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There is a global movement towards renewable energies now – government must be careful not to reverse this trend.

Manish Bapna, Interim President, World Resources Institute, “2012: A Breakthrough for Renewable Energy?,” Huffington Post, February 12, 2012, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/manish-bapna/2012-a-breakthrough-for-r\_b\_1263543.html, accessed 6-20-2012.

Despite conventional wisdom, there is a growing body of evidence showing that renewables are no longer decades away from being a viable and affordable alternative to fossil fuels. Instead, onshore wind and solar photovoltaics are close to a tipping point to compete head-to-head with coal and natural gas in many countries. In fact, it’s likely that 2012 could be the year when investment in renewable energy (not counting hydropower) will surpass fossil fuels, signaling a profound shift toward a global clean energy economy. Investors are leading the charge toward a clean energy future, betting heavily on renewable energy. Global investment in clean energy generation capacity reached a record high of $260 billion in 2011, Bloomberg New Energy Finance announced last month. That was up 5 percent above 2010 levels and almost five times the 2004 total. The United States, surprisingly, led the world in renewable energy investment at nearly $56 billion, and China was second with more than $47 billion. Wind farms in China and solar panels on rooftops in Europe are the biggest signs of growth. But the renewables boom is a global phenomenon. In South and Central America, investments rose 39 percent to $13 billion. In India, they rose by 25 percent to almost $4 billion; and in the Middle East and Africa, by 104 percent to $5 billion. So what is getting investors– from asset financiers to venture capitalists— so excited? The answer is simple: wind and solar energy is becoming increasingly cost competitive with coal and natural gas. In the past few years, the costs of PV modules and wind turbines have tumbled, driven mainly by technology innovations and a maturing supply chain. The results are evident in falling clean energy prices around the world. Take just a few examples: In the United States, the authoritative National Renewable Energy Laboratory forecasts that solar PV residential electricity prices could be cost competitive by 2015 across two-thirds of the country. In Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal, and Japan, solar PV is on course to match retail electricity fossil fuel prices next year, without the benefit of subsidies, according to Pike Research. In Brazil, wind power plants undercut natural gas competitors in bidding for government power contract tenders last summer. And in China, wind power prices are expected to be competitive with coal within two years. But before rushing to invest your entire pension in clean energy, there are some important caveats. Renewable power is not yet a mainstream global industry. It made up only a little over 3 percent of total world electricity generation, as of 2009. While its future seems bright, the outcome may hang on how two key issues play out: First is the unpredictable effect of the shale gas boom. In countries, like the United States, where low electricity prices already make it tough for renewables to become cost competitive, abundant and cheap shale gas may drive energy prices down even further and divert investment from wind and solar power. Low-priced natural gas is good for consumers, but it could slow the growth of renewable. This could have additional negative environmental consequences, including on greenhouse gas emissions. The second key issue is whether governments will keep up their investor-friendly commitments to clean energy policy and incentives. The BNEF report, Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment 2011, showed significant progress on that front. By early 2011, some 119 countries had policies or targets in place to support renewables, more than half of them in the developing world. But given the turbulent global economy, it is likely that fiscal and political constraints will continue to bite across much of the globe in 2012. Governments may see support for wind and solar as tempting for budget cuts. In the United States, for example, wind power developers are nervous about the potential expiration of the Production Tax Credit in December 2012. If Congress fails to renew or replace it, the industry’s robust growth will likely falter. President Obama acknowledged as much during State of the Union, when he called on Congress to extend support for wind power and solar power. So the outlook for the year is still sunny, but not cloudless for renewables. Given the significant strides the industry has made, it would be unfortunate if governments and investors turned their backs now. If they forge ahead, 2012 could indeed see global investment surpass that for fossil fuels, crossing an important threshold toward a clean energy future.

Increasing coal subsidies would cause interest in coal to exceed interest in renewables.

Edmund L. Andrews, “Lawmakers Push for Big Subsidies for Coal Process ,” NYT, May 29, 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/29/business/29coal.html?pagewanted=all, accessed 8-13-2012.

Even as Congressional leaders draft legislation to reduce greenhouse gases linked to global warming, a powerful roster of Democrats and Republicans is pushing to subsidize coal as the king of alternative fuels. Prodded by intense lobbying from the coal industry, lawmakers from coal states are proposing that taxpayers guarantee billions of dollars in construction loans for coal-to-liquid production plants, guarantee minimum prices for the new fuel, and guarantee big government purchases for the next 25 years. With both House and Senate Democrats hoping to pass “energy independence” bills by mid-July, coal supporters argue that coal-based fuels are more American than gasoline and potentially greener than ethanol. “For so many, filthy coal is a dirty four-letter word,” said Representative Nick V. Rahall, Democrat of West Virginia and chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee. “These individuals, I tell you, have their heads buried in the sand.” Environmental groups are adamantly opposed, warning that coal-based diesel fuels would at best do little to slow global warming and at worst would produce almost twice as much of the greenhouse gases tied to global warming as petroleum. Coal companies are hardly alone in asking taxpayers to underwrite alternative fuels in the name of energy independence and reduced global warming. But the scale of proposed subsidies for coal could exceed those for any alternative fuel, including corn-based ethanol.

Renewable energy is comparatively better than fossil fuels – key to jobs and manufacturing

Christina C. DiPasquale, Associate Director of Press Relations at the Center for American Progress and Kate Gordon, Vice President for Energy Policy at the Center, “Top 10 Reasons Why Green Jobs Are Vital to Our Economy,” Center for American Progress, September 7, 2011, http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/09/top\_ten\_green\_jobs.html, accessed 8-12-2012.

Green jobs are integral to any effort to jumpstart our economy and reduce as rapidly as possible our 9.1 percent unemployment rate. The rapid growth of green jobs will boost demand in our economy by reducing unemployment, make America more competitive in the global economy, and protect our public health—all of which will result in greater economic productivity and long-term economic prosperity. Here are the top 10 reasons why this is the case today and into the future: 1. There are already 2.7 million jobs across the clean economy. Clean energy is already proving to be larger job creation engine than the heavily subsidized fossil-fuels sector, putting Americans back to work in a lackluster economy. 2. Across a range of clean energy projects, including renewable energy, transit, and energy efficiency, for every million dollars spent, 16.7 green jobs are created. That is over three times the 5.3 jobs per million dollars that are created from the same spending on fossil-fuel industries. 3. The clean energy sector is growing at a rate of 8.3 percent. Solar thermal energy expanded by 18.4 percent annually from 2003 to 2010, along with solar photovoltaic power by 10.7 percent, and biofuels by 8.9 percent over the same period. Meanwhile, the U.S. wind energy industry saw 35 percent average annual growth over the past five years, accounting for 35 percent of new U.S. power capacity in that period, according to the 2010 U.S. Wind Industry Annual Market Report. As a whole, the clean energy sector’s average growth rate of 8.3 percent annually during this period was nearly double the growth rate of the overall economy during that time. 4. The production of cleaner cars and trucks is employing over 150,000 workers across the United States today. These job numbers are likely to increase as improved car and light truck standards recently announced by President Barack Obama will require more skilled employees and encourage further investment. 5. Median wages are 13 percent higher in green energy careers than the economy average. Median salaries for green jobs are $46,343, or about $7,727 more than the median wages across the broader economy. As an added benefit, nearly half of these jobs employ workers with a less than a four-year college degree, which accounts for a full 70 percent of our workforce. 6. Green jobs are made in America, spurring innovation with more U.S. content than other industries. Most of the products used in energy efficiency retrofits are more than 90 percent made in America. Sheet metal for ductwork is over 99 percent domestically sourced, as are vinyl windows (98 percent) and rigid foam insulation (more than 95 percent). Even major mechanical equipment such as furnaces (94 percent) and air conditioning and heat pumps (82 percent) are predominantly American made. 7. We have a positive trade balance in solar power components such as photovoltaic components and solar heating and cooling components of $1.9 billion, and are exporting components to China. Contrast this with the oil industry, where in 2010 alone we imported over $250 billion in petroleum-related products. As our nation’s basic manufacturing base declines, we risk losing our place in the forefront of innovation if we don’t invest in advanced manufacturing in the green sector. 8. Three separate programs for energy efficiency retrofits have employed almost 25,000 Americans in three months. The Weatherization Assistance Program, Energy Efficiency Block Grant Program, and State Energy Programs have collectively upgraded over half a million buildings since the programs began to ramp up from April 1, 2011 and June 30, 2011, providing immediate new and sustainable job opportunities to tens of thousands of construction workers eagerly searching for work. 9. Clean energy jobs are better for U.S. small businesses. Specialty construction companies that perform energy retrofits show very high rates of small business participation in the construction. Ninety-one percent of the firms involved in retrofits are mall businesses with less than 20 employees. 10. An abundance of jobs in the green sector are manufacturing jobs with an upward career track. Forty-one percent of the nation’s green jobs offer medium to long-term career building and training opportunities, and 26 percent of green jobs are in the manufacturing sector, compared to 9 percent in the traditional economy. The bottom line: Green jobs being created through smart investments in our energy infrastructure are expanding employment opportunities while reducing pollution of our air and water, providing an alternative to foreign oil, and allowing us to export more American-made goods abroad.

Anthropogenic warming causes extinction – mitigating coal in the electric power industry is key to solve.

Mudathir F. Akorede et. al, June 2012, M.Eng degree at Bayero University Kano in Electrical Engineering, tutelage engineer in the Chad Basin Development Authority’s, lectureship appointment in the Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Ilorin, professional engineer with the Council for Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN), reviewer for a number of reputable international journals, Hashim Hizam, Department of Meterology and Atmospheric Sciences, faculty, University of Putra Malaysia, M.Sc in Electrical Engineering, Polytechnic University of Brooklyn, New York, M. Z. A. Ab Kadir and I. Aris, Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Faculty of Engineering University Putra Malaysia, S.D. Buba professor of Climatology University of Putra Malaysia, Ph.D. paleoclimatology, University of Oxford, M.Eng at the University of Putra Malaysia, Renewable & Sustainable Energy Reviews, Vol. 16 Issue 5, “Mitigating the anthropogenic global warming in the electric power industry,” p. 1, Ebsco Host

One of the most current and widely discussed factors that could lead to the ultimate end of man’s existence and the world at large is global warming. Global warming, described as the greatest environmental challenge in the 21st century, is the increase in the average global air temperature near the surface of the Earth, caused by the gases that trap heat in the atmosphere called greenhouse gases (GHGs). These gases are emitted to the atmosphere mostly as a result of human activities, and can lead to global climate change. The economic losses arising from climate change presently valued at $125 billion annually, has been projected to increase to $600 billion per year by 2030, unless critical measures are taken to reduce the spate of GHG emissions. Globally, the power generation sector is responsible for the largest share of GHG emissions today. The reason for this is that most power plants worldwide still feed on fossil fuels, mostly coal and consequently produce the largest amount of CO2 emitted into the atmosphere. Mitigating CO2 emissions in the power industry therefore, would significantly contribute to the global efforts to control GHGs. This paper gives a brief overview of GHGs, discusses the factors that aid global warming, and examines the expected devastating effects of this fundamental global threat on the entire planet. The study further identifies the key areas to mitigate global warming with a particular focus on the electric power industry.

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Energy production is inseparable from capitalist growth—their narrow lens framing is complicit through excusing avoidance & propping up destructive forces

Clark and York ’8 Brett Clark, assistant professor of sociology at North Carolina State University, and Richard York, coeditor of Organization %26 Environment and associate professor of sociology at the University of Oregon, "Rifts and Shifts: Getting to the Root of Environmental Crises," Monthly Review, Vol. 60, Issue 06, November 2008

The development of energy production technologies provides one of the best examples of rifts and shifts, as technological fixes to energy problems create new ecological crises in the attempt to alleviate old ones. Biomass, particularly wood, has, of course, been one of the primary energy sources humans have depended on throughout their history. The development of more energy intensive processes, such as the smelting of metals, was, therefore, connected with greater pressure on forests, as trees were fed to the fires. By the time the Industrial Revolution began to emerge in Europe, vast regions of the continent had already been deforested, particularly in areas close to major sites of production, and much of this deforestation was driven by the demand for fuel. As industrialization advanced, new sources of power were desired to fuel the machines that allowed for production to take place on a growing scale. Whole forests could be devoured at an unprecedented rate, making wood ever more scarce. The tension between the desire of the capitalist owners of the new industrial technologies for expanding the accumulation of capital and the biophysical limits of Earth were apparent from the start of the Industrial Revolution. However, capitalists did not concern themselves with the internal contradictions of capitalism, except insofar as they were barriers to be transcended. Thus, efforts to achieve what we would today call sustainability were not even considered by the elite. Rather, coal (and subsequently other fossil fuels) quickly became the standard fuel of industry, temporarily sidestepping the fuelwood crisis (although forests continued to fall due to the many demands placed on them) but laying the foundations for our current global climate change crisis by dramatically increasing the emission of carbon dioxide.16 The pattern has remained similar to how it was in the early years of the Industrial Revolution. Oil was quickly added to coal as a fuel source and a variety of other energy sources were increasingly exploited. Among these was hydropower, the generation of which requires damming rivers, and thus destroying aquatic ecosystems. For example, the expansion of hydropower over the twentieth century in the U.S. Pacific Northwest was the primary force leading to the widespread depletion and extinction of salmon runs. Nuclear power was, of course, the most controversial addition to the power mix. Despite initial claims that it would provide clean, unlimited power that would be too cheap to meter, it proved to be an expensive, risky power source that produced long-lived highly radioactive waste for which safe long-term storage sites have been nearly impossible to develop. Now, in the twenty-first century, with global climate change finally being recognized by the elite as a serious problem, the proposed solutions are, as we would expect, to shift the problem from one form of energy to a new form of energy. Nuclear power, despite its drop in popularity toward the end of the last century, due to high costs and widespread public opposition, is now very much back on the agenda, with new promises of how the new nuclear plants are safer—never mind the issue of radioactive waste. We are also regaled with promises of agrofuels, ironically bringing us back to the pre-coal energy crisis. Recent scientific reports note that growing crops for agrofuel to feed cars may actually increase the carbon emitted into the atmosphere.17 But even this ignores the fact that the production of agrofuel would be based on unsustainable agricultural practices that demand massive inputs of fertilizers and would only further the depletion of soil nutrients, bringing us back to the metabolic rift that Marx originally addressed. Two recent examples of technical approaches to mitigating climate change are particularly illustrative of how technological optimism distracts us from the political-economic sources of our environmental problems. Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen, who admirably played a central role in identifying and analyzing human-generated ozone depletion in the stratosphere, recently argued that climate change can be avoided by injecting sulfur particles into the stratosphere to increase the albedo of the Earth, and thus reflect more of the sun’s energy back into space, which would counter the warming stemming from rising concentrations of greenhouse gases. Although no doubt offered sincerely and out of desperation stemming from the failure of those in power adequately to address the mounting climate crisis, the technical framing of the climate change issue makes it easy for political and business leaders to avoid addressing greenhouse gas emissions, since they can claim that technical fixes make it unnecessary to take action to preserve forests and curtail the burning of fossil fuels. Engineering the atmosphere on this scale is likely to have many far-reaching consequences (acid rain being only the most obvious), many of which have not been anticipated. In a similar vein, well-known physicist Freeman Dyson recently suggested that we can avoid global climate change by replacing one-quarter of the world’s forests with genetically engineered carbon-eating trees. The ecological consequences of such an action would likely be extraordinary. Both of these so-called solutions avoid addressing the dynamics of an economic system that is largely structured around burning fossil fuels, that must constantly renew itself on a larger scale, and that runs roughshod over nature. Often techno-solutions are proposed in a manner that suggests they are completely removed from the world as it operates. The irony is that such narrowly conceived “solutions” would only serve as a means to prop up the very forces driving ecological degradation, allowing those forces to continue to operate, as they create additional ecological rifts.18

The alternative is to do nothing – this solves the inevitability of capitalism

Zizek 08—Senior Research @ Institute for Social Studies-Ljubljana [Slavoj, Violence, p. 207-217

While the parallel holds, the concluding characterisation seems to fall short: the unsettling message of Seeing is not so much the indissolubility of both people and government as much the compulsive nature of democratic rituals of freedom. What happens is that by abstaining from voting, people effectively dissolve the government-not only in the limited sense of overthrowing the existing government, but more radically. Why is the government thrown into such a panic by the voters' abstention? It is compelled to confront the fact that it exists, that it exerts power, only insofar as it is accepted as such by its subjects-accepted even in the mode of rejection. The voters' abstention goes further than the intra-political negation, the vote of no confidence: it rejects the very frame of decision. In psychoanalytic terms, the voters' abstention is something like the psychotic Verwerfung (foreclosure, rejection/repudiation), which is a more radical move than repression (Verdrangung). According to Freud, the repressed is intellectually accepted by the subject, since it is named, and at the same time is negated because the subject refuses to recognise it, refuses to recognise him or herself in it. In contrast to this, foreclosure rejects the term from the symbolic tout court. To circumscribe the contours of this radical rejection, one is tempted to evoke Badiou's provocative thesis: "It is better to do nothing than to contribute to the invention of formal ways of rendering visible that which Empire already recognizes as existent.''6 Better to do nothing than to engage in localised acts the ultimate function of which is to make the system run more smoothly (acts such as providing space for the multitude of new subjectivities). The threat today is not passivity, but pseudoactivity, the urge to "be active," to "participate," to mask the nothingness of what goes on. People intervene all the time, "do something"; academics participate in meaningless debates, and so on. The truly difficult thing is to step back, to withdraw. Those in power often prefer even a "critical" participation, a dialogue, to silence-just to engage us in "dialogue," to make sure our ominous passivity is broken. The voters' abstention is thus a true political act: it forcefully confronts us with the vacuity of today's democracies.If one means by violence a radical upheaval of the basic social relations, then, crazy and tasteless as it may sound, the problem with historical monsters who slaughtered millions was that they were not violent enough. Sometimes doing nothing is the most violent thing to do.

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TEXT: Congressional rulemaking bodies should facilitate regulatory negotiations with relevant parties over the proposal of exempting modified and new coal-fired power plants from Utility Mercury and Air Toxics Standards and changing the carbon dioxide limit of the New Source Performance Standards for Greenhouse Gas Emissions for modified and new coal-fired power plants to 2,000 pounds per MWh and subsequently implement the negotiated policy.

CP Reduces environmental restrictions without hurting the environment or increasing costs

Richard J. Curcio, Kent State, and Fran M. Wolf, Youngstown State University, “CORPORATE ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY:¶ IMPACT UPON FIRM VALUE,” Journal Of Financial And Strategic Decisions, Summer 1996.

A good relationship with activist groups cannot be overemphasized. Lavelle (1993) reports that more than onehalf¶ of corporate attorney respondents in a National Law Journal/Arthur Andersen survey state that community¶ activists impact corporate behavior. “Reg-neg”, or regulatory negotiation between corporations and interested¶ parties such as environmental groups, has already been written into some environmental legislation. The firm and¶ environmental groups may agree on a plan that reduces costs by allowing the firm to bypass rigid command-andcontrol¶ regulation in favor of an alternative that is better both for the firm and for the environment.¶ Firms that have chosen an environmentally proactive strategy face fewer expenses when conducting inter-state¶ and international business. Corporations must comply with more stringent environmental standards originating¶ with other states and countries. For example, Germany regularly returns excess packaging to the offending company at the latter’s expense. Extra expenditures are incurred by less environmentally responsible firms in the¶ form of special packaging, manufacturing or other requirements when shipping to those areas.¶ In many cases, recycled inputs or raw materials used by the ERF are less costly. Similarly, recycling can¶ decrease disposal costs. One significant cost faced by most manufacturers is waste disposal of hazardous materials.¶ An ERF is often able to significantly reduce hazardous material disposal costs along with the potential liability¶ associated with them.

Plan leads to excessive litigation – Reg Negs avoid

CNA, Center for Negotiation Analysis, not-for-profit research institute established in 1993 devoted to studying, training, and providingg practical advisory support concerning negotiations, mediation, and other forms of conflict resolution at the national, regional and international levels, “Regulatory Negotiations,” February 1, 2004, <http://www.negotiations.org/reg-neg1.htm>, accessed 9-12-2012.

The traditional process of regulatory development is typically top-down. Government initiates, formulates and proposes the rules. In centralized or closed systems, regulations are imposed; in more open systems, businesses, groups or individuals may comment on the proposals in public hearings, but with little possibility of making major structural and functional modifications to the regulations. This process, while well-intentioned, often leaves stakeholders feeling far removed from the process and disempowered. They may feel that they have minimal voice in designing the regulations, standards and provisions that must be obeyed, and, as a result, compliance may be low and enforcement costs high -- a double-edged sword.¶ Stakeholder reactions to top-down regulatory development can have negative implications. If penalties are increased to discourage noncompliance, businesses may migrate into a "shadow economy," thereby fueling corruption, reducing tax revenues and evading the regulatory regime altogether. In some societies, lengthy and costly litigation in the courts is sometimes pursued by civil society groups to modify or eliminate imposed regulations. Antagonistic and adversarial relations between regulatory agencies and the regulated parties may ensue, resulting in delay or outright disregard for the regulation’s intent. The lack of effective and frank dialogue between the regulators and the regulated is usually blamed for these negative consequences.¶ There is an alternative approach to the traditional process of regulatory formulation and implementation – negotiated rulemaking or regulatory negotiation (reg-neg). Negotiated rulemaking brings together affected stakeholder groups -- businesses, organizations, and citizens -- with the relevant government agency and a neutral mediator or facilitator to build a consensus on the features of a new regulation before it is proposed officially by the agency. Regulatory provisions are developed as a bottom-up participatory process of negotiation.¶ Negotiated rulemaking is a fully collaborative process, in which all interested groups are convened in an "Advisory Committee." Key issues and concerns are identified, the interests of all sides are compared and contrasted, negotiations take place, and hopefully, agreements based on consensus are developed.¶ In the United States, negotiated rulemaking became an officially recommended approach to develop new regulations by federal government agencies in 1990 when the Negotiated Rulemaking Act (5 U.S.C. 561-570) was passed by Congress. A September 1993 Executive Order from the White House requires all federal agencies to consider applying negotiated rulemaking strategies in future regulatory actions. However, the approach has been used informally by government agencies since the 1970s. The Department of Labor, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Department of the Interior, are its principal proponents. By far, the EPA has been the most frequent user of negotiated rulemaking. Over 50 federal negotiated rulemaking cases have been documented between 1982 and 1995; many more applications have been conducted in the United States at the state level . Examples of environmental regulations developed using negotiated rulemaking in the United States include:¶ Penalties for businesses for noncompliance with the Clean Air Act¶ Exceptions for licensing pesticides¶ Performance standards for wood burning stoves¶ Controls on volatile organic chemical equipment leaks¶ Standards for transporting hazardous wastes¶ Standards for chemicals used in manufacturing wood furniture.¶ The experience with negotiated rulemaking in the United States has produced several benefits:¶ While negotiated rulemaking takes more time and effort upfront than traditional modes of developing regulations, all the stakeholders, including government agencies, are more satisfied with the results. ¶ Participants find that with a negotiated process, the resulting regulations tend not to be challenged in court. (In contrast, about 80 percent of all EPA regulations have been challenged in court and about 30 percent have been changed as a result.)¶ Less time, money and effort are expended on enforcing the regulations.¶ Final regulations are technically more accurate and clear to everyone.¶ Final regulations can be implemented earlier and with a higher compliance rate.¶ More cooperative relationships are established between the agency and the regulated parties.

Effective U.S. courts are key to immigration enforcement

Brad Heath, “Immigration courts face huge backlog,” March 29, 2009, <http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2009-03-29-immigcourt_N.htm>, accessed 9-21-2012.

The nation's immigration courts are now so clogged that nearly 90,000 people accused of being in the United States illegally waited at least two years for a judge to decide whether they must leave, one of the last bottlenecks in a push to more strictly enforce immigration laws.¶ Their cases — identified by a USA TODAY review of the courts' dockets since 2003 — are emblematic of delays in the little-known court system that lawyers, lawmakers and others say is on the verge of being overwhelmed. Among them were 14,000 immigrants whose cases took more than five years to decide and a few that took more than a decade.¶ "It's an indication that they just don't have enough resources," says Kerri Sherlock Talbot of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.¶ Some immigration courts are now so backlogged that just putting a case on a judge's calendar can take more than a year, says Dana Marks, an immigration judge in San Francisco and president of the National Association of Immigration Judges.¶ "You could have a case that would take an hour (to hear). But I can't give you that hour of time for 14 months," Marks says.¶ In the most extreme cases, immigrants can remain locked up while their cases are delayed. More often, the backlogs leave them struggling to exist until they learn their fate, Marks and others say.¶ The immigration courts, run by the Justice Department, have weathered years of criticism that their 224 judges are unable to handle a flood of increasingly-complicated cases. Justice Department spokeswoman Susan Eastwood acknowledges some long delays, but says that's often the result of unusual circumstances. She says the department has enough judges.¶ USA TODAY reviewed immigration court cases completed between 2003 and mid-2008, using a copy of the court system's docket obtained from the Justice Department's Executive Office for Immigration Review. That listing included only cases that have been resolved, making it impossible to determine how many more long-delayed cases might be pending.¶ Five-year delays were most common in San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York, but were far less common around busy border crossings such as San Diego and Tucson, according to the dockets.¶ Federal law requires the courts to deal swiftly with some cases, including requests for asylum and immigrants who are jailed while their cases are heard, Eastwood says. The department has no guidelines for how quickly the courts should handle other cases, she says.¶ Immigration lawyers say they are wary of attempts to simply move cases through the system faster. "Do you want to be expedient or do you want to be just?" says San Francisco attorney Jacquelyn Newman.

Poor enforcement causes terrorism

Susan N. Herman, Centennial Professor of Law, Brooklyn Law School. B.A. 1968, Barnard

College; J.D. 1974, New York University School of Law. The author serves as President

of the American Civil Liberties Union, “FEDERAL CRIMINAL LITIGATION IN 20/20 VISION,” May 14, 2009, <http://www.lclark.edu/live/files/778>, accessed 9-21-2012.

Drug enforcement has been my chief example of federal crime so ¶ far because it has been one of the major components of growth in the ¶ federal docket. From comprising a rather small percentage of the federal ¶ docket in 1968, by the 1980’s, drug cases amounted to about twenty-one ¶ percent of the federal criminal docket.¶ 12¶ More recently, they amounted to ¶ about thirty-five percent of the federal criminal docket.¶ 13¶ So decisions made ¶ by Congress, not only about what to criminalize in the statutes themselves, ¶ but also about resources allocated to investigation and prosecution, ¶ combined with the agency’s and prosecutors’ enforcement decisions, have ¶ caused the federal courts to experience a tremendous and growing volume ¶ of drug cases—currently amounting to about seventeen percent of the ¶ federal criminal docket.¶ 14¶ However, a new trend seems to be emerging that ¶ may be rivaling drug enforcement in having a major impact on the kinds of ¶ cases federal judges confront. There were some 155,694 federal criminal ¶ cases in fiscal year 2008.¶ 15¶ Analysis shows that many of those new cases were ¶ referrals from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).¶ 16¶ Just when ¶ federal drug prosecutions seem to be settling down, immigration ¶ enforcement is on the rise, evidently fueling a twenty-seven and a half percent increase in one year in the number of immigration offense cases on ¶ the federal docket, which has greatly contributed to the overall increase in ¶ the federal criminal caseload.¶ 17¶ As Dean Erwin Chemerinsky remarked at the ¶ 2008 conference, certain aspects of the approach of the DHS in its antiterrorism efforts are challenging our model of criminal jurisdiction.¶ 18¶ Instead of being backward looking, waiting for someone to commit a crime ¶ and then prosecuting him or her for the crime, the DHS aims to prevent ¶ terrorism-related crime. Most DHS cases that end up as federal prosecutions ¶ are not prosecutions under terrorism-related statutes, but are prosecutions ¶ for immigration violations.¶ 19¶ The DHS seems to be focusing on immigration ¶ enforcement as part of its forward-looking strategy to prevent terrorism. ¶ Whether or not this strategy is effective can be debated; that the strategy has ¶ an impact on the work of the federal courts is not debatable.

Extinction

Alexander 2003 (Yonah prof and dir. of Inter-University for Terrorism Studies, Washington Times, August 28)

Last week's brutal suicide bombings in Baghdad and Jerusalem have once again illustrated dramatically that the international community failed, thus far at least, to understand the magnitude and implications of the terrorist threats to the very survival of civilization itself. Even the United States and Israel have for decades tended to regard terrorism as a mere tactical nuisance or irritant rather than a critical strategic challenge to their national security concerns. It is not surprising, therefore, that on September 11, 2001, Americans were stunned by the unprecedented tragedy of 19 al Qaeda terrorists striking a devastating blow at the center of the nation's commercial and military powers. Likewise, Israel and its citizens, despite the collapse of the Oslo Agreements of 1993 and numerous acts of terrorism triggered by the second intifada that began almost three years ago, are still "shocked" by each suicide attack at a time of intensive diplomatic efforts to revive the moribund peace process through the now revoked cease-fire arrangements [hudna]. Why are the United States and Israel, as well as scores of other countries affected by the universal nightmare of modern terrorism surprised by new terrorist "surprises"? There are many reasons, including misunderstanding of the manifold specific factors that contribute to terrorism's expansion, such as lack of a universal definition of terrorism, the religionization of politics, double standards of morality, weak punishment of terrorists, and the exploitation of the media by terrorist propaganda and psychological warfare. Unlike their historical counterparts, contemporary terrorists have introduced a new scale of violence in terms of conventional and unconventional threats and impact. The internationalization and brutalization of current and future terrorism make it clear we have entered an Age of Super Terrorism [e.g. biological, chemical, radiological, nuclear and cyber] with its serious implications concerning national, regional and global security concerns.

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Obama wins easily absent future events – conventions, combined data prove – counterspin is self interested

Bruce Bartlett. 9-7-12. Why Barack Obama Will Win the Election Easily

http://www.thefiscaltimes.com/Columns/2012/09/07/Why-Barack-Obama-Will-Win-the-Election-Easily.aspx#page2

Having failed rather spectacularly to correctly predict Mitt Romney’s running mate—I said it definitely would not be Paul Ryan less than 24 hours before he was picked -- I should probably avoid political predictions for a while. But as all those who make their livings in the prediction business know, the secret to success is to make so many of them that a few are bound to be right. That said, I’m going to go out on a limb and predict that Barack Obama will win the election easily, at least in the all-important Electoral College. I have thought so for some time, but wanted to wait and see if the party conventions changed the political dynamics. They have; they have made me more certain of Obama’s victory. Pollster Nate Silver has done an excellent job of assembling all of the known political data on where the presidential race stood as of Wednesday. His analysis leads him to project that Obama will beat Romney 51.2 percent to 47.6 percent in the popular vote, and 311 to 227 in the Electoral College where only 270 votes are needed to win. Overall, Silver gives Obama a 76 percent chance of winning the election. Those who don’t follow the data intensively can be forgiven for not knowing what good shape Obama is in, because it is rarely reported in the mainstream media. There is a simple reason for this: it has a huge vested interest in maintaining the idea that the election is so close it cannot be called and will come down to the last vote cast on Election Day. That is because the media have huge political operations with many highly-paid commentators who need people reading and tuning in daily to see if their preferred candidate has made any headway. There is also an enormous amount of data being produced daily that requires reporting and analysis—polls, campaign contributions, charges and counter charges, endorsements, gaffes and so on. It is not hard to spin this vast cacophony of material in such a way as to maintain the fiction that the election will be close. The media, collectively, are in the position of sports announcers calling a game where one team is heavily favored and well ahead. They need to keep people watching so that advertisers will get value for their money. So they use every cliché in the book to tell viewers that “it ain’t over till it’s over” and about all the times the losing team has come from behind to win and so on and so on. Of course, it goes without saying that once in a while, the losing team does make a comeback and wins unexpectedly. But by the time that happens, all except the winning team’s hardcore fans have changed the channel or left the stadium. However, we all know about those magical come-from-behind victories because the media have an incentive to hype them as a warning to fickle fans that they better stay tuned next time. The same is going on today with the presidential race. Reporters and commentators are building up Romney’s chances and downplaying Obama’s to keep people interested. This was most evident last week when Republican speakers at their convention were played up and their talking points repeated, as if they were changing the course of the election as they spoke. This week, they are doing the same for the Democrats. I thought the Republican convention went very poorly. And apparently, I was not the only one. According to Nielsen, television ratings for the Republican convention were down sharply from 2008. And according to Gallup, Romney’s convention “bounce” was the worst for any candidate of either party except for John Kerry in 2004—and we know what happened to him. We don’t yet know what kind of bounce Obama will get, but anecdotal evidence suggests that it will at least be significantly better than Romney’s. Whereas few Republicans raved about any convention speech other than actor Clint Eastwood’s rambling conversation with an empty chair, Democrats are raving about those by Michele Obama, Bill Clinton and a number of other speakers at their convention. To be sure, there are still opportunities for Republicans to level the playing field. There will be three debates between Romney and Obama, as well as one between the respective vice presidential nominees. They could make a difference, but history does not show that debates have much impact.

Plan isolates key democrats – increasing coal will cause Obama backlash.

McMorris-Santoro 8/8/12 Evan McMorris-Santoro, covered politics for Talking Points Memo since 2009, reporter at National Journal’s Hotline covering election 2008, “Progressive Group Calls On Obama To Take Down Pro-Coal Ad”, Talking Points Memo, August 8th, 2012, http://2012.talkingpointsmemo.com/2012/08/progressivs-attack-obama-coal-ad.php

On Wednesday the progressive group Credo Action called on Obama to take down the ad, launching a web petition pressuring the president’s campaign to drop the coal attacks on Romney. “Drop your cynical pro-coal ad,” the petition reads. “Is the Obama campaign actually misguided enough to think that anyone whose number one issue is promoting dirty coal would also be misguided enough to vote for Obama instead of Romney?” The group praises the Obama administration for doing “some very good things” on coal, including using the Clean Air Act to “limit, for the first time, toxic mercury pollution from coal plants” and instituting a “Carbon Standard.” Credo believes Obama is actually anti-coal, but is attacking Romney to score political points. That would put Obama, ironically, on the same side as pro-coal Republicans who attacked the Obama campaign earlier this year for not including “clean coal” in its published list of energy priorities. The Obama campaign added the term to the list (dumping “fuel efficiency” for “clean coal” on the campaign’s seven-bullet energy priority list). And that fight was reminiscent of one from 2008, when the Obama campaign was forced to publicly amp up its support for “clean coal technology” after Joe Biden said he and Obama were against it. The coal fight in both instances what is exposed divides in the Democratic coalition. Progressive groups were upset Obama got behind still a fantasy technology with rhetoric supported by the coal industry, while union groups were happy Obama stood up for a industry that provides thousands of union jobs. Coal is hugely important to states like Virginia and Ohio and Obama does not want to get on the wrong side of coal supporters. Clean coal was a rare moment of disagreement between the left and Obama during the 2008 campaign. Now coal is divide Obama from the left once again.

Approval ratings are key to the election

Cook, The National Journal Political Analyst, 11

(Charlie, October 27, “Underwater,” http://www.nationaljournal.com/columns/cook-report/the-cook-report-obama-underwater-20111027, d/a 7-20-12, ads)

The best barometer of how a president is going to fare is his approval rating, which starts taking on predictive value about a year out. As each month goes by, the rating becomes a better indicator of the eventual results. Presidents with approval numbers above 48 to 50 percent in the Gallup Poll win reelection. Those with approval ratings below that level usually lose. If voters don’t approve of the job you are doing after four years in office, they usually don’t vote for you. Of course, a candidate can win the popular vote and still lose the Electoral College. It happened to Samuel Tilden in 1876, Grover Cleveland in 1888, and Al Gore in 2000. But the popular votes and the Electoral College numbers usually come down on the same side.

Romney will bomb Iran his first month in office

Kidd 12 (Dr. Billy, research psychologist and long-term political activist, June 14, ‘Romney Strategist Prepare for War Against Iran,’ http://www.opposingviews.com/i/politics/foreign-policy/crisis-gaza/romney-strategists-prepare-war-against-iran)

The Emergency Committee for Israel is running an advertisement urging an immediate war with Iran. This organization was founded by Weekly Standard creator, and Romney strategist, William Kristol. Its message is that the evil, Jewish-hating Persian theocracy must be obliterated to make way for Israeli expansion. Sound preposterous? Well, the ploy, here, is to make Romney look like a Delta Team 6 super-commando. This supposedly will take Jewish voters away from Obama in the November election. The other purpose is to sanctify the execution of a million Iranians when Romney orders the bombing come next January.

Attacking Iran causes full-scale war with Russia

 Conway January 17, 2012 Alvin Conway Author, blogger he cites Russia’s former ambassador to NATO and the Arab Times “Iranian Crisis: escalating series of troubling events sliding world towards war” http://theextinctionprotocol.wordpress.com/2012/01/17/iranian-crisis-escalating-series-of-troubling-events-sliding-world-towards-war/

Russian response could lead to WWIII: Russia would regard any military intervention linked to Iran’s nuclear program as a threat to its own security, Moscow’s departing ambassador to NATO warned on Friday. “Iran is our neighbor,” Dmitry Rogozin\* told reporters in Brussels. “And if Iran is involved in any military action, it’s a direct threat to our security.” –Arab Times

\*Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Russia, vice-premier of Russian Government in charge of defense industry.

Extinction

Nick Bostrom 2002 Professor, Faculty of Philosophy, Oxford University“Existential Risks” Journal of Evolution and Technology, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2002) . http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html

A much greater existential risk emerged with the build-up of nuclear arsenals in the US and the USSR. An all-out nuclear war was a possibility with both a substantial probability and with consequences that might have been persistent enough to qualify as global and terminal. There was a real worry among those best acquainted with the information available at the time that a nuclear Armageddon would occur and that it might annihilate our species or permanently destroy human civilization.[4] Russia and the US retain large nuclear arsenals that could be used in a future confrontation, either accidentally or deliberately. There is also a risk that other states may one day build up large nuclear arsenals. Note however that a smaller nuclear exchange, between India and Pakistan for instance, is not an existential risk, since it would not destroy or thwart humankind’s potential permanently. Such a war might however be a local terminal risk for the cities most likely to be targeted. Unfortunately, we shall see that nuclear Armageddon and comet or asteroid strikes are mere preludes to the existential risks that we will encounter in the 21st century.

### ECON

Huge, catastrophic blackout is not likely in the US – many safeguards prevent something on that scale.

Maggie Koerth-Baker at 6:06 am Friday, Aug 3 2012 Blackout: What's wrong with the American grid

<http://boingboing.net/2012/08/03/blackout-whats-wrong-with-t.html>

¶ Let’s get one thing out of the way right up front: The North American electric grid is not one bad day away from the kind of catastrophic failures we saw in India this week. I’ve heard a lot of people speculating on this, but the folks who know the grid say that, while such a huge blackout is theoretically possible, it is also extremely unlikely. As Clark Gellings, a fellow at the Electric Power Research Institute put it, “An engineer will never say never,” but you should definitely not assume anything resembling an imminent threat at that scale. Remember, the blackouts this week cut power to half of all Indian electricity customers. Even the 2003 blackout—the largest blackout in North America ever—only affected about 15% of Americans.¶ ¶ We don’t know yet what, exactly, caused the Indian blackouts, but there are several key differences between their grid and our grid. India’s electricity is only weakly tied to the people who use it, Gellings told me. Most of the power plants are in the far north. Most of the population is in the far south. The power lines linking the two are neither robust nor numerous. That’s not a problem we have in North America.¶ ¶ Likewise, India has considerably more demand for electricity than it has supply. Even on a good day, there’s not enough electricity for all the people who want it, said Jeff Dagle, an engineer with the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory’s Advanced Power and Energy Systems research group. “They’re pushing their system much harder, to its limits,” he said. “If they have a problem, there’s less cushion to absorb it. Our system has rules that prevent us from dipping into our electric reserves on a day-to-day basis. So we have reserve power for emergencies.”

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

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

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

Coal unsustainable - shocks wreck economy.

Mat McDermott, 11-29-2010, “Coal Prices May Rise Sooner Than Anyone Expects As Global Reserves Revised Downward,” Tree Hugger, http://www.treehugger.com/corporate-responsibility/coal-prices-may-rise-sooner-than-anyone-expects-as-global-reserves-revised-downward.html

We've written about how the world's recoverable coal reserves may be much less than commonly believed (and touted by politicians and coal producers) for a while now; here's another take on it from Richard Heinberg and David Fridley of the Post Carbon Institute: Writing in Nature, they point out that the main coal-producing countries of the world are overestimating supplies and that coal prices could start rising far sooner than anyone thinks--with obvious serious implications for energy policy. In coming to this conclusion, the authors point out that there's something off with mainstream projections for coal supply. For the past couple of decades global supply has been dropping at a faster rate than consumption.It seems advances in geology have caused a number of nations to revise downward the amount of economically recoverable coal reserves they have: South Africa and Germany have both reduced there estimates by over a third in the past five years. Furthermore, the US hasn't updated its national coal survey since the 1970s, meaning there well may be a nasty shock in store should a new estimate be done today.The Post Carbon Institute recommends that countries should "immediately start planning for higher coal prices, and reconsider their investments in clean-coal technology...the economic shocks for rising prices would be felt by every sector of society."When may we start seeing more rapidly rising coal prices? Heinberg and Fridley say it'll happen by the end of this decade.

Railroads don’t need coal.

Ken Silverstein, 5-14-2012, “Railroading Coal: The Uneasy Marriage Between Coal and Rail Carriers,” Energy Biz, http://www.energybiz.com/article/12/05/railroading-coal-uneasy-marriage-between-coal-and-rail-carriers

It might be called “Ripple Through Economics.” It’s in reference to the fall in demand for domestic coal and how it is affecting the railroad industry that carries such fuel from the mine mouth to the utilities that burn it. Despite the slowdown in coal demand, the top-tier rail carriers are actually doing just fine. As an industrial class, they have outperformed the broader companies within the Standard & Poor’s 500: 29 percent to 21 percent, respectively. That performance, though, is the result of greater shipments by the automotive industry and through increased productivity. “All the railroads exceeded consensus estimates by a healthy margin largely due to greater-than-expected productivity gains, robust pricing and less-than-feared decline in coal revenues,” says the Paragon Report, which is a market research company. According to a Wall Street Journal report, coal consumption in November 2011 was 10 percent below where it had been almost four years earlier. That’s affected the rail industry, which has seen its overall traffic fall by 1.4 percent in 2012, adds the Association of American Railroads. Coal shipments, specifically, have dropped by 7.6 percent.

Railroads rebounding more than economy

Association of American Railroads(AAR) July 2012 <http://www.aar.org/~/media/aar/Background-Papers/Railroads-and-Chemicals.ashx> “Railroads and Chemicals”

Freight railroading is a “derived demand” industry: demand for rail service occurs as a result of demand elsewhere in the economy for the products railroads haul. The recession that began in late 2007 led to reduced demand for goods produced by rail customers — including chemical companies — thus negatively impacting railroads too. The recovery in 2010 and 2011, while slower than anyone would have preferred, meant somewhat higher rail chemical carloadings. In 2011, Class I railroads originated 2.3 million carloads and 192 million tons of chemicals, both up significantly from the recession-reduced levels of 2009 (see nearby charts).

Railroads are durable over the long term, and nat gas prices and China’s economy overwhelm solvency

Liam Denning March 16, 2012, 12:00 p.m. ET Railroads Struggle at the Coal Face http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303863404577285382160837836.html

This is encouraging, but the shift in demand for coal isn't merely the side-effect of a mild winter. Chronic oversupply in the natural-gas market, limiting price increases, will make it a formidable competitor to coal in the utilities sector for years to come. Compounding this, environmental regulations on coal-fired power plants are tightening, which will force some plants to close altogether. Bernstein estimates a net 15% of the current fleet will close by 2015, equivalent to 106 million tons of annual coal demand, or 10%. Meanwhile, another offset for the railways, coal exports, may also run out of steam. Chinese demand for coal, especially for making steel, has helped keep the coal cars rolling. But this was due to China's construction binge as part of government stimulus efforts. Those followed the financial crisis and floods in Queensland that limited competing coal cargoes from Australia. These tailwinds cannot be relied on in the future. Longer term, the desire for more fuel-efficient modes of transportation provides support for railroads as an investment—hence the purchase of Burlington Northern Santa Fe by Berkshire Hathaway, BRKB +0.24% announced in 2009. But with the bedrock of their coal business being undermined, anyone buying these stocks now will need to take Warren Buffett's approach and settle in for the long haul.

Extinction impossible

Gregg Easterbrook (a senior fellow at The New Republic) July 2003 “We're All Gonna Die!” http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/11.07/doomsday.html?pg=1&topic=&topic\_set=

Germ warfare!Like chemical agents, biological weapons have never lived up to their billing in popular culture. Consider the 1995 medical thriller Outbreak, in which a highly contagious virus takes out entire towns. The reality is quite different. Weaponized smallpox escaped from a Soviet laboratory in Aralsk, Kazakhstan, in 1971; three people died, no epidemic followed. In 1979, weapons-grade anthrax got out of a Soviet facility in Sverdlovsk (now called Ekaterinburg); 68 died, no epidemic. The loss of life was tragic, but no greater than could have been caused by a single conventional bomb. In 1989, workers at a US government facility near Washington were accidentally exposed to Ebola virus. They walked around the community and hung out with family and friends for several days before the mistake was discovered. No one died. The fact is, evolution has spent millions of years conditioning mammals to resist germs. Consider the Black Plague. It was the worst known pathogen in history, loose in a Middle Ages society of poor public health, awful sanitation, and no antibiotics. Yet it didn't kill off humanity. Most people who were caught in the epidemic survived. Any superbug introduced into today's Western world would encounter top-notch public health, excellent sanitation, and an array of medicines specifically engineered to kill bioagents. Perhaps one day some aspiring Dr. Evil will invent a bug that bypasses the immune system. Because it is possible some novel superdisease could be invented, or that existing pathogens like smallpox could be genetically altered to make them more virulent (two-thirds of those who contract natural smallpox survive), biological agents are a legitimate concern. They may turn increasingly troublesome as time passes and knowledge of biotechnology becomes harder to control, allowing individuals or small groups to cook up nasty germs as readily as they can buy guns today. But no superplague has ever come close to wiping out humanity before, and it seems unlikely to happen in the future.

Even if deliberately selected for lethality – disease wont cause extinction

Mark Leney 1996 (Professor of Biological Anthropology University of Cambridge) http://www.indiana.edu/~diatom/plextinc.dis

I think that epidemics are a most unlikely expalnation for continent wide extinctions. An extinction of this type is the same sort of event in evolutionary terms as the megaherbiovres undergoing population expansion, eating all the grass and starving themselves to extinction. Who would credit such a scenario? Biological systems rarely run like this, the componens of these systems adapt either genotypically in the evolutionary sense or in the immediate ontogenetic sense. As pathogens probably have a greater potential for evolutionary change than their hosts it is the 'experience' of the pathogens that counts in the long run not the immunological naivity of the large animal populations. Whilst super-virulent pathogens can cause local catastrophe, they tend to evolve towards intermediate levels of pathogenicity in the medium term as this maximises their reproductive success. Even when pathogens such as myxamatosis are deliberately selected for virulence and then introduced to a naive wild population, extinction only occurs locally with the pathogen rapidly evolving towards lowered virulence as it squeezes through population bottlenecks. The myth of the exterminator pathogen is just that. Consider the evolutionary achievements of viruses with different levels of virulence AIDS vs Ebola. AIDS is not a wipeout virus it has propagated itself widely. Ebola never gets going in the human population as it kills all the hosts before enough transmissions take place to achieve any growth. The disease model just doesn't wash for the whole continent.

Econ collapse doesn’t cause war – prefer our studies

Samuel Bazzi (Department of Economics at University of California San Diego) and Christopher Blattman (assistant professor of political science and economics at Yale University) November 2011 “Economic Shocks and Conflict: The (Absence of?) Evidence from Commodity Prices” <http://www.chrisblattman.com/documents/research/2011.EconomicShocksAndConflict.pdf?9d7bd4>

VI. Discussion and conclusions A. Implications for our theories of political instability and conflict The state is not a prize?—Warlord politics and the state prize logic lie at the center of the most influential models of conflict, state development, and political transitions in economics and political science. Yet we see no evidence for this idea in economic shocks, even when looking at the friendliest cases: fragile and unconstrained states dominated by extractive commodity revenues. Indeed, we see the opposite correlation: if anything, higher rents from commodity prices weakly 22 lower the risk and length of conflict. Perhaps shocks are the wrong test. Stocks of resources could matter more than price shocks (especially if shocks are transitory). But combined with emerging evidence that war onset is no more likely even with rapid increases in known oil reserves (Humphreys 2005; Cotet and Tsui 2010) we regard the state prize logic of war with skepticism.17 Our main political economy models may need a new engine. Naturally, an absence of evidence cannot be taken for evidence of absence. Many of our conflict onset and ending results include sizeable positive and negative effects.18 Even so, commodity price shocks are highly influential in income and should provide a rich source of identifiable variation in instability. It is difficult to find a better-measured, more abundant, and plausibly exogenous independent variable than price volatility. Moreover, other time-varying variables, like rainfall and foreign aid, exhibit robust correlations with conflict in spite of suffering similar empirical drawbacks and generally smaller sample sizes (Miguel et al. 2004; Nielsen et al. 2011). Thus we take the absence of evidence seriously. Do resource revenues drive state capacity?—State prize models assume that rising revenues raise the value of the capturing the state, but have ignored or downplayed the effect of revenues on self-defense. We saw that a growing empirical political science literature takes just such a revenue-centered approach, illustrating that resource boom times permit both payoffs and repression, and that stocks of lootable or extractive resources can bring political order and stability. This countervailing effect is most likely with transitory shocks, as current revenues are affected while long term value is not. Our findings are partly consistent with this state capacity effect. For example, conflict intensity is most sensitive to changes in the extractive commodities rather than the annual agricultural crops that affect household incomes more directly. The relationship only holds for conflict intensity, however, and is somewhat fragile. We do not see a large, consistent or robust decline in conflict or coup risk when prices fall. A reasonable interpretation is that the state prize and state capacity effects are either small or tend to cancel one another out. Opportunity cost: Victory by default?—Finally, the inverse relationship between prices and war intensity is consistent with opportunity cost accounts, but not exclusively so. As we noted above, the relationship between intensity and extractive commodity prices is more consistent with the state capacity view. Moreover, we shouldn’t mistake an inverse relation between individual aggression and incomes as evidence for the opportunity cost mechanism. The same correlation is consistent with psychological theories of stress and aggression (Berkowitz 1993) and sociological and political theories of relative deprivation and anomie (Merton 1938; Gurr 1971). Microempirical work will be needed to distinguish between these mechanisms. Other reasons for a null result.—Ultimately, however, the fact that commodity price shocks have no discernible effect on new conflict onsets, but some effect on ongoing conflict, suggests that political stability might be less sensitive to income or temporary shocks than generally believed. One possibility is that successfully mounting an insurgency is no easy task. It comes with considerable risk, costs, and coordination challenges. Another possibility is that the counterfactual is still conflict onset. In poor and fragile nations, income shocks of one type or another are ubiquitous. If a nation is so fragile that a change in prices could lead to war, then other shocks may trigger war even in the absence of a price shock. The same argument has been made in debunking the myth that price shocks led to fiscal collapse and low growth in developing nations in the 1980s.19 B. A general problem of publication bias? More generally, these findings should heighten our concern with publication bias in the conflict literature. Our results run against a number of published results on commodity shocks and conflict, mainly because of select samples, misspecification, and sensitivity to model assumptions, and, most importantly, alternative measures of instability. Across the social and hard sciences, there is a concern that the majority of published research findings are false (e.g. Gerber et al. 2001). Ioannidis (2005) demonstrates that a published finding is less likely to be true when there is a greater number and lesser pre-selection of tested relationships; there is greater flexibility in designs, definitions, outcomes, and models; and when more teams are involved in the chase of statistical significance. The cross-national study of conflict is an extreme case of all these. Most worryingly, almost no paper looks at alternative dependent variables or publishes systematic robustness checks. Hegre and Sambanis (2006) have shown that the majority of published conflict results are fragile, though they focus on timeinvariant regressors and not the time-varying shocks that have grown in popularity. We are also concerned there is a “file drawer problem” (Rosenthal 1979). Consider this decision rule: scholars that discover robust results that fit a theoretical intuition pursue the results; but if results are not robust the scholar (or referees) worry about problems with the data or empirical strategy, and identify additional work to be done. If further analysis produces a robust result, it is published. If not, back to the file drawer. In the aggregate, the consequences are dire: a lower threshold of evidence for initially significant results than ambiguous ones.20

### China

No US/China war—It’s in neither country’s best interest

Ackerman 2011 (Robert Ackerman, May 10, 2011, “War Between China, U.S. Not Likely,” http://www.afcea.org/signal/signalscape/index.php/2011/05/10/11510/)

The United States and China are not likely to go to war with each other because neither country wants it and it would run counter to both nations’ best interests. That was the conclusion of a plenary panel session hosted by former Good Morning America host David Hartman at the 2011 Joint Warfighting Conference in Virginia Beach. Adm. Timothy J. Keating, USN (Ret.), former head of the U.S. Pacific Command, noted that China actually wants the United States to remain active in the Asia-Pacific region as a hedge against any other country’s adventurism. And, most of the other countries in that region want the United States to remain active as a hedge against China. Among areas of concern for China is North Korea. Wallace “Chip” Gregson, former assistant secretary of Defense for Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, said that above all China fears instability, and a North Korean collapse or war could send millions of refugees streaming into Manchuria, which has economic problems of its own.

Chinese leadership wouldn’t risk war

Ross 2009 (Robert S. Ross is Professor of Political Science at Boston College and Associate of the John King Fairbank Center for East Asian Research at Harvard University, September 2009 “Myth The Great Debate” http://nationalinterest.org/greatdebate/dragons/myth-3819)

Professor Friedberg's concluding suggestion that China's illiberal political system exacerbates the China threat fails to grasp that Beijing's authoritarian system is its greatest vulnerability. The Chinese leadership dares not risk war; it is acutely aware of its vulnerability to the will of its people and the necessity to minimize strategic adventurism and the risk of military defeat, lest it be the cause of its own demise. A balanced rather than an ideological assessment of the Sino-American dynamic offers the United States the confidence to compete with China and secure U.S. interests, and simultaneously promote U.S.-China cooperation.

Shared interests keep relations stable, overwhelm all other issues.

Winny Chen, 2010 (Testing Time for U.S.-China Relations, http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/02/china\_relations.html)

Unfortunately, President Obama’s conciliatory approach just postponed the already existing friction in U.S.-China relations. But like the times before, this rough patch will pass, too. The tone may have changed, but the challenges and shared interests ultimately remain the same. The United States and China need each other now more than ever. China needs America’s innovation and purchasing power just as much as the United States needs China’s economic growth to boost its exports and key cooperation on important global issues. China needs American-provided stability in the Asia Pacific in order to sustain its own development, and the United States needs China’s help on pressing regional and international security issues such as North Korea, piracy, and Iran. Continuing to focus on these areas of shared interests, aligning policies where we share objectives, and working through current disagreements, no matter how long it takes is the only way forward. Global problem solving on the hardest issues is made exponentially harder without China. Our national interests require a continued partnership. So even as the two countries brace for a bumpy ride through the next few months, it is important not to lose sight of the shared interests we have across a panoply of issues economic rebalancing, nonproliferation, climate change, and regional security. The key is not to overreact to the mercurial tone, but to stay focused on our shared interests and to keep working toward a mature relationship.

China growth doomed, eight reasons- Hybrid economy, environmental degradation, decreasing exports, inflation, consumer demand, unemployment, corruption, real estate bubble

Davis 2012 (Marc Davis, veteran journalist with more than 20 years experience reporting and writing on business, finance, corporate management and legal subjects, April 5, 2012, “Problems Loom For The Chinese Economy,” Investopedia, http://www.investopedia.com/financial-edge/0412/Problems-Loom-For-The-Chinese-Economy.aspx#axzz25tQ0D18Z)

In the World Bank's report, titled "China 2030," the Chinese government is urged to transform their currently hybrid economy - much of it is still controlled by the state - to a complete market economy. The government was also urged to reign in the excessive power of state-owned industry to encourage private enterprise and to close the gap on the increasing inequality of income. ¶ The nation's development pattern over the past 30 years or so, since China's transformation from communism to state capitalism with remnants of communist control, has been uneven. A major issue beyond economics, although related incidentally, is the degradation of China's environment. Unless this, among a slew of problems, are addressed and resolved, says the World Bank's report, China's growth is unsustainable. ¶ The World Bank's report is especially timely, as China has recently come under new governance, and the report could have a major impact on government policies proposed and initiated by China's new leader. ¶ Among the pressing economic challenges confronting China's new leadership is the struggling global economy, which could seriously impact China's flourishing export business. The economies of China's principal buyers of its goods - the U.S., Japan and Europe - are weak and facing increasing debt, which threaten to curtail import purchases. ¶ These global issues translate into domestic issues for the Chinese economy. Major state-owned banks face increasing risk, as the economy gears down due to declining exports. Add to this the risk of inflation, the state's financial support of public works and industry, and ever-increasing global and local debt, and the economic picture turns grim. ¶ Further exacerbating these problems is China's low consumer demand and high savings rate, its questionable ability to provide new jobs for people entering the work force, and its need to fight corruption and economic crimes.¶ Challenges also exist in China's real estate sector. A real estate boom, driven by debt, and once encouraged by the government to stimulate domestic consumption, now seems shaky. ¶ One almost universal complaint against the Chinese economy is its currency manipulation. The Chinese global exchange rate - the value of the yuan against other national currencies - is set by the government and not by the foreign exchange market, and it's pegged against the greenback.¶ Currency plays a key role with trade between China and the United States. China deliberately undervalues its currency, making its exports to the U.S. cheaper, and U.S. imports more expensive. As a result, U.S. manufacturers post smaller profits, U.S. jobs are lost and the U.S. has an enormous trade deficit with China; the deficit was recently reported to be at $31.5 billion.

No cascade of proliferation – its all alarmist rhetoric

Muthia Alagappa, pub. date: 2008, Distinguished Senior Fellow, East-West Center, “The Long Shadow: Nuclear Weapons and Security in 21st Century Asia,” accesed: 1-6-09, p. 521-2, Google Books

It will be useful at this juncture to address more directly the set of instability arguments advanced by certain policy makers and scholars: the domino effect of new nuclear weapon states, the probability of preventative action against new nuclear weapon states, and the compulsion of these states to use their small arsenals early for fear of losing them in a preventive or preemptive strike by a stronger nuclear adversary. On the domino effect, India’s and Pakistan’s nuclear weapon programs have not fueled new programs in South Asia or beyond. Iran’s quest for nuclear weapons is not a reaction to the Indian or Pakistani programs. It is grounded in that country’s security concerns about the U ntiedStates and Tehran’s regional aspirations. The North Korean test has evoked mixed reactions in Northeast Asia. Tokyo is certainly concerned; its reaction, though, has not been to initiate its own nuclear weapon program but to reaffirm and strengthen the American extended deterrence commitment to Japan. Even if the U.S.-Japan security treaty were to weaken, it is not certain that Japan would embark on a nuclear weapon program. Likewise, South Korea has sought reaffirmation of the American extended deterrence commitment, but has firmly held to its nonnuclear posture. Without dramatic change in it’s political, economic, and security circumstances, South Korea is highly unlikely to embark on a covert (or overt) nuclear weapon program as it did in the 1970s. South Korea could still become a nuclear weapon state by inheriting the nuclear weapons of North Korea should the Kim Jong Il regime collapse. Whether it retains or gives up that capability will hinge on the security circumstances of a unified Korea. The North Korean nuclear test has not spurred Taiwan or Mongolia to develop nuclear weapon capability. The point is that each country’s decision to embark on and sustain nuclear weapon programs is contingent on its particular security and other circumstances. Through appealing, the domino theory is not predictive; often it is employed to justify policy on the basis of alarmist predictions. The loss of South Vietnam, for example, did not lead to the predicted domino effect in Southeast Asia and brought about a fundamental transformation in that sub region (Lord 1993, 1996). In the nuclear arena, the nuclear programs of China, India, and Pakistan were part of a security chain reaction, not mechanically falling dominos. However, as observed earlier the Indian, Pakistani, and North Korean nuclear tests have thus far not had the domino effect predicted by alarmist analysts and policy makers. Great caution should be exercised in accepting at face value the sensational predictions of individuals who have a vested interest in accentuating the dangers of nuclear proliferation. Such analysts are now focused on the dangers of a nuclear Iran. A nuclear Iran may or may not have destabilizing effects. Such claims must be assessed on the basis of an objective reading of the drivers of national and regional security in Iran and the Middle East.

Robust statistical studies prove prolif decreases war and escalation

Victor Asal and Kyle Beardsley, pub. date: 2007, Assistant Prof. Pol. Sci. – SUNY Albany, and Kyle Beardsley, Asst. Prof. Pol. Sci. – Emory Univ., Journal of Peace Research, “Proliferation and International Crisis Behavior,” accessed: 12-18-09, http://jpr.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/44/2/139

The literature on international conflict is divided on the impact of nuclear proliferation on state conflict. The optimists’ argument contends that nuclear weapons raise the stakes so high that states are unlikely to go to war when nuclear weapons enter the equation. The pessimists rebut this argument, contending that new proliferators are not necessarily rational and that having nuclear weapons does not discourage war but rather makes war more dangerous. Focusing on one observable implication from this debate, this article examines the relationship between the severity of violence in crises and the number of involved states with nuclear weapons. The study contends that actors will show more restraint in crises involving more participants with nuclear weapons. Using data from the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) project, the results demonstrate that crises involving nuclear actors are more likely to end without violence and, as the number of nuclear actors involved increases, the likelihood of war continues to fall. The results are robust even when controlling for a number of factors including non-nuclear capability. In confirming that nuclear weapons tend to increase restraint in crises, the effect of nuclear weapons on strategic behavior is clarified. But the findings do not suggest that increasing the number of nuclear actors in a crisis can prevent war, and they cannot speak to other proliferation risks

### 2NC

### CP

Regulatory negotiations can be used to reduce environmental restrictions while still spurring innovation and meeting environmental goals

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Interest in the use of so-called voluntary approaches to supplement or replace formal environmental regulation is on the rise, both in Europe and in the United States. These approaches fall into two general categories: (1) industry-initiated codes of good practice focusing on environmental management systems or performance goals, and (2) negotiation between government and individual firms (or industry sector trade associations) focusing on regulation or compliance. This paper addresses the latter. In the United States, the motivations for engaging in such negotiation are manifold and sometimes contradictory. They include desires (1) to facilitate the achievement of legislated environmental goals by introducing flexible and cost-effective implementation and compliance measures, (2) to negotiate levels of compliance (standards) fulfilling health-based legislative mandates, (3) to negotiate legal definitions of Best Available Technology and other technology-based requirements, and (4) to weaken environmental regulation. In the United States, administrative agencies have long been experimenting with “negotiated rulemaking as a means of setting regulatory standards, and the Administrative Procedure Act was amended in 1990 to encourage further use of this process. U.S. agencies have also made frequent use of negotiation as a means of defining compliance responsibilities for individual firms. In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has sometimes acted outside of the authority given to it by its enabling legislation in an attempt to negotiate environmental policy and implementation. Two recent examples are the "Common Sense Initiative," in which EPA attempted broad-based negotiation focuses on particular industry sectors, and “Project XL", in which the agency attempted to negotiate flexible implementation of environmental requirements with individual firms. Although both programs are now moribund, each provides useful lessons for future efforts at environmental negotiation. This paper describes and analyses negotiated agreements in the United States in the context of EPA efforts to ensure environmental protection. These agreements can be described according to the following taxonomy: (a) negotiated regulation (either preceding formal regulation or as a substitute for formal regulation); (b) negotiated implementation (negotiations with an individual firm to establish the timetable and/or the means for meeting a particular regulatory standard; and (c) negotiated compliance (negotiation in the context of an enforcement action in which the firm is out of compliance with an applicable standard and there is an opportunity for extra-statutory environmental gains, such as encouraging cleaner production through the leveraging of penalty reductions). The criteria for evaluation used in this paper include: environmental outcomes, effects on stimulating technological change, time for development (time to completion), ease of implementation (likelihood of court challenge), stakeholder influence (ability of large firms to dominate outcome, environmentalists-industry balance of power), and administrative features.

Reg negs can reduce restrictions while allowing for more effective voluntary agreements between regulators and companies

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Environmental Voluntary Agreements (VAs) are collaborative arrangements between firms and regulators in which firms voluntarily commit to actions that improve the natural environment. The regulator encourages and/or supervises these actions. This cooperation with regulatory agencies can be used by firms as a strategic tool to reduce their regulatory burden, develop new environmental competencies ahead of competition, and communicate their environmentally responsible behavior to customers. Regulators,¶ meanwhile, can employ VAs to protect the environment in a Less confrontational¶ and costly way than through traditional command-and-control regulations.¶ The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched a number of¶ VAs through its program “Partners for the Environment.” which included the¶ 33/50 Program and the Climate Wise Program. In 1992, the EPA invited 1300¶ companies to join its 33/50 Program. Companies who volunteered to participate¶ had to submit individual plans to reduce the release and transfer of 17 high-¶ priority toxic chemicals by 33% in 1992 and by 50% in 1995. In return, the EPA¶ publicized firms with outstanding pollution prevention achievement.1 Climate¶ Wise aims at reducing industrial greenhouse gas emissions. Participating firms¶ set their own pollution reduction targets and submit Action Plans to local regulators and the EPA on how to meet these targets. In exchange, regulators provided firms with technical assistance and financial support and they advertised¶ the firms’ environmental improvement. Table 1 shows some examples of VAs in¶ Europe and the United States.

a signal to innovate and the innovations are better because of information sharing

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Negotiation should hardly be viewed as a panacea for the various difficulties that typically confront the policymaker. Used in the right context, however, negotiation can be a useful tool in the establishment, implementation, and enforcement of environmental and occupational safety and health policy. Negotiation can facilitate a better understanding of issues, concerns, facts, and positions among adversaries. It can also promote the sharing of relevant information, and can provide an opportunity for creative problem-solving. Whether negotiation will be better than other, generally more adversarial mechanisms as a means of fostering improved environmental, health, and safety outcomes, or of stimulating meaningful technological change, will depend on the situation in which it is used. In general, negotiation would appear to work best a means of securing these goals in situations in which the necessary regulatory signals for improvement and innovation are already in place.¶ This is one of the reasons that EPA's use of negotiated compliance, as embodied in its SEP policy, has been as successful as it has been. To the firm that is the target of the enforcement action, the "stakes" are clear: so long as it believes it faces higher costs (in the form of a larger fine and/or higher transaction costs) if it does not identify and execute a SEP that is acceptable to EPA, the firm has a meaningful incentive to participate in good faith in the SEP process. And, because the agency has structured the program to allow maximum credit for pollution prevention projects, pollution prevention can become the focus, and the goal, of the negotiations. The pollution prevention results of the SEP program have been relatively modest - mostly diffusion and, sometimes, incremental innovation - but this is in keeping with the relatively modest nature of the financial incentives typically involved, and with the relatively short time period within which the SEP typically must be identified and completed. Especially because negotiation is the traditional means of resolving enforcement disputes, even outside of the SEP process, negotiation appears to work well here. ¶ One would also expect negotiation to work well in those negotiated implementation situations that have a clear, formal focus on technological change, such as the innovation waiver opportunities created by certain environmental statutes. The chief signal to innovate - the new regulatory standard - is already in place (or clearly on the horizon) before negotiation over the waiver or variance begins, and the statutes typically provide an extended period of time for the firm to develop and test the proposed innovation. Thus, so long as the new standard is stringent enough to command the firm's attention, firms should have a meaningful incentive to negotiate time to pursue an innovative compliance alternative.

Innovation guarantees jobs and economic leadership for the U.S.

TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of CEOs that promotes the growth of technology industries and the economy by building long-term relationships between technology leaders and policymakers and by advocating a targeted policy agenda, “America’s Technology Leaders Assert Innovation Key to Nation’s Recovery and Global Competitiveness,” 2011, <http://www.technet.org/america%E2%80%99s-technology-leaders-assert-innovation-key-to-nation%E2%80%99s-recovery-and-global-competitiveness/>, accessed 9-10-2012.

Nearly 60 executives from TechNet, the bipartisan policy and political network of CEOs that promotes the growth of the innovation economy, assemble in Washington, D.C. this week for the organization’s annual CEO fly-in to meet with America’s policy leaders and advocate for innovative policy solutions to create jobs and grow the U.S. economy. The TechNet executives are meeting with senior Obama Administration officials and an array of bipartisan Congressional leaders to advocate for a robust innovation policy agenda comprised of three critical areas: improving the nation’s education system and human capital support; fostering a globally competitive business climate including comprehensive tax reform; and driving investment for clean technology and 21st century energy solutions. “To win the future, America must invest in innovation and the future discoveries that will create good paying jobs for more of our people,” said Rey Ramsey, President and CEO of TechNet. “To reach this goal, we must make the smart policy choices on R&D, education, comprehensive tax reform, high skilled immigration and protecting intellectual property. These are fundamental kitchen table issues that will help grow jobs here in America. Our message to our policy leaders is that we will work with you to ensure that America remains the world’s center of innovation and economic growth.”

Avoids tradeoffs. -- industries find common ground and compliment one another

Alana Knaster is the Deputy Director of the Monterey County Resource Management Agency. ¶ Prior to joining the staff of Monterey County, she was the President of the Mediation Institute, a ¶ national non-profit firm that specialized in the mediation of complex, multi-party public policy ¶ disputes. Ms. Knaster has mediated dozens of environmental disputes over issues relating to ¶ sustainable resource management, pollution reduction, land use, and endangered species. She has ¶ been on the faculty of the Straus Institute, Pepperdine University School of Law, since 1989. Ms. ¶ Knaster is also the former Mayor of the City of Hidden Hills, California, “Resolving Conflicts Over Climate ¶ Change Solutions: Making the Case ¶ for Mediation,” PEPPERDINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION LAW JOURNAL, 2010, <http://law.pepperdine.edu/dispute-resolution-law-journal/issues/volume-ten/Knaster%20Article.pdf>, accessed 9-11-2012.

As noted at the onset of this discussion, the “Taking It Upstream” ¶ participants assumed that there was common ground in seeking effective ¶ solutions to reverse climate change, even though the stakeholders may be ¶ differently motivated in achieving this goal. With some key interests now ¶ questioning whether a crisis exists, negotiations based on common ground ¶ may be more difficult. However, common ground may still exist with ¶ respect to the benefits that could result from reducing green house gas ¶ emission. For example, reducing energy consumption has both environmental and economic benefits. Promoting alternative energy technology that reduces emissions also has the potential to foster new industries that provide reliable, well paying jobs, higher profits, and improve our balance of trade. Implementation of climate regulations may have upfront costs that are controversial, but the stakeholder groups may be able to negotiate strategies for compliance with a view to achieving the long term benefits of these strategies. Determining whether there are tradeoffs among the issues is a critical factor as well. It may be difficult before negotiations begin or even in the early stages to ascertain whether compromise is possible, but parties must individually assess if there are issues upon which they are willing to compromise when deciding whether to participate. This assessment is also one of the key tasks of the mediator who, as convener, plays a role in helping the parties assess the feasibility of engaging in talks.

### CP Solvency

Reg negs can represent hundreds of interested parties in a short amount of time and come up with a simpler and more effective solution

Alana Knaster is the Deputy Director of the Monterey County Resource Management Agency. Prior to joining the staff of Monterey County, she was the President of the Mediation Institute, a national non-profit firm that specialized in the mediation of complex, multi-party public policy disputes. Ms. Knaster has mediated dozens of environmental disputes over issues relating to sustainable resource management, pollution reduction, land use, and endangered species. She has been on the faculty of the Straus Institute, Pepperdine University School of Law, since 1989. Ms. Knaster is also the former Mayor of the City of Hidden Hills, California, “Resolving Conflicts Over Climate Change Solutions: Making the Case for Mediation,” PEPPERDINE DISPUTE RESOLUTION LAW JOURNAL, 2010, <http://law.pepperdine.edu/dispute-resolution-law-journal/issues/volume-ten/Knaster%20Article.pdf>, accessed 9-11-2012.

There were close to one hundred separate organizations that had an interest in these negotiations. 134 The Negotiating Rulemaking Act suggests that negotiating committees be limited to twenty-five. 135 Based on the recommendations of the co-mediators/conveners, the committee was expanded to thirty-one members. 136 Each of the key interests was organized into interest caucuses. For example, there were forty-nine cities that would be directly affected by the rule. 137 They agreed to representation by five individuals, coordinated by the executive director of the Association of State and Local Air Pollution Control Officials. 138 The petroleum interests were divided into three separate caucuses—large and medium sized companies, small refiners, and alternative energy refiners. Public interest groups, including several national and regional environmental coalitions, agreed to five seats at the table, with the designated negotiators assuming responsibility for obtaining input from the larger group. 139 The organization of the group allowed for participation in work groups around each of the key topics. The use of work groups allowed more participation by individual stakeholder groups who did not have seats at the table, but had expertise in a particular area and enabled them to participate more fully in caucus decision-making. The negotiations centered on the issue of modeling and testing of formulas. 140 One side argued for laboratory testing of formulas to ensure compliance with the legislation. Others noted that in order to meet the deadlines, modeling of the formulas was the only feasible solution. The final settlement incorporated a simpler model than had been originally contemplated, but included a process for incorporating new data. The tradeoff for use of these models was that industry agreed to meet Phase II reformulated gasoline requirements earlier than was required by law. At the end of six months, a consensus was reached on an outline for a proposed rule. The final rule was published well in advance of the regulatory deadline. 141 The case example demonstrates the value of the mediated negotiations process in allowing direct negotiations on complex issues in a constrained timeline. It also demonstrates the type of creative exchange of ideas and solutions that can occur in a process that is designed to accommodate and enfranchise a larger number of diverse interests and individual organizations, while keeping the number negotiators small.

### a/t perms

Can’t do both – reg negs are an alternative to notice-and-comment – perm undercuts potential of reg neg

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Regulatory negotiation is an alternative to notice and comment participation and was developed to form dialogue among¶ regulators, regulated parties, and interested parties. n33 It is used in rule--making and is considered an efﬁcient way¶ to form rules with which everyone can live. n34 Regulatory negotiation is also considered a good method of public¶ participation because it produces better results. Through negotiation over rules in a small forum, the groups involved are¶ more likely to cooperate and problem--solve rather than take sides and defend their positions. n35¶ Regulatory negotiation gives parties involved in following and enacting rules, as well as interest groups, a chance to¶ directly participate in formulating rules that they will have to follow. n36 This differs from notice and comment public¶ participation where only the enacting agency makes the rules and then announces them to other parties who never had the¶ chance to inﬂuence the decision making process when it counted. By having all the parties work together on the rules,¶ working relationships are formed that can be beneﬁcial in the future. The parties, including agencies such as the EPA, are¶ more satisﬁed because they have a direct role in rule—making.

Any deviation from a strictly reg neg approach means parties lose interest and negotiations fail

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The act also includes highly detailed provisions governing the use of binding arbitration in agency proceedings" ¶ The focus on arbitration and the level of detail devoted to ¶ it appears to be a function of the binding nature or this ¶ form of dispute resolution. The act allows the head of an ¶ agency to terminate an arbitration proceeding or vacate an ¶ arbitration award before it becomes final. If this power is ¶ exercised to vacate an award, parties may recover their ¶ attorney fees and expenses incurred in connection with the ¶ arbitration, unless the agency head determines that such ¶ recovery would be unjust. These provisions were inserted ¶ to satisfy the concerns of the Department of Justice that ¶ arbitration decisions binding the government would constitute an unlawful delegation of executive authority. The ¶ expectation is that this summary power will be exercised ¶ rarely: otherwise, parties will quickly lose faith in arbitrations involving the government. In fact, despite the focus ¶ on binding arbitration in the act, other nonbinding forms ¶ of dispute resolution may find greater favor in agency ¶ proceedings.

### ECON

### Baseload Power

Renewables can provide base-load power – multiple warrants

Dr Mark Diesendorf is Deputy Director of the Institute of Environmental Studies at University of New South Wales., previously, as a Principal Research Scientist in CSIRO, he led a research group on the integration of wind power into electricity grids, author and co-author of several national energy scenario studies, “The Base Load Fallacy and other Fallacies disseminated by Renewable Energy Deniers,” Energy Science Coalition, March 2010, http://www.energyscience.org.au/BP16%20BaseLoad.pdf, accessed 8-17-2012.

Opponents of renewable energy, from the coal and nuclear industries and from NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) groups, are disseminating the Base-Load Fallacy, that is, the fallacy that renewable energy cannot provide base-load (24-hour) power to substitute for coal-fired electricity. In Australia, even Government Ministers and some journalists are propagating this conventional ‘wisdom’, although it is false. This fallacy is the principal weapon of renewable energy deniers. Other fallacies are discussed briefly in the appendix. The political implications are that, if these fallacies become widely believed, renewable energy would always have to remain a niche market, rather than achieve its true potential of becoming a set of mainstream energy supply technologies with the capacity to supply all of Australia’s and indeed the world’s electricity. The refutation of the fallacy has the following key logical steps: • With or without renewable energy, there is no such thing as a perfectly reliable power station or electricity generating system. Both coal and nuclear power are only partially reliable. • Electricity grids are already designed to handle variability in both demand and supply. To do this, they have different types of power station (base-load, intermediate-load and peak-load) and reserve power stations. • Wind power and solar power without storage provide additional sources of variability to be integrated into a system that already has to balance a variable conventional supply against a variable demand. • The variability of small amounts of wind and solar power in a grid is indistinguishable from variations in demand. Therefore, existing peak-load plant and reserve plant can handle small amounts of wind and solar power at negligible extra cost. • Some renewable electricity sources (e.g. bioenergy, solar thermal electricity with thermal storage and geothermal) have similar patterns of variability to coal-fired power stations and so they can be operated as base-load. They can be integrated without any additional back-up, as can efficient energy use. • Other renewable electricity sources (e.g. wind, solar without storage, and run-of-river hydro) have different kinds of variability from coal-fired power stations and so have to be considered separately. • Single wind turbines cut-in and cut-out suddenly in low wind speeds and so can be described as ‘intermittent’. • But, for large amounts of wind power connected to the grid from several wind farms that are geographically dispersed in different wind regimes, total wind power generally varies smoothly and therefore cannot be described accurately as ‘intermittent’. Like coal and 3 nuclear power, wind power is a partially reliable source of power (Sinden 2007). However, its statistics are different from those of coal and nuclear power. • As the penetration into the grid of wind energy increases substantially, so do the additional costs of reserve plant and fuel used for balancing wind power variations. However, when wind power supplies up to 20% of electricity generation, these additional costs are relatively small.

### Nuke Power Safe

New reactor designs ensure no repeat of Fukushima.

David Biello, 2-9-2012, Scientific American, “Nuclear Reactor Approved in U.S. for First Time Since 1978,” <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=first-new-nuclear-reactor-in-us-since-1978-approved&page=2>

Other than the Watts Bar unit No. 2 in Tennessee, which will simply be the completion of a reactor that started construction in the 1970s, the four new plants will all employ a novel design—the AP1000. They will be the first to employ so-called passive safety features, or technology that kicks in with or without human intervention. In the case of the AP1000 that means cooling water sits above the reactor core and, in the event of a meltdown like the ones at Fukushima Daiichi, will flow via gravity into the core to cool it with the automatic opening of a heat-sensitive valve. Furthermore, although the thick steel vessel containing the nuclear reactor is encased in a shell of 1.2-meter-thick concrete, that shell is itself surrounded by a building that is open to the sky. Should the concrete containment vessel begin to heat up during a meltdown, natural convection would pull cooling air inside? The NRC initially rejected that open-air building for a lack of structural strength. The U.S. regulator argued that it would not withstand a severe shock such as an earthquake or airplane impact because it was initially planned to be built from prefabricated concrete and steel modules to save money. The NRC approved a modified design (pdf) in December that employs more steel reinforcement, among other changes. Nevertheless, NRC Chairman Gregory Jaczko voted against approving the license for the two reactors at Vogtle today unless they incorporated a "binding obligation that these plants will have implemented the lessons learned from the Fukushima accident before they operate." The commission also required more inspection and testing of the explosive-opened valves that would allow venting in case of an accident.

### Econ War

Diversionary war theory is false

Boehmer 2007 – political science professor at the University of Texas (Charles, Politics & Policy, 35:4, “The Effects of Economic Crisis, Domestic Discord, and State Efficacy on the Decision to Initiate Interstate Conflict”, WEA)

This article examines the contemporaneous effect of low economic growth and domestic instability on the threat of regime change and/ or involvement in external militarized conflicts. Many studies of diversionary conflict argue that lower rates of economic growth should heighten the risk of international conflict. Yet we know that militarized interstate conflicts, and especially wars, are generally rare events whereas lower rates of growth are not. Additionally, a growing body of literature shows that regime changes are also associated with lower rates of economic growth. The question then becomes which event, militarized interstate conflict or regime change, is the most likely to occur with domestic discord and lower rates of economic growth? Diversionary theory claims that leaders seek to divert attention away from domestic problems such as a bad economy or political scandals, or to garner increased support prior to elections. Leaders then supposedly externalize discontented domestic sentiments onto other nations, sometimes as scapegoats based on the similar in-group/out-group dynamic found in the research of Coser (1956) and Simmel (1955), where foreign countries are blamed for domestic problems. This process is said to involve a “rally-round-the-flag” effect, where a leader can expect a short-term boost in popularity with the threat or use of force (Blechman, Kaplan, and Hall 1978; Mueller 1973). Scholarship on diversionary conflict has focused most often on the American case1 but recent studies have sought to identify this possible behavior in other countries.2 The Falklands War is often a popular example of diversionary conflict (Levy and Vakili 1992). Argentina was reeling from hyperinflation and rampant unemployment associated with the Latin American debt crisis. It is plausible that a success in the Falklands War may have helped to rally support for the governing Galtieri regime, although Argentina lost the war and the ruling regime lost power. How many other attempts to use diversionary tactics, if they indeed occur, can be seen to generate a similar outcome? The goal of this article is to provide an assessment of the extent to which diversionary strategy is a threat to peace. Is this a colorful theory kept alive by academics that has little bearing upon real events, or is this a real problem that policy makers should be concerned with? If it is a strategy readily available to leaders, then it is important to know what domestic factors trigger this gambit. Moreover, to know that requires an understanding of the context in external conflict, which occurs relative to regime changes. Theories of diversionary conflict usually emphasize the potential benefits of diversionary tactics, although few pay equal attention to the prospective costs associated with such behavior. It is not contentious to claim that leaders typically seek to remain in office. However, whether they can successfully manipulate public opinion regularly during periods of domestic unpopularity through their states’ participation in foreign militarized conflicts—especially outside of the American case—is a question open for debate. Furthermore, there appears to be a logical disconnect between diversionary theories and extant studies of domestic conflict and regime change. Lower rates of economic growth are purported to increase the risk of both militarized interstate conflicts (and internal conflicts) as well as regime changes (Bloomberg and Hess 2002). This implies that if leaders do, in fact, undertake diversionary conflicts, many may still be thrown from the seat of power—especially if the outcome is defeat to a foreign enemy. Diversionary conflict would thus seem to be a risky gambit (Smith 1996). Scholars such as MacFie (1938) and Blainey (1988) have nevertheless questioned the validity of the diversionary thesis. As noted by Levy (1989), this perspective is rarely formulated as a cohesive and comprehensive theory, and there has been little or no knowledge cumulation. Later analyses do not necessarily build on past studies and the discrepancies between inquiries are often difficult to unravel. “Studies have used a variety of research designs, different dependent variables (uses of force, major uses of force, militarized disputes), different estimation techniques, and different data sets covering different time periods and different states” (Bennett and Nordstrom 2000, 39). To these problems, we should add a lack of theoretical precision and incomplete model specification. By a lack of theoretical precision, I am referring to the linkages between economic conditions and domestic strife that remain unclear in some studies (Miller 1995; Russett 1990). Consequently, extant studies are to a degree incommensurate; they offer a step in the right direction but do not provide robust cross-national explanations and tests of economic growth and interstate conflict. Yet a few studies have attempted to provide deductive explanations about when and how diversionary tactics might be employed. Using a Bayesian updating game, Richards and others (1993) theorize that while the use of force would appear to offer leaders a means to boost their popularity, a poorly performing economy acts as a signal to a leader’s constituents about his or her competence. Hence, attempts to use diversion are likely to fail either because incompetent leaders will likewise fail in foreign policy or people will recognize the gambit for what it is. Instead, these two models conclude that diversion is likely to be undertaken particularly by risk-acceptant leaders. This stress on a heightened risk of removal from office is also apparent in the work of Bueno de Mesquita and others (1999), and Downs and Rocke (1994), where leaders may “gamble for resurrection,” although the diversionary scenario in the former study is only a partial extension of their theory on selectorates, winning coalitions, and leader survival. Again, how often do leaders fail in the process or are removed from positions of power before they can even initiate diversionary tactics? A few studies focusing on leader tenure have examined the removal of leaders following war, although almost no study in the diversionary literature has looked at the effects of domestic problems on the relative risks of regime change, interstate conflict, or both events occurring in the same year.3

Low growth makes politicians cautious—they don’t want to risk war because it makes them vulnerable

Boehmer 2007 – political science professor at the University of Texas (Charles, Politics & Policy, 35:4, “The Effects of Economic Crisis, Domestic Discord, and State Efficacy on the Decision to Initiate Interstate Conflict”, WEA)

Economic Growth and Fatal MIDs

The theory presented earlier predicts that lower rates of growth suppress participation in foreign conflicts, particularly concerning conflict initiation and escalation to combat. To sustain combat, states need to be militarily prepared and not open up a second front when they are already fighting, or may fear, domestic opposition. A good example would be when the various Afghani resistance fighters expelled the Soviet Union from their territory, but the Taliban crumbled when it had to face the combined forces of the United States and Northern Alliance insurrection. Yet the coefficient for GDP growth and MID initiations was negative but insignificant. However, considering that there are many reasons why states fight, the logic presented earlier should hold especially in regard to the risk of participating in more severe conflicts. Threats to use military force may be safe to make and may be made with both external and internal actors in mind, but in the end may remain mere cheap talk that does not risk escalation if there is a chance to back down. Chiozza and Goemans (2004b) found that secure leaders were more likely to become involved in war than insecure leaders, supporting the theory and evidence presented here. We should find that leaders who face domestic opposition and a poorly performing economy shy away from situations that could escalate to combat if doing so would compromise their ability to retain power.

### CHINA

Common interest

Zhou 2008 (Xinwu Zhou. Economic Interdependence and Peaceful Power Transition. Paper Prepared for the 66th Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conferance. April 3-6, 2008. Online.)

The empirical model shows us how to avoid potential conflict in the future Sino-U.S. power transition. In view of the high price that they would pay for confrontation, the two will definitely try their best to avoid violent clashes. To reduce the chances of conflict, the U.S. should have more engagement with China to enhance the bilateral relationship, it should also aim at increasing China’s involvement in regional and international affairs. Chinese participation in the North Korean nuclear issue dialogue is a good start toward integration of China into East Asian regional affairs, which might increase Chinese satisfaction to the status quo. Multilateral economic ties are another important way to increase the probability of cooperation between China and the whole system. It is possible to transform the three aspects of co-operation, competition, and conflicts in Sino-US relations. As long as China and the United States have many economic ties and cultural communications, they will be able to turn their struggles and conflicts into competition and co-operation. A future with healthy competition and co-operation is in the basic interests of the Chinese and the U.S. people

No cascade of proliferation – its historically wrong and based on alarmist predictions – China, India, Pakistan, North Korea, Iran, South Africa, Libya all pursued nuclear weapons and none caused a cascade. Prefer our evidence - their lit base is all lobbyist scaremongering

Steve Kidd (Director of Strategy & Research at the World Nuclear Association, where he has worked since 1995 (when it was the Uranium Institute)) June 2010 “Nuclear proliferation risk – is it vastly overrated?” http://www.waterpowermagazine.com/story.asp?sc=2056931

The real problem is that nuclear non-proliferation and security have powerful lobby groups behind them, largely claiming to have nothing against nuclear power as such, apart from the dangers of misuse of nuclear technology. In fact in Washington DC, home of the US federal government, there is a cottage industry of lobby groups dedicated to this. Those who oppose their scaremongering (and it essentially amounts to no more than this) are castigated as being in the industry’s pocket or acting unresponsively to allegedly genuinely expressed public fears. Pointing out that very few new countries will acquire nuclear power by even 2030, and that very few of these will likely express any interest in acquiring enrichment or reprocessing facilities, seems to go completely over their heads. In any case, nuclear fuel cycle technologies are very expensive to acquire and it makes perfect sense to buy nuclear fuel from the existing commercial international supply chain. This already guarantees security of supply, so moves towards international fuel banks are essentially irrelevant, while measures supposedly to increase the proliferation resistance of the fuel cycle are unwarranted, particularly if they impose additional costs on the industry

Prefer our evidence – it’s the only one based on robust empirical studies

Victor Asal and Kyle Beardsley, pub. date: 2007, Assistant Prof. Pol. Sci. – SUNY Albany, and Kyle Beardsley, Asst. Prof. Pol. Sci. – Emory Univ., Journal of Peace Research, “Proliferation and International Crisis Behavior,” accessed: 12-18-09, http://jpr.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/44/2/139

Much of the literature on the impact of nuclear weapons does not empirically test the arguments made (Geller, 2003: 37; Huth & Russett, 1988: 34). Here, we strive to move beyond speculation to observe the impact of nuclear proliferation on the level of violence used in crises. We examine the relationship between the severity of the violence in crises in the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) dataset and the number of involved states with nuclear weapons, controlling for other factors that increase the likelihood of severe violence.1 We find that crises involving nuclear actors are more likely to end without violence. Also, as the number of nuclear actors involved in a crisis increases, the likelihood of war continues to drop. Drawing from Waltz (Sagan & Waltz, 2003) and the rational deterrence literature, we argue that states facing the possibility of a nuclear attack will be more willing to concede or back down from violent conflict

### 1NR

Anthropogenic warming causes extinction – mitigating coal in the electric power industry is key to solve.

Mudathir F. Akorede et. al, June 2012, M.Eng degree at Bayero University Kano in Electrical Engineering, tutelage engineer in the Chad Basin Development Authority’s, lectureship appointment in the Department of Electrical Engineering, University of Ilorin, professional engineer with the Council for Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN), reviewer for a number of reputable international journals, Hashim Hizam, Department of Meterology and Atmospheric Sciences, faculty, University of Putra Malaysia, M.Sc in Electrical Engineering, Polytechnic University of Brooklyn, New York, M. Z. A. Ab Kadir and I. Aris, Department of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Faculty of Engineering University Putra Malaysia, S.D. Buba professor of Climatology University of Putra Malaysia, Ph.D. paleoclimatology, University of Oxford, M.Eng at the University of Putra Malaysia, Renewable & Sustainable Energy Reviews, Vol. 16 Issue 5, “Mitigating the anthropogenic global warming in the electric power industry,” p. 1, Ebsco Host

end of man’s existence and the world responsible for the largest share of GHG atmosphere. Mitigating CO2 emissions

Renewable energy boosts the economy in the short term and long term

MatteR Network, “Experts Say Renewable Energy Key to Economic Recovery,” October 17, 2008, http://www.matternetwork.com/2008/10/experts-say-renewable-energy-key.cfm, accessed 8-12-2012.

Meanwhile, the Center for American Progress, a Washington, D.C. think tank and 25x'25 endorsing partner, says the United States can create 2 million jobs over two years by investing in a rapid "green" economic recovery program. In a recently issued report, the group says a $100-billion public/private investment package would create nearly four times more jobs - including a vast majority paying at least $16 per hour than spending the same amount of money within the oil industry, and would reduce the unemployment rate from the 5.7 percent recorded in July of this year down to 4.4 percent over two years. The report, Green Recovery: A Program to Create Good Jobs and Start Building a Low-Carbon Economy, which was prepared by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst under commission by the Center for American Progress, also shows that the proposed green economic recovery package would boost construction and manufacturing employment. The report says the green recovery program, at the least, can restore some 800,000 construction jobs lost, from 8 million to 7.2 million, over the past two years due to the housing bubble collapse. John Podesta, president and CEO of the Center for American Progress, says falling home prices, foreclosures, bank failures, a weaker dollar, steep prices for gas, food, and steel, and layoffs in the banking, construction and manufacturing sectors are all indicators of serious economic strain. "What's more, evidence suggests the current downturn will continue for at least another year," he says. "At the same time, we face a growing climate crisis that will require us to rapidly invest in new energy infrastructure, cleaner sources of power, and more efficient use of electricity and fuels in order to cut global warming pollution." Podesta says the time is now "for a new vision for the economic revitalization of the nation and a restoration of American leadership in the world" and "at the heart of this opportunity is clean energy, remaking the vast energy systems that power the nation and the world." He says the economic opportunities provided by a fundamental change in the way energy is produced and consumed, are vast. The $100 billion package envisioned by the Center would include $50 billion for tax credits, $46 billion in direct government spending, and $4 billion for federal loan guarantees. By comparison, U.S. crude oil imports during the first eight months of this year totaled $251 billion, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. "The green economic recovery program addresses the immediate need to boost our struggling economy and accelerate the adoption of a comprehensive clean energy agenda," says Podesta, noting that combining tax credits and loan guarantees for private businesses along with direct public investment spending would retrofit buildings to increase energy efficiency, expand mass transit and freight rail, construct "smart" electrical grid transmission systems, and boost wind energy, solar power and advanced biofuels.

Anthropogenic warming is real and has a scientific consensus.

John W. Farley, July/August 2008, is a professor in the department of physics and astronomy at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he has won several awards for distinguished teaching, Monthly Review: An Independent Socialist Magazine, Vol. 60 Issue 3, “The Scientific Case for Modern Anthropogenic Global Warming,” p. 88, Ebsco Host

Anthropogenic global warming is based on very solid science. The discussion in the scientific climate change community is about how much anthropogenic global warming is occurring, but not about whether or not anthropogenic global warming is happening at all. The contrarian arguments raised by Alexander Cockburn lack scientific validity. This is not to say that Cockburn and other skeptics should not have raised some of the questions they have. Science demands constant scru-tiny and the misuse of science, when it occurs, is everyone’s concern. But it is also important to recognize a truth when it has been estab-lished. The verdict is in. Modern global warming stemming to a consid-erable extent from anthropogenic causes is real and constitutes a seri-ous threat to life on the planet as we know it. It is time to stop debating its reality and to do something about it, while there is still time.

Anthropogenic warming causes rapid sea level rise and a collapse in biodiversity.

Kathy J. Willis et. al, 2010, holds the Tasso Leventis Chair of Biodiversity, is Director of the Biodiversity Institute (BIO) in the Zoology Department and a Professorial Fellow at Merton College, Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge in Plant Sciences, held a Selwyn College Research Fellowship and then a NERC Postdoctoral Fellowship in the department of Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge, Royal Society University Research Fellowship in the Godwin Institute for Quaternary Research, University of Cambridge, University Lectureship in the School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford, Keith D. Bennett is a professor in the School of Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology at Queen’s University, Belfast, Professor of Late-Quaternary Environmental Change, Responsible for Quaternary Geology program, Senior Assistant in Research at the University of Cambridge, NSERC Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Toronto, Shonil A. Bhagwat has a D.Phil. in Tropical Forest Diversity and Conservation and MSc in Forestry and its Relation to Land Use from the University of Oxford, Senior Research Fellow, Course Director BCM, co-ordinating a project that examines Human Adaptation to Biodiversity Change, and John B. Birks professor in the Department of Biology and Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research University of Bergen, editorial boards of Review of Palaeobotany and Palynology; Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, and Palaeoecology; Grana; Journal of Paleolimnology; Acta Palaeobotanica; Journal of Biogeography; Ecology and Plant Diversity, and Perspectives in Plant Ecology, and Evolution, Systematics and Biodiversity, Vol. 8 Issue 1, “4 ◦ C and beyond: what did this mean for biodiversity in the past?,” p. 3, Ebsco Host

Of the many predictions for climate change in the next cen-tury, a general consensus is emerging that global tempera-tures will increase by 2–4 ◦ C and possibly beyond (Mein-shausenet al., 2009), sea levels will rise (1m±0.5 m), and atmospheric CO2 will increase by up to 1000 ppmv (Solomonet al., 2007). It is also widely suggested that the magnitude and rate of these changes will result in many plants and animals going extinct, for example within the next century, over 35% of some biota will have gone ex-tinct (Thomaset al., 2004; Solomonet al., 2007) and there will be extensive die-back of the tropical rainforest due to climate change (e.g. Huntingford et al., 2008). These predictions, based predominantly on models constructed using the present-day static distribution of species in rela-tion to present-day climate, paint a depressing picture. And it is these predictions that pervade the scientific and non-scientific literature to highlight the potential perils of future climate change and leading to the oft-cited sentiment that future climate change poses an equal or greater extinction threat to global biodiversity than land-use change (Parme-san & Yohe, 2003; Thomaset al., 2004).

Biodiversity loss causes extinction.

Ruth Young, 2-9-2010, Ph.D. specialising in coastal marine ecology, “Biodiversity: what it is and why it’s important,” <http://www.talkingnature.com/2010/02/Biodiversity/Biodiversity-what-and-why/>

Different species within ecosystems fill particular roles, they all have a function, they all have a niche. They interact with each other and the physical environment to provide ecosystem services that are vital for our survival. For example plant species convert carbon dioxide (CO2) from the atmosphere and energy from the sun into useful things such as food, medicines and timber. A bee pollinating a flower (Image: ClearlyAmbiguous Flickr) Pollination carried out by insects such as bees enables the production of ⅓ of our food crops. Diverse mangrove and coral reef ecosystems provide a wide variety of habitats that are essential for many fishery species. To make it simpler for economists to comprehend the magnitude of services offered by Biodiversity, a team of researchers estimated their value – it amounted to $US33 trillion per year. “By protecting Biodiversity we maintain ecosystem services” Certain species play a “keystone” role in maintaining ecosystem services. Similar to the removal of a keystone from an arch, the removal of these species can result in the collapse of an ecosystem and the subsequent removal of ecosystem services. The most well known example of this occurred during the 19th century when sea otters were almost hunted to extinction by fur traders along the west coast of the USA. This led to a population explosion in the sea otters’ main source of prey, sea urchins. Because the urchins graze on kelp their booming population decimated the underwater kelp forests. This loss of habitat led to declines in local fish populations. Sea otters are a keystone species once hunted for their fur (Image: Mike Baird) Eventually a treaty protecting sea otters allowed the numbers of otters to increase which inturn controlled the urchin population, leading to the recovery of the kelp forests and fish stocks. In other cases, ecosystem services are maintained by entire functional groups, such as apex predators (See Jeremy Hance’s post at Mongabay). During the last 35 years, over fishing of large shark species along the US Atlantic coast has led to a population explosion of skates and rays. These skates and rays eat bay scallops and their out of control population has led to the closure of a century long scallop fishery. These are just two examples demonstrating how Biodiversity can maintain the services that ecosystems provide for us, such as fisheries. One could argue that to maintain ecosystem services we don’t need to protect Biodiversity but rather, we only need to protect the species and functional groups that fill the keystone roles. However, there are a couple of problems with this idea. First of all, for most ecosystems we don’t know which species are the keystones! Ecosystems are so complex that we are still discovering which species play vital roles in maintaining them. In some cases its groups of species not just one species that are vital for the ecosystem. Second, even if we did complete the enormous task of identifying and protecting all keystone species, what back-up plan would we have if an unforseen event (e.g. pollution or disease) led to the demise of these ‘keystone’ species? Would there be another species to save the day and take over this role? Classifying some species as ‘keystone’ implies that the others are not important. This may lead to the non-keystone species being considered ecologically worthless and subsequently over-exploited. Sometimes we may not even know which species are likely to fill the keystone roles. An example of this was discovered on Australia’s Great Barrier Reef. This research examined what would happen to a coral reef if it were over-fished. The “over-fishing” was simulated by fencing off coral bommies thereby excluding and removing fish from them for three years. By the end of the experiment, the reefs had changed from a coral to an algae dominated ecosystem – the coral became overgrown with algae. When the time came to remove the fences the researchers expected herbivorous species of fish like the parrot fish (Scarus spp.) to eat the algae and enable the reef to switch back to a coral dominated ecosystem. But, surprisingly, the shift back to coral was driven by a supposed ‘unimportant’ species – the bat fish (Platax pinnatus). The bat fish was previously thought to feed on invertebrates – small crabs and shrimp, but when offered a big patch of algae it turned into a hungry herbivore – a cow of the sea – grazing the algae in no time. So a fish previously thought to be ‘unimportant’ is actually a keystone species in the recovery of coral reefs overgrown by algae! Who knows how many other species are out there with unknown ecosystem roles! In some cases it’s easy to see who the keystone species are but in many ecosystems seemingly unimportant or redundant species are also capable of changing niches and maintaining ecosystems. The more Biodiversityiverse an ecosystem is, the more likely these species will be present and the more resilient an ecosystem is to future impacts. Presently we’re only scratching the surface of understanding the full importance of Biodiversity and how it helps maintain ecosystem function. The scope of this task is immense. In the meantime, a wise insurance policy for maintaining ecosystem services would be to conserve Biodiversity. In doing so, we increase the chance of maintaining our ecosystem services in the event of future impacts such as disease, invasive species and of course, climate change. This is the international year of Biodiversity – a time to recognize that Biodiversity makes our survival on this planet possible and that our protection of Biodiversity maintains this service.

Creating price disparities dooms renewable energy

Rich Miller and Mark Thiele, president of Data Center Pulse, “Thiele: Coal vs. Green Complicated by Incentives,” Data Center Knowledge, DATE http://www.datacenterknowledge.com/archives/2010/06/07/thiele-coal-vs-green-complicated-by-incentives/, accessed 8-12-2012.

Is scrutiny of data centers’ low adoption of renewable energy fair? Or are data center operators being blamed for a U.S. energy system in which few key players are properly incentivized for a broad-based shift to renewable power? Mark Thiele at Data Center Pulse tackles these questions in a blog post titled Cloud Computing and Huge Data Centers Are Killing Our Planet! Not really, of course. Although he has some sport with the headline-grabbing alarmism, Thiele addresses some key points about the complexity of data center energy sourcing. “What I always find missing in these stories criticizing large data centers and cloud computing is a comparison of the alternatives and a fair assessment of market and political drivers affecting data center build decisions,” Mark writes.”If you put free Twinkies in front of someone with limited funds, but charge them $20 for a similar amount of Broccoli, which one will the person pick to eat? In other words, why would a company pay 15 cents a kilo Watt hour for clean energy, when federal and state governments are using taxpayer funds to practically give away fossil fuel generated energy? Our Federal government continues to subsidize the coal and fossil fuel industry to the tune of billions of dollars every year.”

Clean coal won’t work and will kill alternatives – poor byproducts, no storage, and infrastructure.

James B. Meigs, February 2010, editor-in-chief of Popular Mechanics, Dartmouth College, former editor-in-chief of the National Geographic Magazine, Popular Mechanics, Vol. 187 Issue 2, “THE MYTH OF CLEAN COAL,” Ebsco Host

Coal will never be clean. It is possible to make coal emissions cleaner. In fact, we've come a long way since the '70s in finding ways to reduce sulfur-dioxide and nitrogen-oxide emissions, and more progress can be made. But the nut of the clean-coal sales pitch is that we can also bottle up the C02 produced when coal is burned, most likely by burying it deep in the earth. That may be possible in theory, but it's devilishly difficult in practice. Carbon dioxide is not some minor byproduct of coal combustion. Remember your high school chemistry: When coal burns, oxygen from the air combines with the carbon in the coal in an exothermic (heat-releasing) reaction. Because of the addition of oxygen, the resulting C02 weighs more than the carbon alone — which means that each pound of coal produces about 2.5 pounds of C02. Keeping that C02 out of the atmosphere requires a process known as carbon capture and sequestration (CCS). It works by forcing the exhaust from a power plant through a liquid solvent that absorbs the carbon dioxide. Later, the solvent is heated to liberate the gas, much the way a bottle of soda releases its dissolved C02 when opened. The C02 is then compressed to about 100 times normal atmospheric pressure and sent away for storage. So far, so good. But CCS has two major hurdles. First, it consumes energy — a lot of it. While estimates vary, a coal-fired power plant would have to burn roughly 25 percent more coal to handle carbon sequestration while producing the same amount of electricity. That would mean a vast expansion in mining, transportation costs and byproducts such as fly ash. But that's the easy part. The harder challenge would be transporting and burying all of this high-pressure C02. American Electric Power recently began a CCS project at its Mountaineer Plant in West Virginia. The operation captures a few hundred tons of C02 a day. That's a start — but a typical 500-megawatt power plant produces about 10,000 tons daily. Collectively, America's coal-fired power plants generate 1.5 billion tons per year. Capturing that would mean filling 30 million barrels with liquid C02 every single day — about one and a half times the volume of crude oil the country consumes. It took roughly a century to build the infrastructure we use to distribute petroleum products. Could we build an even bigger CCS infrastructure of pumps, pipelines and wells quickly enough to hit the ambitious targets the climate bill envisions? Serious plans to engineer — much less finance — such a vast project aren't even on the table. Here's a final problem: We don't know if the gas will stay buried. We could easily spend hundreds of billions injecting C02 into the earth only to have it start leaking out again in a few decades. None of this means that CCS is impossible to achieve. But it is a dangerous gamble to assume that it will become technically and economically feasible any time soon. At the moment, the Senate's climate bill is on the back burner. And many Americans remain dubious about both the causes of and the appropriate solutions for global warming. (Recent revelations that several climate scientists apparently tried to squelch legitimate debate certainly don't inspire confidence.) But concern over greenhouse gas emissions will continue, and the pressure to regulate them is growing. Wouldn't it be a shame if we created a policy that burdens American consumers with higher energy prices and yet does virtually nothing to reduce our C02 emissions? By embracing the clean-coal myth, that lose-lose scenario may be exactly what we stand to achieve. Sadly, although it might make little economic or scientific sense, the political logic behind clean coal is overwhelming. Coal is mined in some politically potent states — Illinois, Montana, West Virginia, Wyoming — and the coal industry spends millions on lobbying. The end result of the debate is all too likely to resemble Congress's corn-based ethanol mandates: legislation that employs appealing buzzwords to justify subsidies to a politically favored constituency — while actually worsening the problem it seeks to solve. The focus on mythical clean coal is particularly frustrating because practical, cost-effective alternatives do exist — and I don't mean just wind and solar power. Natural gas is plentiful in the U.S., and gas-fired power plants produce only about half as much C02 as coal. Not only that, but once it's ready, the CCS technology envisioned for coal plants would be even more effective if used with natural gas. Tiny gas-fired cogeneration plants in individual homes could also help. Because these mini electrical generating systems use their waste heat to drive the homes' climate control systems, they avoid the huge energy losses involved in making power at distant facilities. This technology exists today. Nuclear power is another proven, low-C02-emitting option — and despite public fears, U.S. nuclear plants have been paragons of safety compared with the harm done by coal-fired plants. The cleanest energy option of all is also the closest at hand: conservation. As clean-energy guru Amory Lovins has shown, it's almost always cheaper to save energy than to mine or drill for it. And there are still massive efficiencies to be found almost everywhere energy is used. Boosting incentives for insulation, next-gen LED lights and ultraefficient smart appliances could do more than carbon sequestration to reduce C02 emissions in the coming decades. Let's be clear. We should continue research into making coal cleaner — that fuel will be a vital part of our energy mix for decades. But let's not allow clean-coal myths to divert us from real-world energy alternatives that work today.A variety of renewables are capable of providing base-load

Dr Mark Diesendorf is Deputy Director of the Institute of Environmental Studies at University of New South Wales., previously, as a Principal Research Scientist in CSIRO, he led a research group on the integration of wind power into electricity grids, author and co-author of several national energy scenario studies, “The Base Load Fallacy and other Fallacies disseminated by Renewable Energy Deniers,” Energy Science Coalition, March 2010, http://www.energyscience.org.au/BP16%20BaseLoad.pdf, accessed 8-17-2012.

Renewable energy can provide several different clean, safe, base-load technologies to substitute for base-load coal: • bioenergy, based for example on the direct combustion of crop and plantation forestry residues, or their gasification followed by combustion of the gas; • geothermal power – a new type of geothermal power (called hot rock, enhanced or engineered geothermal) is being developed in Australia, the USA and Europe; • solar thermal electricity, with overnight thermal storage in molten salt, water, graphite or a thermochemical store such as ammonia; • hydro-electricity in regions with very large storages (eg, Sweden, Iceland, Tasmania); • large-scale, distributed wind power, with a small amount of occasional back-up from peakload plant. It is obvious that the first four of these types of renewable power station are indeed base-load. Efficient energy use and solar hot water, the natural companions of renewable electricity, can also substitute directly for base-load coal. However, the inclusion of large-scale wind power in the above list may be a surprise to some people, because wind power is often described as an ‘intermittent’ source, one that switches on and off frequently. Before discussing the variability of wind power, we introduce the concept of ‘optimal mix’.

True base-load power is impossible

Dr Mark Diesendorf is Deputy Director of the Institute of Environmental Studies at University of New South Wales., previously, as a Principal Research Scientist in CSIRO, he led a research group on the integration of wind power into electricity grids, author and co-author of several national energy scenario studies, “The Base Load Fallacy and other Fallacies disseminated by Renewable Energy Deniers,” Energy Science Coalition, March 2010, http://www.energyscience.org.au/BP16%20BaseLoad.pdf, accessed 8-17-2012.

Even an optimal mix of fossil-fuelled power stations is not 100% reliable, because there is always a chance that several stations might break down at the same time. To achieve 100% reliability would require an infinite amount of back-up and hence an infinite cost. In practice, a generating system has a limited amount of back-up and a specified reliability. This can be 5 measured in terms of the average number of hours per year that supply fails to meet demand or by the frequency and duration of failures to meet demand. It is these indicators that electricity consumers see, not the reliability of individual power stations in the generating mix.

Renewable energies are more effective in solving global warming – the AFF still emits CO2 through extraction and processing

NREL, “Strengthening U.S. Leadership of International Clean Energy Cooperation,” December 2008, http://www.nrel.gov/international/pdfs/44261.pdf, accessed 6-20-2012.

Greenhouse Gas Impacts The primary environmental benefit of the U.S.-led global clean energy market transformation will be reduced greenhouse gas emissions of 50-80% by 2050, which scientists think will prevent catastrophic climate change impacts—a large benefit to the U.S. and the global community. Clean energy technologies will provide more than half of the reductions needed to achieve that goal (Figure 3).4 Other Environmental Benefits Significant local air quality and other environmental benefits will accompany the reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Reduced air emissions translate to improved health, lower health care costs, improved visibility, and reduced impacts on natural ecosystems. Increased use of clean energy also will reduce impacts from fossil fuel extraction and processing. Increased access to clean energy in the poorest regions of the world will reduce the use of firewood, enabling cleaner indoor air quality and contributing to local sustainable development.

Base-load power is unnecessary

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Much base-load power is unnecessary. For example, between midnight and dawn, 4600 megawatts of Australia’s base-load coal-fired power stations are used to heat water, which is supplied to customers at cheap off-peak rates. This is the result of the operational inflexibility of base-load power stations, which cannot be switched off overnight. If cheap off-peak electric hot water prices and hot water systems based on electric resistance heating were both phased out, these unnecessary coal-fired power stations could be retired or an equivalent capacity of new coal-fired power stations could be deferred or cancelled. (The phaseout has already been foreshadowed officially in Australia.) Water would be heated efficiently by solar, gas and electric heat pump. The intermediate-load power that is today supplied by the unnecessary coal-fired power stations between dawn and midnight would be replaced by a combination of combined-cycle gas-fired power stations and solar power. The net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions would be significant. Increasing the efficiency of electricity use (eg, through more efficient buildings, appliances, and equipment) and reducing unnecessary demands through energy conservation behaviour (eg, switching off lights and equipment with standing losses) can also reduce the demand for baseload electricity.