system, but it often takes two to three months, if not longer, to get the permits and other preparations ready. If you’re trying to make solar a significant part of the American energy supply—currently it makes up far less than 1% of total U.S. power—red tape isn’t helping. “The wait incurred is annoying and it adds to costs overall,” says Rive. SunRun has shared the report with the Department of Energy and the White House, and the company is urging the federal government to create incentives that would push towns and cities to adopt common codes and fees for solar installation—something countries like Germany and Japan already do. The report argues that such permit standardization could make solar cost competitive for half the homes in the nation within two years. “At some level this is all about local and state governments, but the federal government can nudge things,” says Fenster. “This could drive an economy of scale.” Still, good intentions on the national level don’t always translate to the community, where parochial concerns sometimes win out. (Witness the fight over smart meters in California, which some libertarians on the right and some ultra-greens on the left have opposed over liberty and health fears.) And as important as smoother regulations are, a broad national energy policy is needed to really jump-start solar and other renewables—but climate still remains a divisive political subject. (Just look at Republican Senator John Barrasso’s new bill, which would block greenhouse gas regulations under the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act.) The least we can do now is pull the red tape off our solar panels.

#### Utilities discrimination prevents solvency

Sovacool 9

Ben, Rejecting renewables: The socio-technical impediments to renewable electricity in the United States. Energy Governance Program, Centre on Asia and Globalisation, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore, Singapore

http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301421509004212

As a final economic impediment, renewable power sources often directly threaten the market share of utilities, energy companies, and other power operators. Joe Catina (personal interview with author) from Ingersoll-Rand, a manufacturer of distributed generation units, summed it up by stating that “utilities are by nature monopolistic entities that had a charter to provide adequate energy capacity, with near total control over the production of electricity with little responsibility for cost. Now, they are being asked to lose control over the market yet keep costs low. And many are uncomfortable with the issue.” Ordinary consumers have little ability to arbitrage the market power of utilities. The best technique to avoid price discrimination is to buy from other sources, but most consumers cannot do this with electricity. Resale by consumers is implausible, distribution is controlled by central stations and vertically integrated with production, and electricity cannot be stored in large quantities cost-effectively. Customers have little capacity to hedge against the market power of dominant utilities (Yakubovich et al., 2005). Little incentive exists for utilities and system operators to change the system; such actors are less concerned about renewable power technologies, and more worried about competing in the restructured marketplace. Analogously, utilities have actively used their “power of incumbency” to further mold federal and state regulations in favor of large, centralized plants that they own (and disadvantage small, decentralized units that they do not). Alan Crane (personal interview with author) from the National Academy of Sciences elaborated that perhaps the most significant impediment for renewable power systems is an institutional, rather than a technological, dilemma. According to him: System and transmission operators don’t recognize many renewable technologies as being part of their network because they are not dispatchable …. It's not in the “right people's” interest to fix interface problems like interconnection and intermittency when such improvements will do little (in their view) to improve control of the overall system. Technically, these technologies can be incorporated into the grid easily. Socially, much institutional resistance remains. Renewable power providers thus face hurdles when dealing with the administrators of the existing transmission and distribution system, who seek to retain a number of traditional, “time-tested” regulatory and utility practices that have existed for upwards of a century. Seeking to maintain control over a system they (and their predecessors) created, some have made it difficult for new entrants to play on their turf. A few, independent studies have confirmed instances where system operators attempt to retain their control over the electric utility system by employing a wide variety of predatory and discriminatory practices. Such efforts typically begin with the imposition of fees to connect to the grid. In many states that have begun restructuring their utility systems, formerly regulated “natural monopoly” power companies have been permitted to charge customers “stranded costs” (Allen, 2002). These costs are intended to cover a “fair return” on generation and transmission investments made by utilities during the era of regulation, when the investments were viewed as serving all users. Put simply, when a customer decides to install an electric generator independent from the utility, he or she arguably removes part of the grid's existing load requirement and “strands” part of the investment the utility made in the power system. Stranded costs thus enable system operators to charge consumers for an electricity system that they may not even use. But such fees greatly increase the cost of renewable energy systems because customers must pay them in addition to paying for power from the new technology. Utilities also require payment of a host of charges on those who use renewable energy systems that run intermittently. For example, incumbent power providers or transmission operators may ask for high rates for providing backup power for when the intermittent renewable energy technologies do not produce power. They may also charge demand fees (a charge that penalizes customers for displacing demand from utilities) that discourage the use of intermittent power systems. A study undertaken by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) found more than 17 different “extraneous” charges associated with the use of dispersed renewable technologies (Alderfer and Starrs, 2000). These types of charges, the senior editor of the trade journal Public Utilities Fortnightly exclaimed, “are a major obstacle to the development of a competitive electricity market” (Stavros, 1999). Moreover, some renewable energy manufacturers utilize intellectual property rights to solidify market power. General Electric has actively used its patent on variable speed wind turbines to block Enercon (a European manufacturer) and Mitsubishi (a Japanese manufacturer) from entering the American wind market. Thus, the existing electricity landscape in the United States, far from creating incentives for consumers and businesses to invest in cost-effective renewable power technologies, remains prone to multiple and interrelated market failures. Consumers lack capital and knowledge about energy efficiency investments; builders, homeowners, and businesses remain uninterested in energy projects; and utilities and energy companies wield their market power to retain control over the electricity industry

#### Data disproves hegemony impacts

Fettweis, 11

Christopher J. Fettweis, Department of Political Science, Tulane University, 9/26/11, Free Riding or Restraint? Examining European Grand Strategy, Comparative Strategy, 30:316–332, EBSCO

It is perhaps worth noting that there is no evidence to support a direct relationship between the relative level of U.S. activism and international stability. In fact, the limited data we do have suggest the opposite may be true. During the 1990s, the United States cut back on its defense spending fairly substantially. By 1998, the United States was spending $100 billion less on defense in real terms than it had in 1990.51 To internationalists, defense hawks and believers in hegemonic stability, this irresponsible “peace dividend” endangered both national and global security. “No serious analyst of American military capabilities,” argued Kristol and Kagan, “doubts that the defense budget has been cut much too far to meet America’s responsibilities to itself and to world peace.”52 On the other hand, if the pacific trends were not based upon U.S. hegemony but a strengthening norm against interstate war, one would not have expected an increase in global instability and violence.

The verdict from the past two decades is fairly plain: The world grew more peaceful while the United States cut its forces. No state seemed to believe that its security was endangered by a less-capable United States military, or at least none took any action that would suggest such a belief. No militaries were enhanced to address power vacuums, no security dilemmas drove insecurity or arms races, and no regional balancing occurred once the stabilizing presence of the U.S. military was diminished. The rest of the world acted as if the threat of international war was not a pressing concern, despite the reduction in U.S. capabilities. Most of all, the United States and its allies were no less safe. The incidence and magnitude of global conflict declined while the United States cut its military spending under President Clinton, and kept declining as the Bush Administration ramped the spending back up. No complex statistical analysis should be necessary to reach the conclusion that the two are unrelated.

Military spending figures by themselves are insufficient to disprove a connection between overall U.S. actions and international stability. Once again, one could presumably argue that spending is not the only or even the best indication of hegemony, and that it is instead U.S. foreign political and security commitments that maintain stability. Since neither was significantly altered during this period, instability should not have been expected. Alternately, advocates of hegemonic stability could believe that relative rather than absolute spending is decisive in bringing peace. Although the United States cut back on its spending during the 1990s, its relative advantage never wavered.

However, even if it is true that either U.S. commitments or relative spending account for global pacific trends, then at the very least stability can evidently be maintained at drastically lower levels of both. In other words, even if one can be allowed to argue in the alternative for a moment and suppose that there is in fact a level of engagement below which the United States cannot drop without increasing international disorder, a rational grand strategist would still recommend cutting back on engagement and spending until that level is determined. Grand strategic decisions are never final; continual adjustments can and must be made as time goes on. Basic logic suggests that the United States ought to spend the minimum amount of its blood and treasure while seeking the maximum return on its investment. And if the current era of stability is as stable as many believe it to be, no increase in conflict would ever occur irrespective of U.S. spending, which would save untold trillions for an increasingly debt-ridden nation.

It is also perhaps worth noting that if opposite trends had unfolded, if other states had reacted to news of cuts in U.S. defense spending with more aggressive or insecure behavior, then internationalists would surely argue that their expectations had been fulfilled. If increases in conflict would have been interpreted as proof of the wisdom of internationalist 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 likely systemic reaction to a more restrained United States suggests that the current peaceful trends are unrelated to U.S. military spending. Evidently the rest of the world can operate quite effectively without the presence of a global policeman. Those who think otherwise base their view on faith alone.

#### No challengers

Kaplan, senior fellow – Center for a New American Security, and Kaplan, frmr. vice chairman – National Intelligence Council, ‘11

(Robert D and Stephen S, “America Primed,” *The National Interest*, March/April)

But in spite of the seemingly inevitable and rapid diminution of U.S. eminence, to write America’s great-power obituary is beyond premature. The United States remains a highly capable power. Iraq and Afghanistan, as horrendous as they have proved to be—in a broad historical sense—are still relatively minor events that America can easily overcome. The eventual demise of empires like those of Ming China and late-medieval Venice was brought about by far more pivotal blunders.

Think of the Indian Mutiny against the British in 1857 and 1858. Iraq in particular—ever so frequently touted as our turning point on the road to destruction—looks to some extent eerily similar. At the time, orientalists and other pragmatists in the British power structure (who wanted to leave traditional India as it was) lost some sway to evangelical and utilitarian reformers (who wanted to modernize and Christianize India—to make it more like England). But the attempt to bring the fruits of Western civilization to the Asian subcontinent was met with a violent revolt against imperial authority. Delhi, Lucknow and other Indian cities were besieged and captured before being retaken by colonial forces. Yet, the debacle did not signal the end of the British Empire at all, which continued on and even expanded for another century. Instead, it signaled the transition from more of an ad hoc imperium fired by a proselytizing lust to impose its values on others to a calmer and more pragmatic empire built on international trade and technology.1 There is no reason to believe that the fate of America need follow a more doomed course.

Yes, the mistakes made in Iraq and Afghanistan have been the United States’ own, but, though destructive, they are not fatal. If we withdraw sooner rather than later, the cost to American power can be stemmed. Leaving a stable Afghanistan behind of course requires a helpful Pakistan, but with more pressure Washington might increase Islamabad’s cooperation in relatively short order.

In terms of acute threats, Iran is the only state that has exported terrorism and insurgency toward a strategic purpose, yet the country is economically fragile and politically unstable, with behind-the-scenes infighting that would make Washington partisans blanch. Even assuming Iran acquires a few nuclear devices—of uncertain quality with uncertain delivery systems—the long-term outlook for the clerical regime is itself unclear. The administration must only avoid a war with the Islamic Republic.

To be sure, America may be in decline in relative terms compared to some other powers, as well as to many countries of the former third world, but in absolute terms, particularly military ones, the United States can easily be the first among equals for decades hence.

China, India and Russia are the only major Eurasian states prepared to wield military power of consequence on their peripheries. And each, in turn, faces its own obstacles on the road to some degree of dominance.

The Chinese will have a great navy (assuming their economy does not implode) and that will enforce a certain level of bipolarity in the world system. But Beijing will lack the alliance network Washington has, even as China and Russia will always be—because of geography—inherently distrustful of one another. China has much influence, but no credible military allies beyond possibly North Korea, and its authoritarian regime lives in fear of internal disruption if its economic growth rate falters. Furthermore, Chinese naval planners look out from their coastline and see South Korea and a string of islands—Japan, Taiwan and Australia—that are American allies, as are, to a lesser degree, the Philippines, Vietnam and Thailand. To balance a rising China, Washington must only preserve its naval and air assets at their current levels.

India, which has its own internal insurgency, is bedeviled by semifailed states on its borders that critically sap energy and attention from its security establishment, and especially from its land forces; in any case, India has become a de facto ally of the United States whose very rise, in and of itself, helps to balance China.

Russia will be occupied for years regaining influence in its post-Soviet near abroad, particularly in Ukraine, whose feisty independence constitutes a fundamental challenge to the very idea of the Russian state. China checks Russia in Central Asia, as do Turkey, Iran and the West in the Caucasus. This is to say nothing of Russia’s diminishing population and overwhelming reliance on energy exports. Given the problems of these other states, America remains fortunate indeed.

The United States is poised to tread the path of postmutiny Britain. America might not be an empire in the formal sense, but its obligations and constellation of military bases worldwide put it in an imperial-like situation, particularly because its air and naval deployments will continue in a post-Iraq and post-Afghanistan world. No country is in such an enviable position to keep the relative peace in Eurasia as is the United States—especially if it can recover the level of enduring competence in national-security policy last seen during the administration of George H. W. Bush. This is no small point. America has strategic advantages and can enhance its power while extricating itself from war. But this requires leadership—not great and inspiring leadership which comes along rarely even in the healthiest of societies—but plodding competence, occasionally steely nerved and always free of illusion.

#### Competitiveness not key to heg

Brooks and Wohlforth, 8

[Stephen G. Brooks is Assistant Professor and William C. Wohlforth is Professor in the Department of Government at Dartmouth College, “World out of Balance, International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy,” p. 32-35]

 American primacy is also rooted in the county's position as the world's leading technological power. The United States remains dominant globally in overall R&D investments, high-technology production, commercial innovation, and higher education (table 2.3). Despite the weight of this evidence, elite perceptions of U.S. power had shifted toward pessimism by the middle of the first decade of this century. As we noted in chapter 1, this was partly the result of an Iraq-induced doubt about the utility of material predominance, a doubt redolent of the post-Vietnam mood. In retrospect, many assessments of U.S. economic and technological prowess from the 1990s were overly optimistic; by the next decade important potential vulnerabilities were evident. In particular, chronically imbalanced domestic finances and accelerating public debt convinced some analysts that the United States once again confronted a competitiveness crisis.23 If concerns continue to mount, this will count as the fourth such crisis since 1945; the first three occurred during the 1950s (Sputnik), the 1970s (Vietnam and stagflation), and the 1980s (the Soviet threat and Japan's challenge). None of these crises, however, shifted the international system's structure: multipolarity did not return in the 1960s, 1970s, or early 1990s, and each scare over competitiveness ended with the American position of primacy retained or strengthened.24

Our review of the evidence of U.S. predominance is not meant to suggest that the United States lacks vulnerabilities or causes for concern. In fact, it confronts a number of significant vulnerabilities; of course, this is also true of the other major powers.25 The point is that adverse trends for the United States will not cause a polarity shift in the near future. If we take a long view of U.S. competitiveness and the prospects for relative declines in economic and technological dominance, one takeaway stands out: relative power shifts slowly. The United States has accounted for a quarter to a third of global output for over a century. No other economy will match its combination of wealth, size, technological capacity, and productivity in the foreseeable future (tables 2.2 and 2.3).

The depth, scale, and projected longevity of the U.S. lead in each critical dimension of power are noteworthy. But what truly distinguishes the current distribution of capabilities is American dominance in all of them simultaneously. The chief lesson of Kennedy's 500-year survey of leading powers is that nothing remotely similar ever occurred in the historical experience that informs modern international relations theory. The implication is both simple and underappreciated: the counterbalancing constraint is inoperative and will remain so until the distribution of capabilities changes fundamentally. The next section explains why.

## 2

#### The thesis is wrong: the U.S. is not a model, and Germany has had feed-in tariffs for 20 years with no complaints or price increases

Stefes, associate professor of political science at the University of Colorado, 2011

(Christoph, http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2011/09/20/why-isnt-the-us-a-leader-in-green-technology/us-should-emulate-germanys-renewable-energy-model?pagewanted=all)

For now, the United States is a good example of how not to get there. While some states have set ambitious goals for the expansion of renewable energy, a concerted effort at the federal level is missing. Instead, the Obama administration has continued to rely on an already existing patchwork of tax breaks, loans and research and development spending that has done little to provide entrepreneurs with a nurturing investment environment. In a market that is so heavily tilted in favor of conventional energy sources, governments need to provide some reassurance to investors in green technology.

In contrast to the U.S., **Germany has for two decades relied on a comprehensive policy instrument to promote renewable energy**: **feed-in tariffs**. This model requires utilities to buy electricity from renewable energy operators at a fixed rate that is guaranteed for 20 years, providing entrepreneurs and banks with a stable investment environment. Since introduction of the first feed-in tariff in 1991, the share of renewables in the electricity sector has increased from less than 5 percent to about 20 percent, with 30 percent envisioned by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050. Renewable energy has thereby become a boom industry, employing around 300,000 workers today, with 500,000 expected by 2020. Utilities have passed on the extra costs to the end consumer. **Yet consumers’ electricity bills have increased by less than 5 percent because of these tariffs**, **and customers have had no major objections**.

German recession inevitable

BBC 10/11/12

BBC, October 11, 2012, "Germany 'risks entering recession' say think tanks", http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-19908664

A group of leading think tanks in Germany have cut growth forecasts for the country and warned of recession. The economic institutes said Europe's biggest economy would only grow 1% next year instead of the 2% they had been expecting six months ago. But this assumes that the crisis in the eurozone does not worsen. They also criticised the European Central Bank's latest initiative to ward off the crisis, saying its debt purchases risked fuelling inflation. Last month the ECB unveiled plans to buy up the government debts of struggling eurozone members, but only if those governments first signed up to a rescue package, including strict conditions on cutting their overspending and reforming their economies. "This process could be triggered by the ECB effectively providing monetary financing for states," according to the semi-annual report by the four think tanks, Ifo in Munich, IFW in Kiel, IWH in Halle and RWI in Essen. "Europe's citizens and players in the markets may lose trust in the ECB's ability to ensure long-term price stability as a result. "In the longer term there is a great danger that the ECB will continue to purchase bonds and provide excessive monetary policy stimulation even if states deviate from the adjustment programmes, which could drive up prices and lead to an increase in inflation expectations." Recession The four also cut their forecast for German growth this year to 0.8% from 0.9% previously. The eurozone's woes, coupled with a general slowdown in global growth, was hurting business confidence and investment in Germany, they said. This was despite the fact that German exports had continued to hold up, thanks in large part to the competitive price edge afforded to them by a weaker euro. Meanwhile in Greece unemployment has now risen to more than a quarter of the entire workforce "This assessment of the German economy is based on the assumption that the situation in the eurozone gradually stabilises over the forecasting period and that confidence, especially on the part of investors, is restored," the report warned. "Should the situation in the eurozone continue to deteriorate, this will also impact the German economy. Over the forecasting period as a whole the downside risks prevail and there is a great danger that Germany will fall into a recession." They said their baseline scenario was that unemployment in Germany would rise from its current 20-year low of 6.2% to 6.8% next year. The German government was forecast to almost balance its budget this year and next. Joblessness Germany is Europe's biggest single national economy, and until now has been faring far better than almost every other eurozone member. A German recession could sap business confidence across the eurozone even further, and would hit the other eurozone members more directly if their exports to Germany fell. Meanwhile, data from the rest of the eurozone continues to paint a grim picture. Everyone agrees that the biggest short-term uncertainties hanging over the global economy are US fiscal policy and the crisis in the eurozone” Consumer prices inflation in Spain rose to a 16-month high in September of 3.4%. High inflation is particularly unwelcome in a country that is already struggling with shrinking incomes and uncompetitively high wage costs within the eurozone. It will also make it even harder for the government to cut its overspending from 8.9% of Spanish economic output this year to 4.5% in 2013, as Spanish state pensions are indexed to the inflation rate. The data comes a day after Standard & Poor's joined fellow rating agency Moody's in cutting the Spanish government's credit rating to just one level above a "junk" rating - at which point many investors would have to reduce their holdings of Spanish government bonds. The downgrade is likely to be followed by similar ratings cuts for Spanish banks and companies in the coming days. Meanwhile in Greece, the unemployment rate rose above 25% for the first time in July, according to the Greek statistics office. The record 25.1% was up from 18% a year ago. The unemployment rate in Spain is also 25%. The poor state of the eurozone, along with the risk of massive automatic government spending cuts in the US early next year, prompted the IMF head Christine Lagarde to issue yet another warning about the state of the global economy earlier on Thursday. "Whether you turn to Europe, to the United States of America, to other places as well, there is a level of uncertainty that is hampering decision makers from investing, from creating jobs," she said during a press conference in Tokyo. "We need action to lift the veil of uncertainty."

#### Trade doesn’t solve war

Martin et. al. 8(Phillipe, University of Paris 1 Pantheon—Sorbonne, Paris School of Economics, and Centre for Economic Policy Research; Thierry MAYER, University of Paris 1 Pantheon—Sorbonne, Paris School of Economics, CEPII, and Centre for Economic Policy Research, Mathias THOENIG, University of Geneva and Paris School of Economics, The Review of Economic Studies 75)

Does globalization pacify international relations? The “liberal” view in political science argues that increasing trade flows and the spread of free markets and democracy should limit the incentive to use military force in interstate relations. This vision, which can partly be traced back to Kant’s Essay on Perpetual Peace (1795), has been very influential: The main objective of the European trade integration process was to prevent the killing and destruction of the two World Wars from ever happening again.1 Figure 1 suggests2 however, that during the 1870–2001 period, the correlation between trade openness and military conflicts is not a clear cut one. The first era of globalization, at the end of the 19th century, was a period of rising trade openness and multiple military conflicts, culminating with World War I. Then, the interwar period was characterized by a simultaneous collapse of world trade and conflicts. After World War II, world trade increased rapidly, while the number of conflicts decreased (although the risk of a global conflict was obviously high). There is no clear evidence that the 1990s, during which trade flows increased dramatically, was a period of lower prevalence of military conflicts, even taking into account the increase in the number of sovereign states.

No Europe war

Massie 12 (Allan Massie is a Scottish writer who has published nearly 30 books, including a sequence of novels set in ancient Rome. His non-fiction works range from a study of Byron's travels to a celebration of Scottish rugby. He has been a political columnist for The Scotsman, The Sunday Times and The Daily Telegraph and writes a literary column for The Spectator., 7/17/2012, "Nuclear Iran, revolution in Europe: it's fun to make your flesh creep, but Armageddon isn't really nigh", blogs.telegraph.co.uk/culture/allanmassie/100065078/nuclear-iran-revolution-in-europe-its-fun-to-make-your-flesh-creep-but-armageddon-isnt-really-nigh/)

Then we had our expert Finance blogger Thomas Pascoe in similar thank-God-it’s-Friday "I wants to make your flesh creep" Fat Boy mode. We are too complacent, he says. We are faced with “impending events that would have precipitated a revolution in almost any other place at almost any other time in history- either the collapse of the currency or the complete secession of budgetary control to a supra-natural body in the EU.” (When I read that I said “Golly”, until I realised that he probably meant to write supranational rather than supra-natural, delightfully flesh-creeping though the idea of a spectral supra-natural body taking control of national budgets may be.) Either of these may lead, he would have us think, to some form of fascist revolution. This is because in the nations enduring austerity, and indeed suffering from austerity, "the populations at large feel no culpability for the debts their leaders have amassed.” Well, I suppose he’s right there. How much culpability do you, dear reader, feel for the size of the UK’s national debt? Do you beat your breast moaning “I blame myself”, or wring your hands in shame? No? I thought not. So why should the Greeks, the Spaniards and the others “feel culpability”? In Fat Boy mode, Thomas Pascoe says that either the EU will take complete control of all national budgets or that countries will default on their debts. Either way, populist politicians will emerge to stir up the masses, and we’ll be back to the Thirties. “Europe,” it seems, “ is one demagogue away from causing an earthquake in global finance such that the current problems seem a tremor in comparison. If Silvio Berlusconi – the only truly populist politician the Continent has produced in half a century – had been twenty years younger, I fancy it might have been him…” Well, if the playboy “Mussolini in a blue blazer” is the nearest to a fascist demagogue you can come up with, there isn’t much to worry about. And indeed there isn’t, because politics now matters less than football and entertainment – both things which bind the young people of Europe together, and make revolutionary fervour somewhat unlikely. So, at the risk of being accused of complacency, I’ll suggest, first, that if a country was going to fall out of the euro, it would have done so by now; second, that the eurozone will muddle through, because the will to do so is there; and third, that while some supranational body charged with supervising national budgets will be set up, it will prove far less rigid and far more elastic in its exercise of control than many suppose or indeed hope or, alternatively, fear. This is because the EU remains a union of nation-states, and national governments will insist on retaining a great degree of autonomy. Flesh-creeping is fun and lively journalism, but Armageddon is not on the menu today, next week, next year, or in the next decade. We have come through worse and far more dangerous times, and goodwill and common sense will let us survive present difficulties and discontents. The notion that “we are one charismatic leader away from a complete reordering of the Continent” is Fat Boy stuff.

Warming won’t cause extinction

Barrett, professor of natural resource economics – Columbia University, ‘7

(Scott, Why Cooperate? The Incentive to Supply Global Public Goods, introduction)

First, climate change does not threaten the survival of the human species.5 If unchecked, it will cause other species to become extinction (though biodiversity is being depleted now due to other reasons). It will alter critical ecosystems (though this is also happening now, and for reasons unrelated to climate change). It will reduce land area as the seas rise, and in the process displace human populations. “Catastrophic” climate change is possible, but not certain. Moreover, and unlike an asteroid collision, large changes (such as sea level rise of, say, ten meters) will likely take centuries to unfold, giving societies time to adjust. “Abrupt” climate change is also possible, and will occur more rapidly, perhaps over a decade or two. However, abrupt climate change (such as a weakening in the North Atlantic circulation), though potentially very serious, is unlikely to be ruinous. Human-induced climate change is an experiment of planetary proportions, and we cannot be sur of its consequences. Even in a worse case scenario, however, global climate change is not the equivalent of the Earth being hit by mega-asteroid. Indeed, if it were as damaging as this, and if we were sure that it would be this harmful, then our incentive to address this threat would be overwhelming. The challenge would still be more difficult than asteroid defense, but we would have done much more about it by now.

No impact and collapse inevitable

**Leonard 12** (Mark Leonard is co-founder and director of the European Council on Foreign Relations, the first pan-European think tank., 7/24/2012, "The End of the Affair", www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/07/24/the\_end\_of\_the\_affair)

But Obama's stellar personal ratings in Europe hide the fact that the Western alliance has never loomed smaller in the imagination of policymakers on either side of the Atlantic. Seen from Washington, there is not a single problem in the world to be looked at primarily through a transatlantic prism. Although the administration looks first to Europeans as partners in any of its global endeavors -- from dealing with Iran's nuclear program to stopping genocide in Syria -- it no longer sees the European theater as its core problem or seeks a partnership of equals with Europeans. It was not until the eurozone looked like it might collapse -- threatening to bring down the global economy and with it Obama's chances of reelection -- that the president became truly interested in Europe. Conversely, Europeans have never cared less about what the United States thinks. Germany, traditionally among the most Atlanticist of European countries, has led the pack. Many German foreign-policy makers think it was simply a tactical error for Berlin to line up with Moscow and Beijing against Washington on Libya. But there is nothing accidental about the way Berlin has systematically refused even to engage with American concerns over German policy on the euro. During the Bush years, Europeans who were unable to influence the strategy of the White House would give a running commentary on American actions in lieu of a substantive policy. They had no influence in Washington, so they complained. But now, the tables are turned, with Obama passing continual judgment on German policy while Chancellor Angela Merkel stoically refuses to heed his advice. Europeans who for many years were infantilized by the transatlantic alliance, either using sycophancy and self-delusion about a "special relationship" to advance their goals or, in the case of Jacques Chirac's France, pursuing the even more futile goal of balancing American power, have finally come to realize that they can no longer outsource their security or their prosperity to Uncle Sam. On both sides of the Atlantic, the ties that held the alliance together are weakening. On the American side, Obama's biography links him to the Pacific and Africa but not to the old continent. His personal story echoes the demographic changes in the United States that have reduced the influence of Americans of European origin. Meanwhile, on the European side, the depth of the euro crisis has crowded out almost all foreign policy from the agenda of Europe's top decision-makers. The end of the Cold War means that Europeans no longer need American protection, and the U.S. financial crisis has led to a fall in American demand for European products (although U.S. exports to Europe are at an all-time high). What's more, Obama's lack of warmth has precluded him from establishing the sorts of human relationships with European leaders that animate alliances. When asked to name his closest allies, Obama mentions non-European leaders such as Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey and Lee Myung-bak of South Korea. And his transactional nature has led to a neglect of countries that he feels will not contribute more to the relationship -- within a year of being elected, Obama had managed to alienate the leaders of most of Europe's big states, from Gordon Brown to Nicolas Sarkozy to Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero. Americans hardly remember, but Europe's collective nose was put out of joint by Obama's refusal to make the trip to Europe for the 2010 EU-U.S. summit. More recently, Obama has reached out to allies to counteract the impression that the only way to get a friendly reception in Washington is to be a problem nation -- but far too late to erase the sense that Europe matters little to this American president. Underlying these superficial issues is a more fundamental divergence in the way Europe and the United States are coping with their respective declines. As the EU's role shrinks in the world, Europeans have sought to help build a multilateral, rule-based world. That is why it is they, rather than the Chinese or the Americans, that have pushed for the creation of institutionalized global responses to climate change, genocide, or various trade disputes. To the extent that today's world has not collapsed into the deadlocked chaos of a "G-zero," it is often due to European efforts to create a functioning institutional order. To Washington's eternal frustration, however, Europeans have not put their energies into becoming a full partner on global issues. For all the existential angst of the euro crisis, Europe is not as weak as people think it is. It still has the world's largest market and represents 17 percent of world trade, compared with 12 percent for the United States. Even in military terms, the EU is the world's No. 2 military power, with 21 percent of the world's military spending, versus 5 percent for China, 3 percent for Russia, 2 percent for India, and 1.5 percent for Brazil, according to Harvard scholar Joseph Nye. But, ironically for a people who have embraced multilateralism more than any other on Earth, Europeans have not pooled their impressive economic, political, and military resources. And with the eurozone's need to resolve the euro crisis, the EU may split into two or more tiers -- making concerted action even more difficult. As a result, European power is too diffuse to be much of a help or a hindrance on many issues. On the other hand, Obama's United States -- although equally committed to liberal values -- thinks that the best way to safeguard American interests and values is to craft a multipartner world. On the one hand, Obama continues to believe that he can transform rising powers by integrating them into existing institutions (despite much evidence to the contrary). On the other, he thinks that Europe's overrepresentation in existing institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund is a threat to the consolidation of that order. This is leading a declining America to increasingly turn against Europe on issues ranging from climate change to currencies. The most striking example came at the 2009 G-20 in Pittsburgh, when Obama worked together with the emerging powers to pressure Europeans to give up their voting power at the IMF. As Walter Russell Mead, the U.S. international relations scholar, has written, "[I]ncreasingly it will be in the American interest to help Asian powers rebalance the world power structure in ways that redistribute power from the former great powers of Europe to the rising great powers of Asia today." But the long-term consequence of the cooling of this unique alliance could be the hollowing out of the world order that the Atlantic powers have made. The big unwritten story of the last few decades is the way that a European-inspired liberal economic and political order has been crafted in the shell of the American security order. It is an order that limits the powers of states and markets and puts the protection of individuals at its core. If the United States was the sheriff of this order, the EU was its constitutional court. And now it is being challenged by the emerging powers. Countries like Brazil, China, and India are all relatively new states forged by movements of national liberation whose experience of globalization has been bound up with their new sense of nationhood. While globalization is destroying sovereignty for the West, these former colonies are enjoying it on a scale never experienced before. As a result, they are not about to invite their former colonial masters to interfere in their internal affairs. Just look at the dynamics of the United Nations Security Council on issues from Sudan to Syria. Even in the General Assembly, the balance of power is shifting: 10 years ago, China won 43 percent of the votes on human rights in the United Nations, far behind Europe's 78 percent. But in 2010-11, the EU won less than 50 percent to China's nearly 60 percent, according to research by the European Council on Foreign Relations. Rather than being transformed by global institutions, China's sophisticated multilateral diplomacy is changing the global order itself. As relative power flows Eastward, it is perhaps inevitable that the Western alliance that kept liberty's flame alight during the Cold War and then sought to construct a liberal order in its aftermath is fading fast. It was perhaps inevitable that both Europeans and Americans should fail to live up to each other's expectations of their respective roles in a post-Cold War world. After all, America is still too powerful to happily commit to a multilateral world order (as evidenced by Congress's reluctance to ratify treaties). And Europe is too physically safe to be willing to match U.S. defense spending or pool its resources. What is surprising is that the passing of this alliance has not been mourned by many on either side. The legacy of Barack Obama is that the transatlantic relationship is at its most harmonious and yet least relevant in 50 years. Ironically, it may take the election of someone who is less naturally popular on the European stage for both sides to wake up and realize just what is at stake.

#### Euro breakup inevitable – breakup now prevents economic catastrophe

Lynn, 11

[Matthew Lynn is chief executive of Strategy Economics, a London-based consultancy. His most recent book is ‘Bust: Greece, The Euro and The Sovereign Debt Crisis,’ published by Wiley,, “ Don’t clamor for a euro rescue; demand a breakup,” 10/5/2011, <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/dont-clamor-for-a-euro-rescue-demand-a-breakup-2011-10-05>]

In fact, the markets should be saying something completely different. They should be clamouring for the euro to be broken-up not bailed-out. Why? Because, right now, every step simply makes the situation worse. There is no fix to the single currency that is going to make it work better. But there is a choice between an orderly, planned break-up, and a chaotic, catastrophic collapse – and it is not very hard to work out which of those two options is preferable. By clamouring for more bail-outs, the financial markets are guilty of prolonging the crisis. The markets this week opened, as they do most weeks, with Greece top of the agenda. Its government admitted that it won’t make its deficit reduction target either this year or next. It will push through yet another round of spending cuts to persuade the International Monetary Fund and the European Union it is serious enough about cutting spending for it to be given the next round of bail-out money. Whether it gets the cash remains to be seen. In the meantime, the markets remain jittery, unsure whether Greece will default this week, next week, or somehow stagger through to 2012. It is crazy. The global economy can’t handle this level of uncertainty. True, Greece will probably get the next slug of bail-out money. When it happens, everyone will breathe a sigh of relief, and the markets will steady. Then, about five minutes later, everyone will start worrying about what happens in three months time when Greece needs yet another round of emergency funding. After all, it still won’t be meeting its deficit targets, because each time it cuts spending, the economy shrinks, tax revenues collapse, and the deficit gets bigger, not smaller. So in a couple of month’s time, everyone will be back precisely where they started, except that the markets will be lower, and the Greeks a bit poorer. Why do the markets keep demanding that? A permanent fiscal union, something else the markets keep ‘asking for’, won’t be any better. It will simply lead to non-stop squabbling among the euro-zone countries over who pays for what. There will be constant revolts by populist politicians threatening to break the system up. The countries making the fiscal transfers will be endlessly complaining that it is too much: the countries receiving the money that it is too little. Does that sound like a recipe for stability? Not really. How about more ‘firepower’, for the European Financial Stability Fund, the organisation that is meant to bail-out the bankrupt euro members. It needs two trillion euros, we keep being told. It should leverage itself up, or turn itself into a bank, so that it can swap lots of pieces of paper with other banks. That is the most desperate solution of all. It will simply introduce a lot more funny-looking paper into the system – and we all know where that leads. What nobody in the markets ever demands is an orderly break-up of the euro, even though it is relatively simple. Just run through the numbers. The EU has already agreed a 440-billion euro rescue fund. Greece’s outstanding debts are about 250 billion euros. The entire amount could be re-paid in full from the fund, Greece could leave the euro, and it could be given another 200 to 300 billion euros to recapitalise its banks, and tide its economy through a difficult period. None of the banks or bondholders would lose any money, so there would be no threat of a banking collapse. The Greek economy would have a chance to steady itself, and with a new, heavily devalued drachma could start to grow again. Portugal and perhaps Italy and Spain could be ushered out of the single currency at the same time if necessary, with their debts written off as well. The remaining core members of the euro could start to thrive again. Sure, it would be expensive. But the policies the EU is following right now are expensive as well. The choice is between expensive and working, and expensive and not working. More bail-outs, a fiscal union and more firepower for the EFSF simply perpetuate the chaos. That comes at high price. It is impossible for investors or companies to plan sensibly when the world’s second biggest currency is constantly teetering on the edge of collapse. Who would want to build a factory in Italy when they don’t know what they currency will be in five years time? Who would want to deposit money in a Spanish bank? Uncertainty hits confidence, and confidence impacts on growth. The euro has become the main source of uncertainty in the global economy. The markets should be clamouring for the single currency to be taken apart in an orderly way – not demanding that it be allowed to carry on. You never know. If everyone started asking for it, it might actually happen.

# 2NC

## Status Quo Solves – 2NC

#### There’s no impact to delay – investments will take a while, even with the plan—

Konrad, PhD, CFA, financial analyst and portfolio manager, 10/21/2012

(Tom, “Why Solar REITs Are A Better Way To Invest In Solar,” http://seekingalpha.com/article/937181-why-solar-reits-are-a-better-way-to-invest-in-solar)

**Even if there is a favorable ruling**, **it may take a while for the first REITs dedicated to solar to emerge**. The first movers are most likely to be traditional REITs that are already thinking about renewable energy investments.

A few REITs have dabbled with solar already as a revenue enhancement. IRS rules allow them to generate up to 25% of their income from sources other than real property, and this allows some scope for solar on REIT-owned buildings, for instance. Some solar developers are even specifically targeting the traditional REIT market. However, few REITs are likely to use this option to obtain more than a few percent of their income from solar because " the IRS tends to be very wary of anything that doesn't smell right in the context of REITs" and " leads to wariness and conservatism by many REIT managers," according to Sturtevant. **REIT managers generally feel that a little extra revenue is not worth risking greater IRS scrutiny**.

#### THEIR DISTINCTIONS ALL WRONG—HERE ARE ALL 3 CARDS

Konrad, 12 – Forbes contributor

(Tom, editor of Alt Energy Stocks, private money manager and writer focused on energy issues, "Solar REITs: A Better Way to Invest in Solar," Forbes, 10-9-12, www.forbes.com/sites/tomkonrad/2012/10/09/solar-reits-a-better-way-to-invest-in-solar/print/, accessed 10-14-12, mss)

UPDATE: The Renewable Energy Trust Capital, Inc., a San Francisco, CA based mission-driven company founded in 2011 to “facilitate the transition to a clean and sustainable economy” apparently already has ruling request “on file with the IRS.” I’m seeking an interview with RET to determine if this is a request for a private-letter ruling (most likely since this is not a government entity) and when the request was filed. 10/12: I’ve published an article about Renewable Energy Trust’s request based on my interview here.

Konrad, 12 – Forbes contributor

(Tom, editor of Alt Energy Stocks, private money manager and writer focused on energy issues, "Solar REITs: A Better Way to Invest in Solar," Forbes, 10-9-12, www.forbes.com/sites/tomkonrad/2012/10/09/solar-reits-a-better-way-to-invest-in-solar/print/, accessed 10-14-12, mss)

Sturtevant says that an IRS ruling might take the form of a “**private** letter ruling” or through a “**revenue** ruling.” The IRS grants a private letter ruling in response to a taxpayer asking for clarification on an aspect of the tax code applies to them**.** A private letter ruling does not have broad applicability**,** in that it is only binding on the requesting taxpayer and the IRS. However, private letter rulings “often end up having some trickle-down influence on business decisions as they are generally accessible to tax lawyers and accountants.” A revenue ruling is ”often issued at the prompting of a government official. To the extent that an issue might be a close call, **it is better for the request for clarification to come from within the government** as there is a better chance of obtaining a favorable (from the perspective of the requestor) outcome.”

Konrad, 10-12 – Forbes contributor

(Tom, editor of Alt Energy Stocks, private money manager and writer focused on energy issues, "Solar REITs: A Better Way to Invest in Solar," Forbes, 10-12-12, www.forbes.com/sites/tomkonrad/2012/10/12/irs-to-rule-on-status-of-solar-pv-owned-by-reits/, accessed 10-14-12, mss)

The biggest open question in my article Solar REITs: A Better Way to Invest in Solar was, when will we have a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)? In particular, Will solar photovoltaics (PV) be considered real property for purposes of Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) ownership? Will revenue from power purchase agreements (PPAs) with utilities be considered rents? These are both important, because in order to qualify for their special tax status, REITs must receive 75% of its gross income from IRS-defined “rents” on “real property.” The IRS has substantial leeway to determine what qualifies as both “rent” ans as “real property,” hence the need for a ruling to clarify matters. As I discussed, the IRS issues rulings in response to either a taxpayer request (this is a “private letter ruling”) or in response to a request from a government official (a “revenue ruling.”) My sources told me that a revenue ruling is generally considered preferable because the chances of an outcome that would allow REITs more freedom to own and derive revenue from PV are higher if there is a government official behind the request. A revenue ruling also has the advantage that it is immediately applicable to all taxpayers, while a private letter ruling is only binding on the requesting taxpayer and the IRS. In practice, however, private letter rulings set precedents which other taxpayers and tax attorneys can reasonably expect to have broader application. When I wrote the article, I knew there were rumors that a revenue ruling might be requested soon, but not if any taxpayers had yet requested private letter rulings. Private letter rulings are, after all, private between the taxpayer and the IRS. The only way to learn about a taxpayer’s request is if the taxpayer makes it public.

#### History proves IRS will say yes

Meehan, writer for Clean Energy Authority, 10/7/2012

(Chris, “Renewable Energy Trust projects REITs could reduce solar financing by 20 percent,” http://www.cleanenergyauthority.com/solar-energy-news/reits-could-reduce-solar-financing-100712)

Creating the class will depend on a number of things, like regulatory approval, which the company already is seeking. “We have on file a ruling request with the IRS—the IRS response will determine the extent to which REITs can be applied to the solar sector,” said RET CFO Christian Fong. “**Historically**, **the IRS has allowed REITs to be applied to several other real-estate-dependent asset classes** over the years. We eagerly await the IRS’s decision,” she said.

[RET = Renewable Energy Trust Capital]

## 2nc no impact

#### Their laundry list of vague impacts is academic junk – conflicts can’t just emerge

Fettweis, 11

Christopher J. Fettweis, Department of Political Science, Tulane University, 9/26/11, Free Riding or Restraint? Examining European Grand Strategy, Comparative Strategy, 30:316–332, EBSCO

Assertions that without the combination of U.S. capabilities, presence and commitments instability would return to Europe and the Pacific Rim are usually rendered in rather vague language. If the United States were to decrease its commitments abroad, argued Robert Art, “the world will become a more dangerous place and, sooner or later, that will redound to America’s detriment.”53 From where would this danger arise? Who precisely would do the fighting, and over what issues? Without the United States, would Europe really descend into Hobbesian anarchy? Would the Japanese attack mainland China again, to see if they could fare better this time around? Would the Germans and French have another go at it? In other words, where exactly is hegemony is keeping the peace? With one exception, these questions are rarely addressed.

That exception is in the Pacific Rim. Some analysts fear that a de facto surrender of U.S. hegemony would lead to a rise of Chinese influence. Bradley Thayer worries that Chinese would become “the language of diplomacy, trade and commerce, transportation and navigation, the internet, world sport, and global culture,” and that Beijing would come to “dominate science and technology, in all its forms” to the extent that soon the world would witness a Chinese astronaut who not only travels to the Moon, but “plants the communist flag on Mars, and perhaps other planets in the future.”54 Indeed China is the only other major power that has increased its military spending since the end of the Cold War, even if it still is only about 2 percent of its GDP. Such levels of effort do not suggest a desire to compete with, much less supplant, the United States. The much-ballyhooed, decade-long military buildup has brought Chinese spending up to somewhere between one-tenth and one-fifth of the U.S. level. It is hardly clear that a restrained United States would invite Chinese regional, must less global, political expansion. Fortunately one need not ponder for too long the horrible specter of a red flag on Venus, since on the planet Earth, where war is no longer the dominant form of conflict resolution, the threats posed by even a rising China would not be terribly dire. The dangers contained in the terrestrial security environment are less severe than ever before.

Believers in the pacifying power of hegemony ought to keep in mind a rather basic tenet: When it comes to policymaking, specific threats are more significant than vague, unnamed dangers. Without specific risks, it is just as plausible to interpret U.S. presence as redundant, as overseeing a peace that has already arrived. Strategy should not be based upon vague images emerging from the dark reaches of the neoconservative imagination.

Overestimating Our Importance

One of the most basic insights of cognitive psychology provides the final reason to doubt the power of hegemonic stability: Rarely are our actions as consequential upon their behavior as we perceive them to be. A great deal of experimental evidence exists to support the notion that people (and therefore states) tend to overrate the degree to which their behavior is responsible for the actions of others. Robert Jervis has argued that two processes account for this overestimation, both of which would seem to be especially relevant in the U.S. case.55 First, believing that we are responsible for their actions gratifies our national ego (which is not small to begin with; the United States is exceptional in its exceptionalism). The hubris of the United States, long appreciated and noted, has only grown with the collapse of the Soviet Union.56 U.S. policymakers famously have comparatively little knowledge of—or interest in—events that occur outside of their own borders. If there is any state vulnerable to the overestimation of its importance due to the fundamental misunderstanding of the motivation of others, it would have to be the United States. Second, policymakers in the United States are far more familiar with our actions than they are with the decision-making processes of our allies. Try as we might, it is not possible to fully understand the threats, challenges, and opportunities that our allies see from their perspective. The European great powers have domestic politics as complex as ours, and they also have competent, capable strategists to chart their way forward. They react to many international forces, of which U.S. behavior is only one. Therefore, for any actor trying to make sense of the action of others, Jervis notes, “in the absence of strong evidence to the contrary, the most obvious and parsimonious explanation is that he was responsible.”57

It is natural, therefore, for U.S. policymakers and strategists to believe that the behavior of our allies (and rivals) is shaped largely by what Washington does. Presumably Americans are at least as susceptible to the overestimation of their ability as any other people, and perhaps more so. At the very least, political psychologists tell us, we are probably not as important to them as we think. The importance of U.S. hegemony in contributing to international stability is therefore almost certainly overrated.

In the end, one can never be sure why our major allies have not gone to, and do not even plan for, war. Like deterrence, the hegemonic stability theory rests on faith; it can only be falsified, never proven. It does not seem likely, however, that hegemony could fully account for twenty years of strategic decisions made in allied capitals if the international system were not already a remarkably peaceful place. Perhaps these states have no intention of fighting one another to begin with, and our commitments are redundant. European great powers may well have chosen strategic restraint because they feel that their security is all but assured, with or without the United States.

## impacts

#### Trade will never collapse

Ikenson, 9

[Daniel, associate director of the Center for Trade Policy Studies at the Cato Institute, “ A Protectionism Fling: Why Tariff Hikes and Other Trade Barriers Will Be Short-Lived,” March 12, 2009, http://www.cato.org/pub\_display.php?pub\_id=10651]

Although some governments will dabble in some degree of protectionism, the combination of a sturdy rules-based system of trade and the economic self interest in being open to participation in the global economy will limit the risk of a protectionist pandemic. According to recent estimates from the International Food Policy Research Institute, if all WTO members were to raise all of their applied tariffs to the maximum bound rates, the average global rate of duty would double and the value of global trade would decline by 7.7 percent over five years.8 That would be a substantial decline relative to the 5.5 percent annual rate of trade growth experienced this decade.9

But, to put that 7.7 percent decline in historical perspective, the value of global trade declined by 66 percent between 1929 and 1934, a period mostly in the wake of Smoot Hawley's passage in 1930.10 So the potential downside today from what Bergsten calls "legal protectionism" is actually not that "massive," even if all WTO members raised all of their tariffs to the highest permissible rates.

If most developing countries raised their tariffs to their bound rates, there would be an adverse impact on the countries that raise barriers and on their most important trade partners. But most developing countries that have room to backslide (i.e., not China) are not major importers, and thus the impact on global trade flows would not be that significant. OECD countries and China account for the top twothirds of global import value.11 Backsliding from India, Indonesia, and Argentina (who collectively account for 2.4 percent of global imports) is not going to be the spark that ignites a global trade war. Nevertheless, governments are keenly aware of the events that transpired in the 1930s, and have made various pledges to avoid protectionist measures in combating the current economic situation.

In the United States, after President Obama publicly registered his concern that the "Buy American" provision in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act might be perceived as protectionist or could incite a trade war, Congress agreed to revise the legislation to stipulate that the Buy American provision "be applied in a manner consistent with United States obligations under international agreements." In early February, China's vice commerce minister, Jiang Zengwei, announced that China would not include "Buy China" provisions in its own $586 billion stimulus bill.12

But even more promising than pledges to avoid trade provocations are actions taken to reduce existing trade barriers. In an effort to "reduce business operating costs, attract and retain foreign investment, raise business productivity, and provide consumers a greater variety and better quality of goods and services at competitive prices," the Mexican government initiated a plan in January to unilaterally reduce tariffs on about 70 percent of the items on its tariff schedule. Those 8,000 items, comprising 20 different industrial sectors, accounted for about half of all Mexican import value in 2007. When the final phase of the plan is implemented on January 1, 2013, the average industrial tariff rate in Mexico will have fallen from 10.4 percent to 4.3 percent.13

And Mexico is not alone. In February, the Brazilian government suspended tariffs entirely on some capital goods imports and reduced to 2 percent duties on a wide variety of machinery and other capital equipment, and on communications and information technology products.14 That decision came on the heels of late-January decision in Brazil to scrap plans for an import licensing program that would have affected 60 percent of the county's imports.15

Meanwhile, on February 27, a new free trade agreement was signed between Australia, New Zealand, and the 10 member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to reduce and ultimately eliminate tariffs on 96 percent of all goods by 2020.

While the media and members of the trade policy community fixate on how various protectionist measures around the world might foreshadow a plunge into the abyss, there is plenty of evidence that governments remain interested in removing barriers to trade. Despite the occasional temptation to indulge discredited policies, there is a growing body of institutional knowledge that when people are free to engage in commerce with one another as they choose, regardless of the nationality or location of the other parties, they can leverage that freedom to accomplish economic outcomes far more impressive than when governments attempt to limit choices through policy constraints.

## at: fiscal union

#### No chance of a fiscal union

Heffer, 10/9/11

Simon Heffer, Daily Mail, 10/9/11, Has Germany got the guts to save the euro?, [www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2059413/Eurozone-debt-crisis-Has-Germany-got-guts-save-euro.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2059413/Eurozone-debt-crisis-Has-Germany-got-guts-save-euro.html)

The recent talk of a fiscal union – an arrangement whereby all countries in the euro had the same tax and spend policies – has died down. This is partly because Germans, who would have led such a union, have belatedly realised how few members of the 17-strong eurozone are actually in a position to follow them into one. A fiscal union is the only other means of shoring up the euro in a way that will give long-term satisfaction to the bond and currency markets. It would be the essential precursor to the creation of a common European bond, to sell debt on behalf of all the member countries of such a union. The yields on those bonds would be substantially lower than what the Italians are now having to pay, precisely because the risk attached to them would be so low. Yet a fiscal union that included perhaps only five or six of the eurozone’s truly sound economies would create not just a two-speed Europe, but a three-speed one – those in the union, those out of it but sharing a new single currency, and those, like Britain, in the EU but not part of a currency block. And that, too, upsets the Germans, who see all such things as a threat to long-term European unity. But the two contradictory German positions – in favour of holding back inflation, but in favour of maintaining the euro – cannot hold. The loose economic policies of the member states of the eurozone blow them apart. And since fiscal union is impossible, that brings us back to the ECB option.

#### Impossible – no compliance

Kay, 11

[John, After a period of study and teaching at Oxford University, I became Director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, where I established it as one of Britain’s most respected think tanks. I then shifted emphasis from public finance to business economics, taking a chair at the London Business School and establishing an economic consultancy, London Economics, which grew rapidly and provided a platform from which I gained experience both of running a small business and of the activities of large business: experience enhanced by non-executive roles in several companies and assignments for a variety of governments. In 1996 I was attracted to the idea of establishing a business school at Oxford University and spent three – not entirely happy – years as founding Director of the Said Business School, “Taverna talk of fiscal union will remain just that,” 12/14/2011, Financial Times, <http://www.johnkay.com/2011/12/14/taverna-talk-of-fiscal-union-will-remain-just-that>]

When people talk about fiscal union in Europe – and today they talk of little else in the bierkellers and tavernas – they do not really mean fiscal union. The Dutch and the Austrians will not be persuaded any time soon to merge their tax structures and authorities with those of Greece and Italy. Nor does anyone expect them to adopt common benefit levels or health systems. “Fiscal union ” means common rules for budgetary discipline across the eurozone. Formal constraints on state budgets have been adopted widely. The modern debate began with the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act, which Congress approved in 1985. The legislation required that the US federal budget be balanced annually, and imposed automatic expenditure cuts if this aspiration was not fulfilled. The Act had no effect on the behaviour of the US government, which continued to run large deficits. In 2002, Dick Cheney famously summarised the experience when he said that Reagan proved that deficits don’t matter. A range of devices achieved technical compliance with the legislation. These devices continue to prove useful, most recently in enabling the US government to keep functioning during the debt ceiling discussions. The federal budget did finally move into surplus in the late 1990s, the result of economic growth rather than legal obligation. There is, perhaps, a lesson there. As Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown introduced two principles to British public finance. Debt should not exceed 40 per cent of gross domestic product. Much effort was then devoted to ensuring that public investment was taken off balance sheet. Current revenues and receipts should match over an economic cycle. Like the new European Union agreement, this was an attempt to reconcile prudence with policies to sustain growth, by focusing on avoiding a structural deficit. When the long economic cycle seemed to approach its end, it was successively redefined so Mr Brown could assert his obligations had been met. When the credit crunch hit in 2008 and meeting the targets was clearly impossible, they were abandoned without further ado. Britain and the US lead the world in accountancy, both conscientious and creative. They have an independent judiciary, honest statistical services and relatively honest politicians. But they have been unable to enforce self-imposed rules of budgetary discipline. We are now asked to believe that countries with weaker political structures will reliably implement budgetary disciplines imposed from outside. They might if there were powerful sanctions. The International Monetary Fund has enjoyed some success in making borrowers bend to its will. But the IMF is backed by the world’s governments, and run by technicians whose advancement depends, not on the applause of an electorate, but on the approval of their colleagues. The IMF can walk away from clients by withholding funds, and this threat is credible. On many occasions, though perhaps not sufficiently many, it has let backsliders flounder. The EU, however, is managed by squabbling politicians with diverse interests. The purpose of the planned mechanisms is to avoid a break-up of the eurozone and the measures will fail in their purpose if they do not offer a reassurance that no member will be allowed to fail. But the necessary consequence of providing that reassurance is that Europe loses its only effective leverage against recalcitrant members. After all, rules for imposing budgetary discipline across the EU already exist. The Maastricht criteria require that member states must hold deficits below 3 per cent of GDP and borrowings below 60 per cent of national income. At my last count, this requirement was met in three states among the eurozone’s 17 members – Estonia, Finland and Luxembourg. The sanctions permitted by the treaties have never been enforced and you would have been naive to have imagined otherwise. Financial markets are an effective discipline on profligate individuals and states because markets cannot easily be bullied or lobbied, and their threat to make the cost of funds prohibitive is effective. Fiscal rules have none of these advantages, however ingenious their construction and however lofty the political rhetoric that accompanies them. To fail to recognise these facts is to ignore the repeated lessons of recent history.

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## 2nc impact ov

#### The system kills agency and value to life

Giroux 11

Henry A. Giroux English and Cultural Studies Department, McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada, 2011 "Neoliberalism and the death of the social state: remembering Walter Benjamin's Angel of History," Social Identities, Vol. 17, No. 4, July 2011, 587-601

As history is erased and economics becomes the driving force for all aspects of political, cultural, and social life, those institutional and political forces that hold the reins of power now become the purveyors of social death, comfortably ensconced in a political imaginary that wreaks human misery on the planet as the rich and powerful reap huge financial gains for themselves. The principal players of casino capitalism live in the highly circumscribed time of short-term investments and financial gains and are more than willing to close their eyes to the carnage and suffering all around them while they are sucked into the black hole of the future. As the social state is eviscerated by an all-embracing market fundamentalism, society increasingly becomes a machine for destroying the power of civic culture and civic life, proliferating the ideologies and technologies of what is increasingly and unequivocally becoming a punishing state. And, quoting Achille Mbembe (2003), politics becomes a form of social death in which 'the future is collapsed into the present' (p. 37).

#### Tax credits get coopted by unsustainable speculation—collapses the industry

Green 9

Joshua Green, The Atlantic, 2009, The Elusive Green Economy, [www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2009/07/the-elusive-green-economy/307554/](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2009/07/the-elusive-green-economy/307554/)

The trouble with tax credits is that in order to make use of them, you must owe taxes, and most start-ups struggling toward profitability do not. So while a company looking to build a wind or solar facility would qualify for valuable benefits, it had no means of realizing this “tax equity.” The work-around was to partner with someone who did, someone large enough to finance a $500 million facility and profitable enough to incur a large tax bill. Having witnessed two decades of busts and bankruptcies, traditional U.S. banks wanted no part of this. European banks, going by their more positive experience, were comfortable funding large renewable projects, but didn’t qualify for U.S. tax credits. The perversity of the government’s incentives demanded a big balance sheet, huge profits, and an indifference to risk. Enter Wall Street.

Investment banks and hedge funds stepped in to fill the void, engineering tax-equity vehicles with suspiciously complicated-sounding names, like “partnership flip structure” and “inverted passthrough lease,” to exploit the tax benefits. These deals amounted to financing agreements for large infrastructure projects, given in exchange for tax credits, often worth hundreds of millions of dollars, that could be applied against profits earned primarily on other investments (like mortgage-backed securities). For renewable-energy companies, tax-equity deals meant life or death: the combination of credits could offset two-thirds of the capital cost of a project. Companies like Lehman Brothers, Wachovia, and AIG became an integral part—even the integral part—of the renewables industry, because the utility-scale projects they financed produce the overwhelming majority of clean energy in the United States.

Basing the entire system of federal incentives on tax equity had two weaknesses, one that has always been clear and another that became clear only recently. Forcing renewables companies to route government support through Wall Street, thereby sacrificing a portion of it, was needless and inefficient. But it also tied the industry’s fate to that of the financial world’s most aggressive players. Just as Wall Street bankers bet that housing prices could never fall and got wiped out when proved wrong, Congress seems never to have imagined that Wall Street might someday have no profits and need no tax equity. Early last year, the multibillion-dollar tax-equity universe consisted of 18 providers. After September’s record carnage, the number dropped to four. Credit froze, and most projects ground to a halt. All of a sudden, not just a few start-ups but the entire renewable-energy industry was staring into the Valley of Death.

## 2nc unsustainable

#### EKC wrong

#### Indirect rebounds

Blackwater 12

<http://monthlyreview.org/2012/06/01/the-denialism-of-progressive-environmentalists>

Bill Blackwater is a freelance writer and journalist living in London. He is an associate editor of the quarterly Renewal: A Journal of Social Democracy and author of the blog We Are All Wotan.

Next they consider “indirect rebound.” A major element of this comes from the embodied energy in materials used to improve energy efficiency; double-glazed windows are a classic example. They conclude, from the embodied energy effect alone, that there are rebounds of 1–15 percent from energy-efficient new buildings. This rebound also comes in the form of capital equipment which is used to increase energy efficiency in industrial production. Rebounds increase as firms pursue incremental efficiency improvements over time, suggesting diminishing returns; this, in turn, undermines the optimistic suggestion that technological progress will be able to deliver greater and greater energy savings into the future. There is also the “respending effect,” whereby consumers spend the savings they make from lower energy costs on other goods and services, in turn boosting their production and the amount of energy embodied in them.

#### Militarism, ecology, and unemployment—past fixes won’t work because FINANCIALIZATION changed the game

Meszaros 12

<http://monthlyreview.org/2012/03/01/structural-crisis-needs-structural-change>

István Mészáros (born December 19, 1930) is a Hungarian Marxist philosopher, and Professor Emeritus at the University of Sussex. He held the Chair of Philosophy at Sussex for fifteen years and was earlier Professor of Philosophy and Social Science for four years at York University.

For a start, to talk about “advanced capitalism”—when the capital system as a mode of social metabolic reproduction finds itself in its descending phase of historical development, and therefore is only capitalistically advanced but in no other sense at all, thereby capable of sustaining itself only in an ever more destructive and therefore ultimately also self-destructive way—is extremely problematical. Another assertion: the characterization of the overwhelming majority of humankind—in the category of poverty, including the “blacks and the immigrants,” the “elderly,” and, “on the global scale, the third world”—as belonging to the “marginal zones” (in affinity with Marcuse’s “outsiders”), is no less untenable. For in reality it is the “advanced capitalist world” that constitutes the long term totally unsustainable privileged margin of the overall system, with its ruthless “elementary need-denial” to the greater part of the world, and not what is described by Sartre in his Manifesto interview as the “marginal zones.” Even with regard to the United States of America the margin of poverty is greatly underrated, at merely 15 percent. Besides, the characterization of the workers’ motor cars as nothing more than purely “artificial needs” which “only serve profit” could not be more one-sided. For, in contrast to many intellectuals, not even the relatively well-off particular workers, let alone the members of the class of labor as a whole, have the luxury of finding their place of work next door to their bedroom. At the same time, on the side of the astonishing omissions, some of the gravest structural contradictions and failures are missing from Sartre’s depiction of “advanced capitalism,” virtually emptying the whole concept of meaning. In this sense one of the most important substantive needs without which no society—past, present, or future—could survive, is the need for work. Both for the productively active individuals—embracing all of them in a fully emancipated social order—and for society in general in its historically sustainable relationship to nature. The necessary failure to solve this fundamental structural problem, affecting all categories of work not only in the “third world” but even in the most privileged countries of “advanced capitalism,” with its perilously rising unemployment, constitutes one of the absolute limits of the capital system in its entirety. Another grave problem which underscores the present and future historical unviability of capital is the calamitous shift toward the parasitic sectors of the economy—like the crisis-producing adventurist speculation which plagues (as a matter of objective necessity, often misrepresented as systemically irrelevant personal failure) the financial sector and the institutionalized/legally buttressed fraudulence closely associated with it—in contradistinction to the productive branches of socioeconomic life required for the satisfaction of genuine human need. This is a shift that stands in menacingly sharp contrast to the ascending phase of capital’s historic development, when the prodigious systemic expansionary dynamism (including the industrial revolution) was overwhelmingly due to socially viable and further enhanceable productive achievements. We have to add to all this the massively wasteful economic burdens imposed on society in an authoritarian way by the state and the military/industrial complex—with the permanent arms industry and the corresponding wars—as an integral part of the perverse “economic growth” of “advanced organized capitalism.” And to mention just one more of the catastrophic implications of “advanced” capital’s systemic development, we must bear in mind the prohibitively wasteful global ecological encroachment of our no longer tenable mode of social metabolic reproduction on the finite planetary world,7 with its rapacious exploitation of the non-renewable material resources and the increasingly more dangerous destruction of nature. Saying this is not “being wise after the event.” I wrote in the same period when Sartre gave his Manifesto interview that: Another basic contradiction of the capitalist system of control is that it cannot separate “advance” from destruction, nor “progress” from waste—however catastrophic the results. The more it unlocks the powers of productivity, the more it must unleash the powers of destruction; and the more it extends the volume of production, the more it must bury everything under mountains of suffocating waste. The concept of economy is radically incompatible with the “economy” of capital production which, of necessity, adds insult to injury by first using up with rapacious wastefulness the limited resources of our planet, and then further aggravates the outcome by polluting and poisoning the human environment with its mass-produced waste and effluence.8

#### Delay makes the crisis worse

Smith 8

PhD Johns Hopkins 1982; Dist Prof) Political economy, urban social theory, space, nature-culture, history and theory of geography (nsmith@gc.cuny.edu) Prof. SmithNeil Smith was trained as a geographer and his research explores the broad intersection between space, nature, social theory and history. He teaches in urban anthropology, cultural anthropology and environmental anthropology, and directs the Center for Place Culture and Politics. His environmental work is largely theoretical, focusing on questions of the production of nature. His urban interests include long term research on gentrification, including empirical work in North America and Europe and a series of theoretical papers emphasizing the importance of patterns of investment and disinvestment in the the real estate market. He also writes more broadly on New York City, focusing especially on the "revanchist city" which has filled the vacuum left in the wake of liberal urban theory.

Jlirgen Habermas once observed that modernism was "dominant but dead." The same may be true in economic terms with the Iraq war marking the failed "endgame of globalization." Following the battle of Seattle in 1999 and subsequent anti-globalization and anti-capitalist protests, which helped establish extraordinary repressive reaction by the state as normal, and following the economic stagnation and recession some years later, neoliberalism ceased to be the source of significant social change. At best, the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century has seen the filling in of established neoliberal political and geographical terrains; less charitably, the period marked a crisis of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism has run out of what George Bush Sr. in the 1980s called "the vision thing." Per Habermas, neoliberalism may now be dominant but dead. A neoliberalism in crisis will not bring an end to uneven development but its opposite, an intensification. As Marx long ago observed, capitalism is marvelously resourceful at transforming itself in the face of crisis, and it has to be said that since the 1970s it is capitalism and not its opponents who have had the overwhelming initiative. That may no longer be true. Future patterns and experiences of uneven development very much depend on the extent to which an opposition to capitalism can develop its own version of the "vision thing." Yet in many parts of the world, we seem today to be unable to conceive of social revolt and the possibilities it might bring. As Donna Haraway, one of our most creative thinkers, once admitted to an audibly stunned audience in the mid-1990s: "If I had to be honest with myself, I have lost the ability to think of what a world beyond capitalism would look like." She was only voicing what has become a broad if implicit loss of political imagination in many of us. For better or worse, revolutions are the constant contrapuntal moments of history. We celebrate them when they bring a better world for us and excoriate them when they oppose what we take to be our interests or beliefs. One of the stunning things about the present is the extent to which the prospect and affect of revolutionary social change have been blanked from the imaginary of political possibility. It may not be too optimistic to begin again to encourage a revolutionary imaginary.

## 2nc link –

#### The plan is Reagonomics – the last experiment with REITs created massive overbuilding until the bubble burst – this turns the entire aff

Weber, Urban Planning and Policy, University of Illinois at Chicago, 2002

(Rachel, “Extracting Value from the City: Neoliberalism and Urban Redevelopment,” http://jft-newspaper.aub.edu.lb/reserve/data/soan238-cn-3/week-3\_weber\_extracting\_value.pdf)

Since the 1970s, capital deployment and turnover times have sped up, as have flows of information and signs in general (Lash and Urry 1987; Virillio 1986). On the supply side, in order to attract capital looking for large, liquid trading markets, the commodity of real estate has become progressively dematerialized and deterritorialized. **Real estate has lost its status as a distinct and quirky asset class**, **in the process becoming more detached from place and more subject to the disciplining power and accelerated schedules of global capital markets**.

**The federal government actively accommodated the drive for liquidity in real estate by creating new forms of property and incentives to invest in real estate through tax policies**, such as shelters, deductions, and tax credits. By creating a secondary mortgage market through quasipublic institutions (eg Fannie Mae, formed in 1968), the state has increased the total size of capital flows with **the unattainable aim of reducing cyclical instability of real-estate capital**. These institutions buy mortgages, package them, and guarantee their payments with government backing on mortgage-backed securities held by other insti- tutions, such as pension funds. Securitization connects real-estate credit markets to the nation’s general capital markets and creates more liquidity in the system (Budd 1999). The secondary mortgage market also enables investors in one part of the country to invest in mortgages originated in another region, effectively ending the geographic segmen- tation of credit (Schill 1999). These innovations, mediated by the development of new electronic trading technologies, have increased the pace of financial transactions so that capital does not get grounded for too long.

The federal government also deregulated the thrifts in the 1970s and lifted the ceilings on interest rates. Less regulated institutional investors (eg mutual and pension funds) and insurance companies became engaged in bank-like activity displaced banks from the credit markets they formerly dominated. Enacting a change in tax shelters in 1981, **the Reagan administration effectively bolstered the role of equity syndicators**, such as real-estate investment trusts (**REITs**), **flooding the markets with capital**. **The resulting overaccumulation resulted in the overbuilding of the 1980s** (Fainstein 1994), particularly in the Sunbelt office sector, **and led the real-estate industry into its worse crisis since the Great Depression**.

Clearly, finance does not just “hang above the rest of the political economy, as it were, as a dominating and abstract force whilst forming part of an order ... of neoliberalism” (Gill 1997:72). New aspects of finance and the money form at the national and global scales are directly relevant to local governance, setting the market rules for (dis)investment in the built environment (Christopherson 1993). Financial deregulation and the increasing securitization of real estate removes owners from actual structures and moves locally determined value away from the underlying property. Determining a property’s true value requires detailed knowledge of the local real-estate market (Warf 1999). **Distant capitalists will only invest if the property is recognizable beyond its unique character embedded in space and if it can provide short-term returns**. When these conditions are met, the particularity of a building is transformed into the uniformity of a financial “instrument,” and place becomes subordinated to “a higher realm of ordering beyond territorialism: speed” (Douglas 1999:146).

## heg adv

#### That fear of migration is part of the logic of competitiveness that militarizes trade—causes inevitable economic collapse and protectionism

Bristow ’10(School of City & Regional Planning, Cardiff University) (Gillian, Resilient regions: re-‘place’ing regional competitiveness, Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society 2010, 3, 153–167)

In recent years, regional development strategies have been subjugated to the hegemonic discourse of competitiveness, such that the ultimate objective for all regional development policy-makers and practitioners has become the creation of economic advantage through superior productivity performance, or the attraction of new ﬁrms and labour (Bristow, 2005). A major consequence is the developing ‘ubiquitiﬁcation’ of regional development strategies (Bristow, 2005; Maskell and Malmberg, 1999). This reﬂects the status of competitiveness as a key discursive construct (Jessop, 2008) that has acquired hugely signiﬁcant rhetorical power for certain interests intent on reinforcing capitalist relations (Bristow, 2005; Fougner, 2006). Indeed, the competitiveness hegemony is such that many policies previously considered only indirectly relevant to unfettered economic growth tend to be hijacked in support of competitiveness agendas (for example Raco, 2008; also Dannestam, 2008). This paper will argue, however, that a particularly narrow discourse of ‘competitiveness’ has been constructed that has a number of negative connotations for the ‘resilience’ of regions. Resilience is deﬁned as the region’s ability to experience positive economic success that is socially inclusive, works within environmental limits and which can ride global economic punches (Ashby et al., 2009). As such, resilience clearly resonates with literatures on sustainability, localisation and diversiﬁcation, and the developing understanding of regions as intrinsically diverse entities with evolutionary and context-speciﬁc development trajectories (Hayter, 2004). In contrast, the dominant discourse of competitiveness is ‘placeless’ and increasingly associated with globalised, growth-ﬁrst and environmentally malign agendas (Hudson, 2005). However, this paper will argue that the relationships between competitiveness and resilience are more complex than might at ﬁrst appear. Using insights from the Cultural Political Economy (CPE) approach, which focuses on understanding the construction, development and spread of hegemonic policy discourses, the paper will argue that the dominant discourse of competitiveness used in regional development policy is narrowly constructed and is thus insensitive to contingencies of place and the more nuanced role of competition within economies. This leads to problems of resilience that can be partly overcome with the development of a more contextualised approach to competitiveness. The paper is now structured as follows. It begins by examining the developing understanding of resilience in the theorising and policy discourse around regional development. It then describes the CPE approach and utilises its framework to explain both how a narrow conception of competitiveness has come to dominate regional development policy and how resilience inter-plays in subtle and complex ways with competitiveness and its emerging critique. The paper then proceeds to illustrate what resilience means for regional development ﬁrstly, with reference to the Transition Towns concept, and then by developing a typology of regional strategies to show the different characteristics of policy approaches based on competitiveness and resilience. Regional resilience Resilience is rapidly emerging as an idea whose time has come in policy discourses around localities and regions, where it is developing widespread appeal owing to the peculiarly powerful combination of transformative pressures from below, and various catalytic, crisis-induced imperatives for change from above. It features strongly in policy discourses around environmental management and sustainable development (see Hudson, 2008a), but has also more recently emerged in relation to emergency and disaster planning with, for example ‘Regional Resilience Teams’ established in the English regions to support and co-ordinate civil protection activities around various emergency situations such as the threat of a swine ﬂu pandemic. The discourse of resilience is also taking hold in discussions around desirable local and regional development activities and strategies. The recent global ‘credit crunch’ and the accompanying in-crease in livelihood insecurity has highlighted the advantages of those local and regional economies that have greater ‘resilience’ by virtue of being less dependent upon globally footloose activities, hav-ing greater economic diversity, and/or having a de-termination to prioritise and effect more signiﬁcant structural change (Ashby et al, 2009; Larkin and Cooper, 2009). Indeed, resilience features particular strongly in the ‘grey’ literature spawned by thinktanks, consul-tancies and environmental interest groups around the consequences of the global recession, catastrophic climate change and the arrival of the era of peak oil for localities and regions with all its implications for the longevity of carbon-fuelled economies, cheap, long-distance transport and global trade. This popularly labelled ‘triple crunch’ (New Economics Foundation, 2008) has power-fully illuminated the potentially disastrous material consequences of the voracious growth imperative at the heart of neoliberalism and competitiveness, both in the form of resource constraints (especially food security) and in the inability of the current system to manage global ﬁnancial and ecological sustainability. In so doing, it appears to be galvinising previously disparate, fractured debates about the merits of the current system, and challenging public and political opinion to develop a new, global concern with frugality, egalitarianism and localism (see, for example Jackson, 2009; New Economics Foundation, 2008).

#### The logic of economic trade blocks makes imperial lashout at China inevitable

Petras 3/6/12

<http://petras.lahaine.org/?p=1890>

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China has been growing at about 9% per annum and its goods and services are rapidly rising in quality and value. In contrast, the US and Europe have wallowed around 0% growth from 2007-2012. China’s innovative techno-scientific establishment routinely assimilates the latest inventions from the West (and Japan) and improves them, thereby decreasing the cost of production. China has replaced the US and European controlled “international financial institutions” (the IMF, World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank) as the principle lender in Latin America. China continues to lead as the prime investor in African energy and mineral resources. China has replaced the US as the principle market for Saudi Arabian, Sudanese and Iranian petroleum and it will soon replace the US as the principle market for Venezuela petroleum products. Today China is the world’s biggest manufacturer and exporter, dominating even the US market, while playing the role of financial life line as it holds over $1.3 trillion in US Treasury notes. Under growing pressure from its workers, farmers and peasants, China’s rulers have been developing the domestic market by increasing wages and social spending to rebalance the economy and avoid the specter of social instability. In contrast, US wages, salaries and vital public services have sharply declined in absolute and relative terms. Given the current historical trends it is clear that China will replace the US as the leading world economic power, over the next decade, if the US empire does not strike back and if China’s profound class inequalities do not lead to a major social upheaval. Modern China’s rise to global power faces serious challenges. In contrast to China’s historical ascent on the world stage, modern Chinese global economic power is not accompanied by any imperialist undertakings. China has seriously lagged behind the US and Europe in aggressive war-making capacity. This may have allowed China to direct public resources to maximize economic growth, but it has left China vulnerable to US military superiority in terms of its massive arsenal, its string of forward bases and strategic geo-military positions right off the Chinese coast and in adjoining territories. In the nineteenth century British imperialism demolished China’s global position with its military superiority, seizing China’s ports – because of China’s reliance on ‘mercantile superiority’. The conquest of India, Burma and most of Asia allowed Britain to establish colonial bases and recruit local mercenary armies. The British and its mercenary allies encircled and isolated China, setting the stage for the disruption of China’s markets and the imposition of the brutal terms of trade. The British Empire’s armed presence dictated what China imported (with opium accounting for over 50% of British exports in the 1850s) while undermining China’s competitive advantages via tariff policies. Today the US is pursuing similar policies: US naval fleet patrols and controls China’s commercial shipping lanes and off-shore oil resources via its overseas bases. The Obama-Clinton White House is in the process of developing a rapid military response involving bases in Australia, Philippines and elsewhere in Asia. The US is intensifying its efforts to undermine Chinese overseas access to strategic resources while backing ‘grass roots’ separatists and ‘insurgents’ in West China, Tibet, Sudan, Burma, Iran, Libya, Syria and elsewhere. The US military agreements with India and the installation of a pliable puppet regime in Pakistan have advanced its strategy of isolating China. While China upholds its policy of “harmonious development” and “non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries”, it has stepped aside as US and European military imperialism have attacked a host of China’s trading partners to essentially reverse China’s peaceful commercial expansion. China’s lack of a political and ideological strategy capable of protecting its overseas economic interests has been an invitation for the US and NATO to set-up regimes hostile to China. The most striking example is Libya where US and NATO intervened to overthrow an independent government led by President Gadhafi, with whom China had signed multi-billion dollar trade and investments agreements. The NATO bombardment of Libyan cities, ports and oil installation forced the Chinese to withdraw 35,000 Chinese oil engineers and construction workers in a matter of days. The same thing happened in Sudan where China had invested billions to develop its oil industry. The US, Israel and Europe armed the South Sudanese rebels to disrupt the flow of oil and attack Chinese oil workers[6]. In both cases China passively allowed the US and European military imperialists to attack its trade partners and undermine its investments.

## 2nc alt

#### 1. Visions, not policies—demands for policy relevance devolve into RIGGED pseudo-debates

Zehner 12

Green illusions,

Ozzie Zehner is the author of Green Illusions and a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. His recent publications include public science pieces in Christian Science Monitor, The American Scholar, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, The Humanist, The Futurist, and Women’s Studies Quarterly. He has appeared on PBS, BBC, CNN, MSNBC, and regularly guest lectures at universities. Zehner’s research and projects have been covered by The Sunday Times, USA Today, WIRED, The Washington Post, Business Week and numerous other media outlets. He also serves on the editorial board of Critical Environmentalism.

Zehner primarily researches the social, political and economic conditions influencing energy policy priorities and project outcomes. His work also incorporates symbolic roles that energy technologies play within political and environmental movements. His other research interests include consumerism, urban policy, environmental governance, international human rights, and forgeries.

Zehner attended Kettering University (BS -Engineering) and The University of Amsterdam (MS/Drs – Science and Technology Studies). His research was awarded with honors at both institutions. He lives in San Francisco.

Even if we could afford to dramatically increase alternative-energy production, what would such a future look like? Would simply adding alternative energy to our current sociopolitical system lead to greater well-being? Or would it just leave us with another strain of fossil-fuel dependence, spinning off hyperconsumption and additional side effects? When alternative-energy productivists do acknowledge the leaks, waste, and other consequences of "clean" energy, they quickly follow up by asserting that these effluents are less harmful than those from the exceptionally dirty fossil-fuel industries. In a very limited sense, they may be right, but they are using an inappropriate and misleading benchmark. Comparing every new energy technology to the filth of fossil fuels is hardly a reasonable yardstick for thoughtful people—especially when we have no historical experience, current data, or future backstops in place to assume that these technologies will even offset fossil-fuel use at all. Nevertheless, energy rhetoric in the United States has largely devolved into arguments pitting production versus production in manufactured pseudodebates that fool us into thinking we are making genuine energy choices. The only reason these appear to be reasonable comparisons is that we are so deeply immersed in the dirty fossil-fuel way of life that a less-dirty bad idea can seem good. (We should remember that the rise of petroleum itself was seen initially as an environmental benefit as it slowed the extermination of whales for their oil.) Why not measure the virtues of electric vehicles against the virtues of walkable neighborhoods? Or the benefits of solar cells against the benefits of supporting comprehensive women's rights? Or the costs of nuclear energy against the costs of plugging energy leaks? These are the comparisons environmentalists should be thinking about, because in a world of limited finances and pricey resources, these are the very real trade-offs that will define our lived experience.

#### 2. Epistemology—the cult of productionism CROWDS OUT other options through insistence on POLICY

Zehner 12

Green illusions,

Ozzie Zehner is the author of Green Illusions and a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. His recent publications include public science pieces in Christian Science Monitor, The American Scholar, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, The Humanist, The Futurist, and Women’s Studies Quarterly. He has appeared on PBS, BBC, CNN, MSNBC, and regularly guest lectures at universities. Zehner’s research and projects have been covered by The Sunday Times, USA Today, WIRED, The Washington Post, Business Week and numerous other media outlets. He also serves on the editorial board of Critical Environmentalism.

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Perhaps it's all too easy for us to miss the limitations of alternative energy as we drop to our knees at the foot of the clean energy spectacle, gasping in rapture. The spectacle has become a divine deity around which duty-bound citizens gravitate to chant objectives without always reflecting upon fundamental goals. This oracle conveys a ready-made creed of ideals, objectives, and concepts that are convenient to recite. And so these handy notions inevitably become the content of environmental discourse. In a process of self-fashioning, environmentalists offer their arms to the productivist tattoo artist to embroider wind, solar, and biofuels into the subcutaneous flesh of the movement. These novelties come to define what it means to be an environmentalist.1 Environmentalists aren't the only ones lining up for ink. Peer pressure is a formidable power, and there's no reason to assume that rational adults are above its dealings. Every news article, environmental protest, congressional committee hearing, textbook entry, and bumper sticker creates an occasion for the visibility of solar cells, wind power, and other productivist technologies. Numerous actors draw upon these moments of visibility to articulate paths these technologies ought to follow.2 First, diverse groups draw upon flexible clean-energy definitions to attract support. Then they roughly sculpt energy options into more appealing promises—not through experimentation, but by planning, rehearsing, and staging demonstrations. Next, lobbyists, strategic planners, and pr teams transfer the promises into legislative and legal frameworks § Marked 16:56 § and eventually into necessities for engineers to pursue. A consequence of this visibility-making is the necessary invisibility of other options. There's only so much room on the stage.

# 1NR

## russia

Obama prevents total collapse

Adomanis 10/23/12

(Mark, international contributor @ Forbes, “How Will Mitt Romney Demonstrate 'Backbone' With Vladimir Putin?” http://www.forbes.com/sites/markadomanis/2012/10/23/how-will-mitt-romney-demonstrate-backbone-with-vladimir-putin/)

Now because the debate was poorly run there wasn’t any follow-up on Romney’s proposed backbone-centric Russia policy. But it naturally raises a number of questions, the most obvious of which is “how would the Russians respond?” It’s worth trying to think through what a more combative Russia policy would achieve and what sorts of unintended consequences it might have because, at least as far as I can tell, it’s one of the only areas of genuine disagreement between the two candidates and one of the few foreign policy changes we could realistically expect from a Romney administration.

Obama has been accused of being “soft” on Russia largely because of things he hasn’t done: he hasn’t signed, and has worked to delay passage of, the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, he hasn’t aggressively responded to the recent expulsion of USAID, and he’s generally, though not entirely, refrained from criticizing Russian domestic policy. I think it’s fair to say that Romney would support passage of the Magnitsky bill, would aggressively respond to the closure of USAID (perhaps following David Satter’s advice of expelling a bunch of Russian diplomats), **and would generally take a** hawkish **and** unaccommodating **line.** Though Mitt Romney’s website is still pretty scant on the details of his proposed Russia policy, **I don’t think it’s** being **uncharitable or unrealistic to say that Romney is contemptuous of and dismissive towards Russia’s current regime and that** he would be much more aggressive in confronting Putin**.**

But the Russians aren’t automatons who have been programmed to behave in a specific way, they’re human actors who respond to external stimuli and changes in US policy. The fact that the Russians are more cooperative since the start of the “reset” isn’t some bizarre puzzle that needs to be explained, it’s exactly what we ought to expect. Russia’s limited cooperation with the United States over the past four years hasn’t been by default or because the Russians “had no other options,” it has occurred because the Russian political leadership calculated that Russian interests were best promoted via cooperation with the Obama administration. But this calculation could easily change, and it doesn’t take an active imagination to think of a scenario in which Russia responds to an aggressive Romney policy by doing something asinine like re-instating the S-300 sale to Iran.

I understand that Romney’s response during the debate wasn’t a detailed policy prescription and that it’s unrealistic to expect extreme levels of detail from off-the-cuff and unprepared statements delivered live on national television. **But the “backbone” comment is perfectly in keeping with Romney’s past statements on the issue**. Romney, and foreign policy hawks in general, take a strangely one-sided view of US-Russia relations, and tend to view it as an arena in which the US is the only party with any real agency. In this view the Russians cooperate on issues like Afghanistan and Iran “because they have to” and the US can afford to aggressively oppose other Russian policies without paying any cost. But that’s clearly not the case.

The Russian government has many interests but its first priority, like any government, is survival. If the **Russia**n government **concludes that its survival might be threatened by Romney’s policies** (and since Romney openly declares his intention of replacing the current government they wouldn’t be unreasonable in reaching such a conclusion) they will oppose those policies with every means at their disposal. Such an observation is hardly novel, but I’ve never seen anyone offer a coherent explanation of why the Russian government will continue to support Iran sanctions or the Northern Distribution Network in the face of aggressive attempts to weaken and marginalize it.

## impact

#### Romney’s advisors guarantee the most aggressive response possible to any crisis

Granoff, President of the Global Security Institute, 9/30/2012

(Jonathan, “Ronald Reagan, Republicans, and Nuclear Weapons,” http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jonathan-granoff/president-ronald-reagan\_b\_1927491.html)

Listening to today's candidates --at any level -- one would not know that, historically, Republicans have been instrumental in advancing arms control, nonproliferation, and nuclear disarmament. That is, until the recent Bush administration. In fact, active Republican leadership was essential in obtaining the Biological Weapons Convention, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, and the Chemical Weapons Convention, to name but a few. However, the current Republicans running for offices, both high and low, have forgotten this legacy of success in **making** America and **the world safer** based on the US value of the rule of law.

Of serious concern is that the men who brought us the eight-year anomaly of consistent failure now comprise Romney's foreign policy team. **Out of 24 advisers**, **17 played significant roles in the Bush administration and contributed to an unmatched history of unprecedented catastrophes**. These guys include Max Boot, John Bolton, Elliot Cohen, and Cofer Black. They constructed an era defined by lies to justify a war in Iraq, a distortion of American values that rationalized torture, the execution of an aggressive war of choice rather than necessity, degradation of the international legal order which the United States had spent decades to establish, and the execution of costly military ventures based on money borrowed from China.

## uq

#### Prefer aggregate data

Silver, 10/27

(NYT Election Expert, Oct. 27: Minnesota Moonlights as Swing State, but Ohio and Virginia Are More Crucial”

http://fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/10/28/oct-27-minnesota-moonlights-as-swing-state-but-ohio-and-virginia-are-more-crucial/#more-36802)

The Ohio poll was a good one for Mr. Romney. The survey, conducted by the University of Cincinnati for a consortium of Ohio newspapers, showed the tied race, 49-49, with almost no undecided voters left. The same survey had given Mr. Obama a 5-point advantage before the Denver debate. Some liberals have critiqued the Ohio poll for being out of date — it was in the field between Oct. 18 and Oct. 23, meaning that some of its interviews were conducted before the final presidential debate in Florida. I think this criticism is probably overdone. There is little evidence that the race has changed all that much since the final debate; the FiveThirtyEight model finds that Mr. Obama has perhaps gained half a percentage point nationally since then, but probably not much more than that. And apart from the timing, the poll has a lot going for it: it has a good track record and collected a reasonably large sample size, meaning that it gets a lot of weight in the FiveThirtyEight forecast. But **the poll should not be used to imply that the race is tightening further in Ohio**. There have been 12 other polls of the state that also conducted at least some interviews after the Florida debate, and they showed Mr. Obama up by two points there on average, which is about where the FiveThirtyEight forecast now shows the state. **If a candidate holds a two-point lead in a state, it is normal for some polls to show him tied or trailing** by a point or so instead in contrast to others that might put him four or five points up. **That is** pretty much **what we see in Ohio right now**, with the edge in the polling average remaining with Mr. Obama. The new poll reduced his chances of winning the state to 73 percent from 76 percent in the forecast.

#### Obama winning Ohio now—poll critics are wrong

Nate Cohn, 10/27/12, Daily Breakdown: Obama Maintains Lead In Ohio Polls With Ten Days To Go , www.tnr.com/blog/electionate/109228/daily-breakdown-obama-maintains-lead-in-ohio-polls-ten-days-go

With the debates fading in the rear view mirror and Election Day approaching quickly, the polls still show Obama ahead by a modest but meaningful and consistent margin in the Buckeye State. Yesterday, CNN/ORG showed Obama leading by 4 points in Ohio, coming on the heels of earlier polls by similar firms conducting interviews with cell phone voters by Time and SurveyUSA showing Obama ahead by 5 and 3, respectively. Even ARG and Purple Strategies—which have tended to produce better than average results for Romney—showed Obama leading by 2 points. In ARG’s case, that was a reversal from their initial post-debate survey, which was one of the few to ever show Romney ahead. What’s most striking is the consistency of Obama’s advantage. Even though three relatively Romney-friendly surveys showed Obama falling behind by 1 point after the first presidential debate, only one partisan poll has shown Romney leading since October 10—and two of the initial three surveys to show Romney ahead have since shown Obama retaking the lead. I suspect that level of consistency won’t last through Election Day, since most averages show Obama ahead by 2 or 2.5 points in Ohio (I’d actually peg it at just 1.9, since I include partisan surveys). As a matter of probability, at least a couple polls should show Romney ahead in such a close race. Of course, when that poll comes, I’m sure a wave of Democratic panic and Republican euphoria will overtake Twitter, so let’s just establish in advanced that such a result should be expected. Start getting excited or concerned once the polls start showing movement that can be distinguished from static. Romney’s chances dwindle to the risk of a systemic error in the polls if he can’t close the gap over the next ten days. Ask Michael Bennet or Harry Reid about whether that's possible, but one argument attempting to explain why one should expect systemic error in Ohio is that the polls are "oversampling" Ohio’s Democratic-leaning early voters, who have constituted as much as 40 percent of recent surveys, even though Michael McDonald’s invaluable US Elections Project’s Early Voting page shows that just 985,000 of Ohio’s voters have cast ballots—or about 18 percent of the 2008 electorate. But even though all but one recent Ohio poll shows a 2-5 point race, the same polls show early voters ranging from perhaps as low as 20 to a high of 32 percent of the electorate. Although the Time breakdown is unweighted, they appear to show voters early voters around just 20 percent of the electorate. What poll shows 31 percent? Rasmussen--the closest poll. This suggests that random sampling, not systemic bias, is influencing the results. After all, Rasmussen shows a tied race with 31 percent of the electorate voting early and voting for Obama by 31 points—they get it back to a tie by showing Romney doing far better among Election Day voters than anyone else. Of course, the average poll still shows early voters at 26 percent of the electorate, and that might seem too high. Part of the issue might be the 800,000 outstanding absentee ballots that have been sent to voters but haven’t yet been returned. Many of these voters may have “voted” in the presidential race by filling out their ballots, even if they haven’t returned the ballot. I don’t know how many Ohio voters would have filled out a ballot and say tell a pollster that they voted before it's submitted, it’s worth noting that the polls usually ask “have you voted” without further elaboration. What percentage of the '08 Ohio electorate has received ballots or voted in-person? 28 percent. Speaking from experience as a Washington State voter where elections are conducted almost entirely by mail, I can say that I repeatedly told people that I “voted” in the presidential race since Tuesday, even though I completed my ballot yesterday still haven’t submitted it. After learning about this controversy, I asked a few fellow Washingtonians if they voted and they said yes. Then I asked whether they submitted their ballot, and all but one said no. So it’s possible. It’s also possible that the polls are actually just getting too many early voters. But even if they do, it doesn’t necessarily skew the polls. For instance, early voters might be overrepresented if early voters tend to be hardcore partisans and if hardcore partisans are more likely to respond to polls. But in this scenario, potential bias should influence every state and the national polls, not just Ohio, since bias would be due to the unrepresentative character of poll respondents, not the number of early voters. For early voters to skew the polls, voters would need to be more likely to respond to a survey after voting than before. Is that possible? Perhaps, but there's not exactly much evidence and many alternative explanations. A slightly different possibility is that the registered voter screens are too tight, not that the polls are capturing too many early voters. A certain number of "unlikely" registered voters will ultimately vote on Election Day, and just enough of them might be excluded by the polls to increase the "early voting" share of likely voters compared to their eventual share of the electorate. Of course, it would actually be big news if the Obama campaign was banking a meaningful number of "unlikely voters" in early voting. The polls outside of Ohio didn't offer much better news for Romney. Yes, the national polls continue to show a tight race or even a Romney lead, but Obama has probably fared just as well in surveys of North Carolina over the last forty-eight hours as Romney in Ohio. Rasmussen showed Obama within two in Florida, even though they previously showed a 5 point race. And Obama led in Iowa and New Hampshire. If Obama wins Ohio, Nevada, New Hampshire, and Iowa, he can secure the presidency without Wisconsin.

## at: jobs pounder

#### Won’t matter – august proves

Greg Sargent, 01:25 PM ET, 10/29/2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/plum-line/post/another-outbreak-of-stupidity-and-paranoia-about-jobs-numbers/2012/10/29/8e1c5760-21e8-11e2-ac85-e669876c6a24\_blog.html

Can we talk about this? Look, far and way the most likely scenario is that the jobs numbers — provided they are released — will have little to no impact on the election’s outcome.

It’s unfortunate that we have to go through this every month, but the hyping of this one metric has become truly ridiculous at this point. Do people really have such short memories that they have already forgotten what happened with the August jobs numbers?

As you may remember, the August jobs numbers came out just after the successful Democratic convention, and they were a disappointment: Only 96,000 jobs were created. Pundits went mad with discussions about how the jobs report would put a damper on Obama’s convention bounce, and conservative gloating was widespread. And here’s what happened: The race went from a slight Obama lead to a four point national advantage for Obama in late September, and a slightly larger edge in key battlegrounds, before tightening up again. There’s no evidence the jobs report had any impact.

What’s more, remember what happened when the jobs report for September came out? It not only found that unemployment fell to 7.8 percent — it also revised the August numbers up to 142,000. And so all of the hyping of the previous month’s numbers was revealed to be thoroughly bogus. Yet here we are one month later hyping this one metric again.

Look, it’s possible this Friday’s jobs report — if it comes out — will have an impact, but that will only happen if the numbers are unusually bad (say, below 50,000 or negative) or if they are unusually high (say, over 200,000). A very good number is also possible, which would make Grassley’s (seemingly willful) paranoia look even more absurd in retrospect.

If the jobs numbers come in between the two, as seems more likely, it just won’t matter much, if at all. The unemployment numbers are just one metric; they don’t come close to capturing the complexities of public perceptions of the economy. There are plenty of reasons to think people’s impressions of the economy have been baked into this election for weeks or months. The far more likely outcome is that the jobs report won’t change a thing about what the fundamentals have dictated about this election for some time now: This is a weak recovery, which ensures a very close race, with perhaps a slight edge to the incumbent.

## link

#### Can’t get a win

Peterson, 10/4

(Political Columnist-NPR Louisville Branch, “Climate Change, But Not Energy, Absent From First Presidential Debate,” http://wfpl.org/post/climate-change-not-energy-absent-first-presidential-debate)

Coal and renewable energy weren't absent from the presidential debate last night, but environmental groups are bemoaning the fact that climate change wasn't brought up. The Hill's E2 Wire notes that a petition was delivered to debate moderator Jim Lehrer with more than 160,000 signatures, asking the PBS host to ask the candidates about climate change. But he didn’t. And while Obama and Romney traded punches on energy policy, neither mentioned climate change or carbon emissions. “Millions of Americans felt the impacts from climate change this year, so it's disappointing it wasn't discussed. Sadly, warming is a global issue too, so hopefully it will come up in the next debate focused on international policy,” said Jamie Henn, co-founder of the climate advocacy group 350.org. Both candidates voluntarily waded into a discussion about renewable energy and fossil fuels during discussions about increasing American energy independence and reducing the federal deficit. But while President Obama and Mitt Romney have both proclaimed their love of coal (the direct quote from Romney last night was "I like coal."), analysts have noted that both have good reasons to stay away from climate change. David Baker of the San Francisco Chronicle looked at the issue this morning. He notes that Romney is worried about alienating the GOP's base, which has increasingly rejected climate change over the past few years. A poll conducted last month by Bloomberg found that only 26 percent of Republicans believe human activity is warming the planet. Contrast that with 78 percent of Democrats and 56 percent of independents. "The GOP is as stony a ground for that issue as you can find today," said Jerry Taylor, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute libertarian think tank and a frequent critic of federal environmental policy. Obama, on the other hand, is **worried about alienating independents.** And he's hoping to win coal mining battleground states like Pennsylvania and Ohio, where Cato fellow Jerry Taylor adds: "**Amongst those voters, swing voters in swing states, there's very little appetite for doing anything** on climate change."

#### It’s key to the whole state

Wolfford, 10/29

(Columnist-Weekly Standard, Date of Relase-10/24/12, “Romancing Ohio,” http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/romancing-ohio\_655096.html?page=1)

In the sparsely populated Appalachian region, the predominantly white working-class and social-conservative electorate mostly voted for Bill Clinton, then George W. Bush. In 2004, southeast Ohio favored amending the Ohio constitution to enshrine traditional marriage by over 70 percent, while giving Bush 54 percent of the vote. **It’s the kind of region where voters cling to their** guns and their religion (in the infamous Obama phrase) .  .  . and their **coal.** The **Democrats’ liberal evolution could turn this region​—​and thus Ohio​—​Romney’s way.** “Gay marriage and coal are both winning issues in our area,” says Brian Wilson, Republican chairman of Jefferson County, along the western bank of the upper Ohio. Wilson and coal advocates insist EPA standards have increased electricity rates and shut down power plants and coal mines. In 2008, roughly 36,000 votes were cast here; Obama won the county by a mere 76 ballots over McCain. Statewide, unemployment in mining and logging has risen 2.5 percentage points from last year. It’s why Romney emphasized oil, coal, and gas in the Hofstra debate.

#### Key to campaign messaging – Obama will get hammered

Kucinich, 10/23

(USA Today Columnist, “Romney digs for coal votes in swing states,” http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2012/10/23/coal-battle-campaign/1649557/)

The Romney campaign has used the argument for coal as a way to court a relatively small percentage of voters, many of who are Reagan Democrats, who occupy key coal-producing counties in several battleground states. While most of the 25 coal producing states are solidly in one camp or the other electorally, four are considered possible tossups this cycle: Pennsylvania, Ohio, Colorado and Virginia. Under the banner of the "war on coal," Republicans have repeatedly hammered the Obama administration's environmental policies as "job-killing" and **preferential to newer, cleaner and more expensive fuels and technologies.** Both campaigns have visited coal country several times over the past few months. Most recently Ryan stopped in Belmont and Romney's son, Matt, stumped for the campaign at a coal rally in Grundy, Va., on Sunday. Obama surrogate Bill Clinton attended a rally in Wintersville, Ohio, last week. Voters in some of these coal-rich areas helped carry the president to victory in Ohio and other states in 2008, and the Obama campaign contends that the president's "all of the above" energy plan has made "one of the most significant federal investments in clean coal technology in history." Nationwide employment in coal mining has fluctuated over the past four years but has risen overall since Obama took office, according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics. As of September, 82,200 were employed in the coal mining industry, up from 77,200 in January 2008. Obama won significant portions parts of coal country in 2008. For example, of the 18 Ohio counties that produce coal, seven voted for Obama including Belmont, the largest producer in the state. Even so, he may have a tougher time this year. Barbara Altizer, director of the Eastern Coal Council in Cedar Bluff, Va., said that when Obama ran in 2008, she was pleased with his record on coal, but that during his term as president his administration seemed to draw "alliances with the anti-coal people." "We've never been under attack quite like we are right now," she said. According to a National Mining Association report, as of 2010, there were about 5,000 directly employed in the mining industry in Virginia, where Romney and Obama are running neck and neck, according to most recent polls. The association has a voter-outreach effort called Mine the Vote, which provides information on mining issues, candidate voting records and registration information. Spokeswoman Carol Raulston said that since August, 220,000 visitors have used the platform with most inquiries coming from Pennsylvania, Ohio, Florida, North Carolina, Illinois, Virginia, West Virginia and Kentucky. Coal mining companies, executives and employees have donated more than $15 million this cycle, and 90% went to Republican candidates, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. And the United Mine Workers of America, which endorsed Obama four years ago, has said it will not endorse a candidate this year, for the first time since 1972. Coal advocates say the Obama administration is pursuing costly new regulations on mines and on power plants that burn coal will be a devastating blow to the industry. "If there's less coal being demanded, especially certain types of coal, that certain jobs are required for, then **you are going to reduce" mine employment,** said Dan Kish, senior vice president of the Institute for Energy Research.

#### Flips the turn

The Week, 10/26

(“Why Obama and Romney aren't talking about climate change,” http://theweek.com/article/index/235468/why-obama-and-romney-arent-talking-about-climate-change)

"Scientists warn the planet is facing a global climate crisis that could result in unprecedented sea-level rise, drought, and food shortages," says Andrew Restuccia at Politico. "But you wouldn't know it from listening to the presidential debates." For the first time since 1988, neither candidate or their running mate talked about climate change or global warming in any of their four face-offs, and none of them were asked about it. The topic is also largely absent from the campaign trail: President Obama only occasionally brings it up, preferring to talk about the promise of green energy, and Mitt Romney only talks about climate change as a way to criticize Obama's policies. In September, both candidates told a group of science organizations that, to differing degree, they both believe that the earth is getting warmer, thanks in part to human activity, and that this is a big problem. So why is neither one talking about the issue? 1. **All the solutions are politically toxic** It's safe enough to agree that the changing climate is a real problem, but "the two most effective ways of reducing global warming pollution — taxing it or regulating it — are politically toxic in a year when economic problems are paramount," says John M. Broder at The New York Times. The Senate let a cap-and-trade bill die in 2010, in large part because "the Republican Party has essentially declared climate change a nonproblem." And it's harder to push for solutions given "a well-financed long-term campaign to sow doubt" about the scientific consensus that humans are responsible for rising temperatures. In short, there's little political upside to talking about climate change. 2. Voters like being in denial "The easy answer is that it's not good politics... to talk about emissions when voters are worried about jobs," but that's missing a key point, says Laurent Belsie at The Christian Science Monitor. Polls actually show that Americans are increasingly convinced about the science of man-made global warming — "the ranks of the 'climate deniers' are thinning, albeit slowly" — but they also understand that there are no easy solutions. That makes global warming feel like "something to fear because we can't fix it." So if Obama and Romney aren't talking about the problem, maybe it's "because we really don't want to hear" about it. 3. **It's all about Ohio**, stupid It's been clear for some time that the swing state of **Ohio** could well decide the election — now it **is the must-win state** — and **one of the keys to winning the Buckeye State is performing well in** a "stretch of southern and southeastern Ohio where Democrats long held the allegiance of working class voters tied to **the coal industry,**" says Nate Cohn at The New Republic. "The so-called 'war on coal' is a pocketbook issue" there, **and Romney needs to talk it up to overcome Obama's advantages in other parts of the state**. Obama has been hitting back by noting Romney's own anti-coal rhetoric from years past. That's left us with "the kind of bizarre reversal that only an election can cultivate," says Stephen Lacey at Think Progress, where both candidates "have run ads attacking the other for their previous comments on the need to transition away from coal."

## at: under the radar

#### Campaigns outweigh tax gimmicks

Pilkington, 10/25

(Columnist-The Guardian, “Battle for Ohio: campaigns micro-target their message in state's four corners,”

http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/oct/25/battle-ohio-campaigns-micro-target)

Campaign strategists in the vital battleground of Ohio are pioneering a radical new approach to the ground war in the final days of the presidential election, delivering targeted messaging to different parts of the state in an attempt drive up voter turnout on 6 November. Both Barack Obama's re-election operation, Obama For America, and Mitt Romney's campaign are using micro-targeting techniques, backed by traditional TV and radio advertising, to hone messages to the specific political concerns of different corners of the state. The heavily vaunted "battle for Ohio" is not a single battle at all – in fact it is several distinct political conflicts being waged simultaneously in a bid for the state's rich crop of 18 electoral votes out of the 270 needed to win. The strategic shift in focus down to the level of regions, counties or in some cases even neighbourhoods is revolutionising the final stages of the race, with both parties vying aggressively for votes right across the state. The localised model of campaigning being developed in Ohio this year is likely to become the template of future US presidential elections as the technology takes hold. As Chris Redburn, who chairs the Ohio Democratic party, puts it: "Four years from now it will be even more targeted as the technology improves and advances are made in how we collect information." As recently as the 2004 presidential election, Ohio was divided for campaigning purposes in half – the Democratic stronghold in the industrialised north, and the more rural and staunchly Republican south. But the advent of targeted messaging has heralded a sea-change in the way the campaigns are being run. In the final two weeks of the presidential contest, Obama will be campaigning as fiercely among the traditionally conservative Appalachian communities in the south-east of Ohio as he is in solidly blue Cleveland. "In the old days – eight years ago – we'd focus on driving up votes in the north of Ohio, then hope we'd outnumbered the conservative turnout in the south-west," Redburn said. "This year we're competing in all Ohio's 88 counties, and we are confident we will find some success in all 88 counties." Scott Jennings, Romney campaign director in Ohio, puts the same point another way: "When our database tells us that there is a household of coal miners in a certain neighbourhood, then volunteers will be calling on them talking about Mitt Romney's plan on energy." The impact of this micro-targeting revolution can be clearly seen in four parcels of Ohio, in each of which a distinct political battle is being fought: the west and south-west of Ohio, with its concentration of military bases and suppliers, where the debate revolves around defence cuts; in the north, where it is wall-to-wall auto industry; in the east and south-east, where an argument rages over coal and the future of energy; and in the central zone around the financial and university hub, Columbus, where there is much talk about Wall Street regulation and education.

#### Obama’s Velcro

**LA Times 10** ( “Obama the Velcro president”, LA Times, 2010, http://articles.latimes.com/2010/jul/30/nation/la-na-velcro-presidency-20100730/3)

If Ronald Reagan was the classic Teflon president, Barack Obama is made of Velcro.

Through two terms, Reagan eluded much of the responsibility for recession and foreign policy scandal. In less than two years, Obama has become ensnared in blame.

Hoping to better insulate Obama, White House aides have sought to give other Cabinet officials a higher profile and additional public exposure. They are also crafting new ways to explain the president's policies to a skeptical public.

But Obama remains the colossus of his administration — to a point where trouble anywhere in the world is often his to solve.

The president is on the hook to repair the Gulf Coast oil spill disaster, stabilize Afghanistan, help fix Greece's ailing economy and do right by Shirley Sherrod, the Agriculture Department official fired as a result of a misleading fragment of videotape.

What's not sticking to Obama is a legislative track record that his recent predecessors might envy. Political dividends from passage of a healthcare overhaul or a financial regulatory bill have been fleeting.

Instead, voters are measuring his presidency by a more immediate yardstick: Is he creating enough jobs? So far the verdict is no, and that has taken a toll on Obama's approval ratings. Only 46% approve of Obama's job performance, compared with 47% who disapprove, according to Gallup's daily tracking poll.

"I think the accomplishments are very significant, but I think most people would look at this and say, 'What was the plan for jobs?' " said Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.). "The agenda he's pushed here has been a very important agenda, but it hasn't translated into dinner table conversations."

Reagan was able to glide past controversies with his popularity largely intact. He maintained his affable persona as a small-government advocate while seeming above the fray in his own administration.

Reagan was untarnished by such calamities as the 1983 terrorist bombing of the Marines stationed in Beirut and scandals involving members of his administration. In the 1986 Iran-Contra affair, most of the blame fell on lieutenants.

Obama lately has tried to rip off the Velcro veneer. In a revealing moment during the oil spill crisis, he reminded Americans that his powers aren't "limitless." He told residents in Grand Isle, La., that he is a flesh-and-blood president, not a comic-book superhero able to dive to the bottom of the sea and plug the hole.

 "I can't suck it up with a straw," he said.

But as a candidate in 2008, he set sky-high expectations about what he could achieve and what government could accomplish.

 Clinching the Democratic nomination two years ago, Obama described the moment as an epic breakthrough when "we began to provide care for the sick and good jobs to the jobless" and "when the rise of the oceans began to slow and our planet began to heal."

Those towering goals remain a long way off. And most people would have preferred to see Obama focus more narrowly on the "good jobs" part of the promise.

A recent Gallup poll showed that 53% of the population rated unemployment and the economy as the nation's most important problem. By contrast, only 7% cited healthcare — a single-minded focus of the White House for a full year.

At every turn, Obama makes the argument that he has improved lives in concrete ways.

Without the steps he took, he says, the economy would be in worse shape and more people would be out of work. There's evidence to support that. Two economists, Mark Zandi and Alan Blinder, reported recently that without the stimulus and other measures, gross domestic product would be about 6.5% lower.

Yet, Americans aren't apt to cheer when something bad doesn't materialize.

Unemployment has been rising — from 7.7% when Obama took office, to 9.5%. Last month, more than 2 million homes in the U.S. were in various stages of foreclosure — up from 1.7 million when Obama was sworn in.

"Folks just aren't in a mood to hand out gold stars when unemployment is hovering around 10%," said Paul Begala, a Democratic pundit.

Insulating the president from bad news has proved impossible. Other White Houses have tried doing so with more success. Reagan's Cabinet officials often took the blame, shielding the boss.

But the Obama administration is about one man. Obama is the White House's chief spokesman, policy pitchman, fundraiser and negotiator. No Cabinet secretary has emerged as an adequate surrogate. Treasury Secretary Timothy F. Geithner is seen as a tepid public speaker; Energy Secretary Steven Chu is prone to long, wonky digressions and has rarely gone before the cameras during an oil spill crisis that he is working to end.

So, more falls to Obama, reinforcing the Velcro effect: Everything sticks to him. He has opined on virtually everything in the hundreds of public statements he has made: nuclear arms treaties, basketball star LeBron James' career plans; Chelsea Clinton's wedding.

Few audiences are off-limits. On Wednesday, he taped a spot on ABC's "The View," drawing a rebuke from Democratic Pennsylvania Gov. Edward G. Rendell, who deemed the appearance unworthy of the presidency during tough times.

 "Stylistically he creates some of those problems," Eddie Mahe, a Republican political strategist, said in an interview. "His favorite pronoun is 'I.' When you position yourself as being all things to all people, the ultimate controller and decision maker with the capacity to fix anything, you set yourself up to be blamed when it doesn't get fixed or things happen."

A new White House strategy is to forgo talk of big policy changes that are easy to ridicule. Instead, aides want to market policies as more digestible pieces. So, rather than tout the healthcare package as a whole, advisors will talk about smaller parts that may be more appealing and understandable — such as barring insurers from denying coverage based on preexisting conditions.

But at this stage, it may be late in the game to downsize either the president or his agenda.

Sen. Richard J. Durbin (D-Ill.) said: "The man came in promising change. He has a higher profile than some presidents because of his youth, his race and the way he came to the White House with the message he brought in. It's naive to believe he can step back and have some Cabinet secretary be the face of the oil spill. The buck stops with his office."

## at: jobs turn

#### Jobs are already priced in – Obama’s striking a critical balance with fossil fuel workers

Sledge, 12

(Reporter-Huffington Post & graduate of Brown University, he was previously the Rhode Island director for FairVote, 6/14, Mitt Romney In Ohio, Seeks Electoral Advantage Amid State's Shale Oil And Gas Boom, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/14/romney-ohio-oil-gas-boom\_n\_1598460.html)

Mitt Romney told a crowd of Ohioans at a manufacturing company Thursday that President Barack Obama is keeping the state's oil and gas industries down. "Go talk to the people in the natural gas world and ask them what it's like under the Obama administration," he said. "They'll tell you that the administration has tried to push itself in to regulate the production of natural gas." "This is a president that's made it harder to create jobs there and to get low-cost energy to manufacturers like this one," he said. For Romney and energy industry groups, that's a central argument in their pitch to Ohio voters whose 18 electoral votes and divided electorate make it a crucial swing state. But they will be forced to argue while **faced with something that undercuts their position**: Spurred by the use of new technologies like hydraulic **fracturing, the oil and gas industry in eastern Ohio's Utica Shale formation is booming**. Economists place the number of jobs that could be created there between 20,000 and 65,680 over the next few years. Steelmakers in Ohio are building 2 million square feet of production space, at a cost of $1.5 billion, to keep up with the demand for pipes and drilling equipment. Obama said he would like to continue that expansion, but **make sure it doesn't lead to pollution**, a position he repeated in Ohio Thursday. "You hear this ridiculous dual story from anti-regulation, pro-industry folks, who on one hand say this is the biggest economic boom and it's going to create millions of jobs for Ohio," said Julian Boggs, a policy advocate at Environment Ohio, a group that promotes tougher regulation on hydraulic fracturing. "And then on the other hand, pretend that the whole thing is so economically fragile that we can't afford basic protections for our environment."

## at: link uq

#### And it’s factually wrong

Cobb, 10/29

(Columnist-HybridCars.com, “Romney Continues to Hammer Obama For His Clean Energy Initiatives, http://www.hybridcars.com/news/romney-continues-hammer-obama-his-clean-energy-initiatives-57609.html)

In the battle of talking points, insinuation and allegation that is the American presidential campaign, Republican candidate Mitt **Romney has lambasted President Obama for his green energy policy**, and again on Friday Romney said if elected, he would cease Obama’s funding of clean energy companies. Romney has notably called out Fisker, Tesla, and Ener1 as being on a list of Obama-backed “losers” topped perhaps by now bankrupted solar panel maker, Solyndra LLC. Instead of backing one company or the other, Romney’s appeal is to funnel money into appropriate research, he said. "Rather than investing in new electric auto and solar companies, we will invest in energy science and research to make discoveries that can actually change our energy world,” Romney said in a speech in Ames, Iowa. “And by 2020, we will achieve North American energy independence." So while Obama’s prior prediction of one million EVs and PHEVs on the road by 2015 has been criticized for looking like it won't happen on schedule, Romney is countering with an even more ambitious multi-year projection that also must overcome many variables outside of his direct control. The last eight presidents in office have also made energy independence a stated objective, but to date it has not been accomplished. Also in question is the future of federal tax credits for EV buyers. The present-day $7,500 credit is actually an endowment from the Bush era which Obama has embraced – just as were the carried forward automaker bailouts also begun under Bush – and Obama has said he’d like to see the federal plug-in credit increased to $10,000, perhaps made also into a point-of-sale rebate to increase and broaden its potential effect. Among other federal initiatives to give a boost to hopeful alternative energy efforts has been the Advanced Technology Vehicle Manufacturing Program administered by the U.S. Department of Energy. **However a political chilling effect against such initiatives was underway even before Romney came to the forefront of the scene**. The Detroit News observed on Friday that the $25 billion program created by Congress in 2007 has awarded just $8.5 billion in loans — including $5.9 billion to Ford and $1.4 billion to Nissan. The Energy Department has long since been reported as feeling the political winds blowing that Romney is only now just fanning further. All this year it has refused to come to agreement with Fisker to reopen funding cut off in February. The Detroit News observed that **the federal government has not made a new loan in the last one-and-a-half years** to the automotive sector and in January this year withdrew a loan that was being considered for Severstal OAO, a Russian steel company.

## at: 123

#### A123 was private sector Chinese money

Hargreaves 8/9 (Steve, CNN, "Chinese Investment in Battery Maker A123 Sparks Controversy", money.cnn.com/2012/08/09/news/companies/a123/index.htm)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) -- U.S. battery maker A123 Systems said **Wednesday** it is receiving up to $450 million from a Chinese firm, the latest controversial foreign investment in an American company in the electric car space.

## at: solyndra

#### Solyndra hasn’t gotten outside the beltway

Flock, 9-11

Elizabeth Flock, staff writer for U.S. News & World Report, US News World Report, http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/washington-whispers/2012/09/11/google-data-voters-may-not-care-about-solyndra

Searches for the company's name were so low that they did not even show up on a graph when compared to other subjects used to criticize Obama, including "obamacare," "obama muslim," "obama jobs" and "obama birth certificate."

Interest in Solyndra proved low both over the four year period of Obama's presidential term, as well as over the last twelve months, Google Insights for Search shows.

The low level of interest doesn't match up to the doggedness with which Republicans have attacked Obama on Solyndra.

In May, GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney made a surprise visit to the shuttered Solyndra headquarters to accuse Obama of "crony capitalism," saying the solar company received federal loans because of its ties to the administration. Last month, Romney's running mate, Paul Ryan, decried Solyndra's "gold-plated connections" in his acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention.

Hundreds of news stories about the political angle of the company's closing have been published over the last 30 days alone.

Sorting the Google searches for "Solyndra" geographically, it becomes clear that interest in the failed company may be big inside the Beltway, but lagging outside of it. The tiny District of Columbia had more interest in the term over the last 12 months than any state.

“No more Solyndras” didn’t get press attention

WZKO, 9-16

WZKO Radio (Washington), “Fred Upton's "no more Solyndras" bill clears the U.S. House,” http://wkzo.com/news/articles/2012/sep/16/fred-uptons-no-more-solyndras-bill-clears-the-us-house/

WASHINGTON D.C. (WKZO) -- The U.S. House has approved the “no More Solyndra’s” act, sponsored by local Congressman Fred Upton, which now heads to an uncertain future in the U.S. Senate.

It was criticized during floor debate by mostly democratic lawmakers as a monumental waste of time in a waning congress with little time to spare.

Critics on both sides say say there are 50-projects in the pipeline funded from the same 34-billion dollar loan fund, many that that have been successes, and more than make up for the Solyndra bankruptcy, and some that pose an even bigger risk than Solyndra that won’t be effected by this bill.

And they say there is another $34-billion to be loaned. They say the House bill is destined to die on a dusty shelf in the Senate anyway, and it was only trotted out one more time to take a political stab at the Obama Administration. It was approved Friday and got scant national attention.

Prolonged fight key

Geman, 2011

The Hill staff writer, “Poll: Solyndra ‘not dinner table conversation’ yet,” The Hill, http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/184481-poll-solyndra-not-dinner-table-conversation-yet

“Solyndra does pose a potential problem for future public investments in clean energy, since it further fuels general skepticism about government’s fiscal decisions. A prolonged drumbeat on this issue could reinforce the strong concerns that voters across the political spectrum hold toward government financial decision‐making,” the memo states. “However, it is far more likely to heighten voters’ concerns about government stimulus spending in general than it is to erode perceptions of the solar industry.”