# 1AC

#### **Grid failures cascade outward, trigger outages at chemical plants- the impact is worse than a nuclear explosion**

Latynina, 03

[America in the Dark Yulia Latynina, Novaya Gazeta (liberal semi-weekly), Moscow, Russia, Aug. 18, 2003. http://www.worldpress.org/Americas/1579.cfm//uwyokb]

The scariest thing about the cascading power outages was not spoiled groceries in the fridge, or elevators getting stuck, or even, however cynical it may sound, sick patients left to their own devices without electricity-powered medical equipment. The scariest thing of all was chemical plants and refineries with 24-hour operations, which, if interrupted, can result in consequences even more disastrous and on a larger scale than those of an atomic bomb explosion. So it is safe to say that Americans got lucky this time. Several hours after the disaster, no one could know for certain whether the power outage was caused by an accident or someone’s evil design. In fact, the disaster on the East Coast illustrates just one thing: A modern city is in itself a bomb, regardless of whether someone sets off the detonator intentionally or by accident. As I recall, when I was writing my book Industrial Zone, in which business deals were bound to lead to a massive industrial catastrophe, at some point in time I was considering making a cascading power outage the cause of a catastrophe. Back then, I was amazed and shocked at the swiftness of the process. Shutting down at least one electric power plant is enough to cause a drop in power output throughout the entire power grid. This is followed by an automatic shutdown of nuclear power plants, a further catastrophic drop in power, and finally a cascading outage of the entire grid system. To start with, the electric power plant may burn out because of just about anything. In Ekibastuz [Kazakhstan] under the Soviet regime, a large hydroelectric power station was burned to the ground because of the negligence of one extremely smart worker, who used a wrench to unscrew the cap from a pressurized oil vessel. A stream of oil shot up to the ceiling; the worker got scared and dropped the wrench, which hit against the steel floor and created a spark that set the stream of oil on fire. Then the lights went off. Which brings us back to our main thesis. In order to destroy a modern city, one does not need to have nuclear weapons, because the modern city is in itself a weapon. The city infrastructure is an infrastructure with dual purpose. Why should terrorists need chemical weapons if their enemies already have chemical plants? Why should terrorists need nuclear weapons if their enemies already have skyscrapers and airplanes with tanks full of fuel, which can be hijacked with the help of a penknife? Why would they need sophisticated military technologies and stolen explosives if the KamAZ truck that blew up the hospital in Mozdok was carrying a load of, let us say, fertilizer? So-called dictatorship regimes and terrorists themselves have long since figured that out.

# 2AC

## Grid

#### Future surges in electricity demand guarantee new cascading black-outs as the system gets stressed

Heyes 8-15-12  
J.D. Heyes is a writer for Natural News.com August 15, 2012   
Overloaded US power grid stretched to capacity; Will America follow in India's footsteps?  
<http://www.naturalnews.com/036808_power_grid_collapse_outages.html#ixzz23glXL83u>, accessed 11/7/12,WYO/JF

Could the U.S. really suffer the kinds of widespread power outages that struck two-thirds of India's billion-plus population recently? Absolutely, say experts, and fixing the problem won't be cheap. While the nation's power infrastructure is referred to as a "grid," suggesting seamless interconnectivity, "the network more closely resembles a patchwork quilt stitched together to cover a rapidly expanding nation," the Washington Post reported. Experts note that the U.S. really doesn't yet face the kind of issues with its electrical infrastructure that left about 670 million Indians without power in what became the largest outage in history. But, at the same time, industry analysts say the nation's grid is definitely showing signs of aging. And, they say, it's stretched to capacity. More often than not, the grid falls victim to decrepitude rather than, say, the forces of nature, as in tornadoes and powerful storms. Nonetheless the grid is beginning to fail, say experts, who fear that such failures that caused blackouts in New York, San Diego and Boston could become ever more common as the country's demand for power grows exponentially. To fix the problem, industry analysts say it will take a multi-billion, multi-year investment if we're to avoid more frequent large-scale outages in the future.

## Shipbuilding

**Heg high now-the U.S. is peerless in every dimension of power**

**Brzezinski 2012**

[Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, CSIS Counselor and Trustee, 2012, Strategic Vision, uwyo//amp]

The more immediate risk of the ongoing dispersal of power is a potentially unstable global hierarchy. **The United States is still preeminent** but the legitimacy, effectiveness, and durability of its leadership is increasingly questioned worldwide because of the complexity of its internal and external challenges. Nevertheless, **in every significant and tangible dimension of traditional power—military, technological, economic, and financial—America is still peerless. It has by far the largest single national economy, the greatest financial influence, the most advanced technology, a military budget larger than that of all other states combined, and armed forces both capable of rapid deployment abroad actually deployed around the world. This reality** may not endure very long but it **is still the current fact of international life.**

## Solvency

#### Offshore wind does not affect birds

DOI, 11

“Commercial Wind Lease Issuance and Site Characterization Activities on the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf Offshore New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia”, <http://www.boem.gov/uploadedFiles/BOEM/Renewable_Energy_Program/Smart_from_the_Start/MidAtlanticWEAs_DraftEA.pdf>, accessed 10/26/12,WYO/JF

While birds may be affected by vessel discharges, the presence of meteorological towers and buoys, and accidental fuel releases, no significant impacts are anticipated. The risk of collision would be minor due to the small number of meteorological towers proposed, their size, and their distance from shore and each other. The impact of meteorological buoys on ESA listed and non ESA listed migratory birds is expected to be negligible, because they are much smaller and close to the water surface and similarly dispersed. The impact of meteorological towers on ESA listed and non ESA listed migratory birds is also expected to be minor at most for the same reasons.

## Natty G

#### China transitioning to OSW now

UPI 16 Jan

[“China revs up wind power amid challenges.” *UPI: Energy Resources.* UPI, 16 Jan 2013. Web. 24 Jan, 2013. <http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Energy-Resources/2013/01/16/China-revs-up-wind-power-amid-challenges/UPI-96591358360261/>. //Wyo-BF]

As the world's largest wind power market, China continues to push forward with wind power installations, yet it faces ongoing problems with grid connection. New wind power installations in China in 2012 brought the country's grid-connected capacity to more than 60 gigawatts, says the State Electricity Regulatory Commission. While a total of 100.4 billion kilowatt hours of electricity was generated by wind power last year -- an increase of 35.5 percent over 2011 -- only 12.85 gigawatts was connected to the grid, compared to 2011's figure of 16 gigawatts "In the past few years, wind farm development has been too rapid and grid construction has not been able to keep up. The huge gap put a lot of pressure on the grid," said Ma Jinru, vice-president and secretary of the board at Goldwind Group, one of China's biggest manufacturers of wind power equipment, China Daily reports. In a news release Monday promoting a Shanghai wind power exposition, the deputy director general of China's National Energy Administration said that wind energy is China's third largest source of electricity. "Wind power has become the third-largest electric power in China," Liu Qi said. "There is no electric power to substitute the position of wind power as number three, following thermal power and hydropower." As part of the National Energy Administration's renewable energy development plan announced last August, China is aiming for 100 gigawatts of wind power to be connected to the grid by 2015, including 5 gigawatts of offshore wind power. Improved grid construction and dispatching, enhanced equipment performance help the wind power sector reach to reach the 100 gigawatt goal, the news release states.

## K

#### Scenario planning is good. In a catastrophe-ridden world it’s vital to make predictions about the future.

Kurasawa, 2004

[Fuyuki, Professor of Sociology at York University, “Cautionary Tales: The Global Culture of Prevention

and the Work of Foresight.” 2004, Constellations, Vol. 11, No. 4]

Independently of this room for maneuver and the chances of success. Humanitarian, environmental, and techno-scientific activists have convincingly shown that we cannot afford not to engage in preventive labor. contractualist justification, global civil society actors are putting forth a number of arguments countering temporal myopia on rational grounds. They make the case that no generation, and no part of the world, is immune from catastrophe. Complacency and parochialism are deeply flawed in that even if we earn a temporary reprieve, our children and grandchildren will likely not be so fortunate unless steps are taken today. Similarly, though it might be possible to minimize or contain the risks and harms of actions to faraway places over the short-term, parrying the eventual blowback or spillover effect is improbable. In fact, as I argued in the previous section, all but the smallest and most isolated of crises are rapidly becoming globalized due to the existence of transnational circuits of ideas, images, people, and commodities. Regardless of where they live, our descendants will increasingly be subjected to the impact of environmental degradation, the spread of epidemics, gross North-South socioeconomic inequalities, refugee flows, civil wars, and genocides. What may have previously appeared to be temporally and spatially remote risks are ‘coming home to roost’ in ever faster cycles. In a word, then, procrastination makes little sense for three principal reasons: it exponentially raises the costs of eventual future action; it reduces preventive options; and it erodes their effectiveness. § Marked 14:44 § With the foreclosing of long-range alternatives, later generations may be left with a single course of action, namely, that of merely reacting to large-scale emergencies as they arise. We need only think of how it gradually becomes more difficult to control climate change, let alone reverse it, or to halt mass atrocities once they are underway. Preventive foresight is grounded in the opposite logic, whereby the decision to work through perils today greatly enhances both the subsequent Moreover, I would contend that farsighted cosmopolitanism is not as remote or idealistic a prospect as it appears to some, for as Falk writes, “[g]lobal justice between temporal communities, however, actually seems to be increasing, as evidenced by various expressions of greater sensitivity to past injustices and future dangers.”36 Global civil society may well be helping a new generational self-conception take root, according to which we view ourselves as the provisional caretakers of our planetary commons. Out of our sense of responsibility for the well-being of those who will follow us, we come to be more concerned about the here and now.

#### Tech is the best solution to holistic politics: checks back inequality, pollution, and disease.

Leckie and Buschman 09

(Gloria J. and John E., Gloria has a PhD from the University of Western Ontario and holds position with the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, John is the Associate University Librarian for Scholarly Resources and Services at Georgetown University and has an MA in American Studies from St. Joseph’s University, and is a doctoral candidate in the Liberal Studies Program at Georgetown University, New Critical Approaches, “Information Technology in Librarianship,” 2009//wyo-mm)

Consider the example of air pollution. So long as those responsible for it could escape the health consequences of their actions to green suburbs, leaving poor urban dwellers to breath ﬁ lthy air, there was little support for technical solutions to the problem. Pollution controls were seen as costly and unproductive by those with the power to implement them. Eventually, a democratic political process sparked by the spread of the problem and protests by the victims and their advocates legitimated the externalized interests. Only then was it possible to assemble a social subject including both rich and poor able to make the necessary reforms. This subject ﬁ nally forced a redesign of the automobile and other sources of pollution, taking human health into account. This is an example of a politics of design that will lead ultimately to a more holistic technological system. § Marked 14:45 § An adequate understanding of the substance of our common life cannot ignore technology. How we conﬁ gure and design cities, transportation systems, communication media, agriculture, and industrial production is a political matter. And we are making more and more choices about health and knowledge in designing the technologies on which medicine and education increasingly rely. Furthermore, the kinds of things it seems plausible to propose as advances or alternatives are to a great extent conditioned by the failures of the existing technologies and the possibilities they suggest. The once controversial claim that technology is political now seems obvious.

#### Alt precludes the possibility of change ensuring it does nothing.

Belu 05

(Dana S., Brooklyn College, Inquiry, “Thinking Technology, Thinking

Nature,” 2005, accessed via Academic Search Premier//wyo-mm)

Feenberg thus sees technology as a socially transformable event. On his account, any critique of technology must imply a redemption that contains a positive content. While Heidegger presciently indexes the pervasively technological character of modern life, his critique fails to account for the emergence of concrete possibilities of change. In this he is at one, albeit for different reasons, with the dominant instrumental interpretations that view technical making as inherently value free.

#### Plan solves- debate offers unique opportunity to come to the best solutions through communal inquiry. Alt fails because Heidegger can’t overcome his existentialist bias.

Depew 10

(David, University of Iowa, Social Epistemology: A Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Policy, “Surprise! Philosophy of science vindicated by hermeneutic phenomenology,” Nov 26, 2010, accessed via UW Libraries//wyo-mm)

The central conclusion McGuire and Tuchanska reach by means of the shift to a properly interpreted hermeneutic phenomenology is that science is a practice. Many aspects of scientific practice have been accurately described by ethnologists of laboratory life. But its status as a practice does not imply for McGuire and Tuchanska any diminution of science’s cognitive, even theoretical, orientation toward the world, or of the necessity for a certain objectification of things if knowledge of this sort is to be acquired, or of the success in uncovering aspects of the world that such an enterprise can be presumed to enjoy. The primacy of praxis may have implied a contrast with theoria for Heidegger, who thought of science as possible only in fitful moments when Dasein’s constitution of the world through everyday tool use breaks down. But Heidegger was wrong. Science in all its cognitive glory, write McGuire and Tuchanska, is ‘an aspect of practice’ (134, my italics.) As a result of this practice, ‘entities become objects of science first and only later enter into everyday human activities through scientific technologies’ (255). Why, we might ask, did Heidegger get it wrong? McGuire and Tuchanska tell us he was wrong, in the first instance, because of his existentialist bias (§ Marked 14:46 § 232). We may or may not be oriented toward our deaths by our lonely selves, but we can be oriented toward the knowability of the world only in and through cooperative inquiry with others, the results of which inherently communal inquiry become aspects of the discursively- experienced world itself, rather than ideas floating around in the minds of more or less isolated individuals who occasionally check their notes with one another.

## REMs

#### Rare earth prices are plummeting now – not enough demand. (Also 2011 should have caused close down)

Global Times (China), 9-21-12  
(“Rare-earth prices slump due to poor demand”, Accessed 9-22-12,<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/734460.shtml)> accessed 12/12/12,WYO/JF

Prices of some rare-earth materials witnessed dramatic decline this week following months of sluggish performance caused by poor demand, according to data released by a raw material information portal Thursday. Analysts said the prices have declined to a reasonable level after a roller-coaster ride last year. § Marked 14:46 § The price of lanthanum cerium carbonate declined by 38.71 percent this week compared with last week, and the price of cerium carbonate saw a 25.58 percent drop, according to the Beijing-based portal baiinfo.com. "The slowdown in the economy at home and abroad has dragged down demand for rare-earth products, and consequently impacted their prices," Chen Zhanheng, deputy secretary-general of the China Rare-Earth Industry Association, told the Global Times..

#### Squo solves the DA – Malaysian mines breaks monopoly within 2 years

Rhodes 11

(Chris Rhodes, Forbes Contributor, 3/28/11, “Rare Earth Elements And Thorium Power” http://www.forbes.com/sites/energysource/2011/03/28/rare-earth-elements-and-thorium-power/)

A controversial REE processing plant is to be built by the Australian mining company Lynas in Malaysia where it is argued that environmental protection laws are less rigorous than in Australia. The plant is predicted to produce one third of global demand for REEs in two years, hence breaking the Chinese monopoly. It is intended to bury the thorium in concrete, but a better option would be to use the material as a nuclear fuel in place of uranium, the price of which has recently risen above $100/pound, in coincidence with the price of crude oil, which is now also above $100/barrel.

# 1AR

#### Technology is reflexive & hasn’t made us devoid of ethical engagement: even drone strikes have been proven to evoke a rethinking of ontology.

Naughton 12

(John, Professor of the Public Understanding of Technology, The Observer, “Review: Discover: THE NETWORKER: Cyberwarfare takes Heidegger's ideas to their logical end,” April 1, 2012, accessed via ProQuest//wyo-mm)

Drones have quietly become a critical military technology in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and such is the growth in their use that the USAF currently doesn't have enough "pilots" to control them, so service personnel end up working the very long shifts needed to keep the planes in the air 24 hours a day. More interestingly, it turns out that the stress levels for these pilots are unexpectedly high. A Pentagon study has found, for example, that 29% of them suffer from "burnout". A co-author of the study says that the air force tries to recruit people who are emotionally well-adjusted, "family people" with "good values". But "when they have to kill someone, or where they are involved in missions and then they either kill them or watch them killed, it does cause them to rethink aspects of their life". So maybe Heidegger was wrong: even the kind of remote-control killing that is enabled by drones can't entirely drain killing of emotional significance. It turns out that the contrast between executing a drone attack from an air-conditioned console one minute and then driving home to one's suburban family takes a toll on those who have to do it.