## 1NC

### 1

#### Obama has held democrats in check – Iran will continue to compromise and new sanctions will be avoided through political toughness – diplomacy failure spark a US-Iran war

Jacob Glass 3/25/14 (Harry S. Truman Scholar and a Udall Scholar. He recently completed a Truman-Albright Fellowship at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars' Environmental Change and Security Program) “As Iran Nuclear Negotiations Begin, Threat of Increased Sanctions Looms Large”, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jacob-glass/as-iran-nuclear-negotiati\_b\_5024604.html

Last week Iran and the so-called P5+1 countries -- Russia, China, Britain, France, the U.S., plus Germany -- began a new round of negotiations in the Austrian capital of Vienna. While perhaps overshadowed by tensions on the Crimean Peninsula and missing Malaysian Flight 370, the talks mark a significant step towards resolving the Iranian nuclear crisis. Yet misguided calls by Congress to increase sanctions on Iran threaten to scuttle progress, and underscore the fragility of the negotiating process.¶ Over the past three decades, Iran has faced crippling sanctions imposed by America and the international community. Trade restrictions have steadily increased to block Iran's lucrative petroleum export market as well as the country's participation in the global banking system. All told, international sanctions have cost Iran over $100 billion in lost oil profits alone.¶ So called "carrot and stick" policies have long been fundamental to international diplomacy. The "stick" has been a sharp one, and has finally brought the Iranians to the negotiating table.¶ During his September visit to the UN General Assembly in New York, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani spoke with President Obama over the phone, marking the first direct communication between an American and Iranian president since 1979. On November 24, an interim "first-step" deal was reached to freeze Iran's nuclear development program and pave the way for a comprehensive agreement. The deal halts uranium enrichment above 3.5 percent and puts international observers on the ground in Iran, all but ensuring that negotiations cannot be used as a delay tactic.¶ Yet amid these positive signs that diplomacy is working, members of Congress have advocated for even more sanctions to be levied against Iran, specifically in the form of Senate Bill 1881, sponsored by Illinois Republican Mark Kirk and New Jersey Democrat Robert Menendez.¶ New sanctions would torpedo the Vienna talks and reverse the diplomatic progress that has been made.¶ Iranian officials have already promised to abandon negotiations if new sanctions are passed. Even our own allies, along with Russia and China, have opposed the move. Passing unilateral sanctions will splinter the fragile international coalition, needlessly antagonize Iranian negotiators, and make a violent conflict with Iran more likely. Diplomatic victory will only be achieved if the international community stands united before Iran.¶ To this point, the Obama administration has avoided a vote on SB 1881 by threatening a veto of the bill, and the administration's full court press to prevent Senate Democrats from supporting new sanctions has bought international negotiators time. Several influential Democrats, including Senator Richard Blumenthal from Connecticut, have agreed to postpone a vote on the bill, contingent on productive negotiations.¶ Although legislation imposing new sanctions has been avoided thus far, the pressure on Congressional Democrats to act will intensify as talks in Vienna move forward. This round of negotiations is widely projected to be more difficult than the November deal, and inflammatory rhetoric from Tehran is likely. Nevertheless, sanctions are not the answer. Instead, we must continue to let diplomacy run its course.¶ Sanctions have done their job by bringing Iran to the table. In return, Iran expects to be rewarded with sanctions relief. The passage of new trade restrictions would effectively withdraw the carrot, and hit Iran with another stick. Consider the negotiations over.¶ The risks of delaying new sanctions is slight. The sanctions relief Iran is receiving is valued between $6 and $7 billion, and represents only a small fraction of the remaining restrictions blocking Iran from using the international banking system and selling oil. Should Iran prove to be a dishonest negotiating partner, sanctions can be renewed and ratcheted up. Most importantly, international observers will be on the ground in Iran to prevent Tehran from racing towards a nuclear weapon while negotiations are ongoing.¶ At the same time, the benefits of successful diplomacy are immense, as a comprehensive deal would be a dramatic victory for U.S. non-proliferation efforts. Further, the dismantling of Iran's nuclear program would significantly ease tensions between its two biggest rivals in the region, Israel and Saudi Arabia.¶ Our congressional leaders must not be so confident as to think Iran is desperate for a deal. The unprecedented overtures of President Rouhani to the West are widely seen as a test to gauge if a favorable solution can be negotiated with the international community. Should he fail to do so, hardliners within the Iranian government will be empowered to revert back to a pre-Rouhani foreign policy dominated by isolation from the West and an aggressive nuclear development program.¶ Our senators are facing significant political pressure to resist multilateralism and pursue increased sanctions based on an uncompromising mistrust of Iran. But history judges leaders not upon their conformity with party politics, but upon the ultimate results they achieve. It's time to negotiate with the Iranians on good faith, and begin the serious work of establishing a meaningful nuclear agreement that could signal the beginning of a new era in Iranian-Western relations.

#### Plan destroys Obama – political strength sustains support of his base

Loomis 7 Dr. Andrew J. Loomis is a Visiting Fellow at the Center for a New American Security, and Department of Government at Georgetown University, “Leveraging legitimacy in the crafting of U.S. foreign policy”, March 2, 2007, pg 36-37, <http://citation.allacademic.com//meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/1/7/9/4/8/pages179487/p179487-36.php>

Declining political authority encourages defection. American political analyst Norman Ornstein writes of the domestic context, In a system where a President has limited formal power, perception matters. The reputation for success—the belief by other political actors that even when he looks down, a president will find a way to pull out a victory—is the most valuable resource a chief executive can have. Conversely, the widespread belief that the Oval Office occupant is on the defensive, on the wane or without the ability to win under adversity can lead to disaster, as individual lawmakers calculate who will be on the winning side and negotiate accordingly. In simple terms, winners win and losers lose more often than not. Failure begets failure. In short, a president experiencing declining amounts of political capital has diminished capacity to advance his goals. As a result, political allies perceive a decreasing benefit in publicly tying themselves to the president, and an increasing benefit in allying with rising centers of authority. A president’s incapacity and his record of success are interlocked and reinforce each other. Incapacity leads to political failure, which reinforces perceptions of incapacity. This feedback loop accelerates decay both in leadership capacity and defection by key allies. The central point of this review of the presidential literature is that the sources of presidential influence—and thus their prospects for enjoying success in pursuing preferred foreign policies—go beyond the structural factors imbued by the Constitution. Presidential authority is affected by ideational resources in the form of public perceptions of legitimacy. The public offers and rescinds its support in accordance with normative trends and historical patterns, non-material sources of power that affects the character of U.S. policy, foreign and domestic

**Escalates to major power war**

**Trabanco 9** – Independent researcher of geopoltical and military affairs (1/13/09, José Miguel Alonso Trabanco, “The Middle Eastern Powder Keg Can Explode at anytime,” \*\*http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=11762\*\*)

In case of an Israeli and/or American attack against Iran, Ahmadinejad's government will certainly respond. A possible countermeasure would be to fire Persian ballistic missiles against Israel and maybe even against American military bases in the regions. **Teheran will** unquestionably **resort to** its **proxies like Hamas or Hezbollah** (or even some of its Shiite allies it has in Lebanon or Saudi Arabia) **to carry out attacks** against Israel, America and their allies, effectively **setting in flames** a large portion of **the Middle East**. The ultimate weapon at Iranian disposal is to block the Strait of Hormuz. If such chokepoint is indeed asphyxiated, that would dramatically increase the price of oil, this a very threatening retaliation because it will bring intense financial and economic havoc upon the West, which is already facing significant trouble in those respects. In short, the necessary conditions for a major war in the Middle East are given. Such conflict **could** rapidly spiral out of control and thus a relatively **minor clash could** quickly **and** dangerously **escalate by engulfing the whole region and** perhaps even **beyond**. There are many key players: the Israelis, the Palestinians, the Arabs, the Persians and their respective allies and some great powers could become involved in one way or another (**America, Russia**, Europe, **China**). Therefore, any miscalculation by any of the main protagonists can trigger something no one can stop. Taking into consideration that the stakes are too high, perhaps it is not wise to be playing with fire right in the middle of a powder keg.

### 2

#### The Executive branch of the United States should make necessary adjustments to its targeted killing policy to ensure compliance with relevant domestic and international law, including principles of necessity, distinction, and proportionality. The Executive branch should publicly articulate its legal rationale for its targeted killing policy, including the process and safeguards in place for target selection.

#### The CP’s the best middle ground---preserves the vital counter-terror role of targeted killings while resolving all their downsides

Daniel Byman 13, Professor in the Security Studies Program at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and a Senior Fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution, July/August 2013, “Why Drones Work,” Foreign Affairs, Vol. 92, No. 4

Despite President Barack Obama's recent call to reduce the United States' reliance on drones, they will likely remain his administration's weapon of choice. Whereas President George W. Bush oversaw fewer than 50 drone strikes during his tenure, Obama has signed off on over 400 of them in the last four years, making the program the centerpiece of U.S. counterterrorism strategy. The drones have done their job remarkably well: by killing key leaders and denying terrorists sanctuaries in Pakistan, Yemen, and, to a lesser degree, Somalia, drones have devastated al Qaeda and associated anti-American militant groups. And they have done so at little financial cost, at no risk to U.S. forces, and with fewer civilian casualties than many alternative methods would have caused.

Critics, however, remain skeptical. They claim that drones kill thousands of innocent civilians, alienate allied governments, anger foreign publics, illegally target Americans, and set a dangerous precedent that irresponsible governments will abuse. Some of these criticisms are valid; others, less so. In the end, drone strikes remain a necessary instrument of counterterrorism. The United States simply cannot tolerate terrorist safe havens in remote parts of Pakistan and elsewhere, and drones offer a comparatively low-risk way of targeting these areas while minimizing collateral damage.

So drone warfare is here to stay, and it is likely to expand in the years to come as other countries' capabilities catch up with those of the United States. But Washington must continue to improve its drone policy, spelling out clearer rules for extrajudicial and extraterritorial killings so that tyrannical regimes will have a harder time pointing to the U.S. drone program to justify attacks against political opponents. At the same time, even as it solidifies the drone program, Washington must remain mindful of the built-in limits of low-cost, unmanned interventions, since the very convenience of drone warfare risks dragging the United States into conflicts it could otherwise avoid.

### 3

#### The 1AC masks neoliberal violence globally. Insisting that practices be judged legally creates a permanent state of exception – normalizing structural violence globally

Dowdeswell, 2013

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Certain practices of contemporary warfare, such as pre-emptive attacks on civilians, house clearings, air strikes in residential neighbourhoods, targeted killings, and attacks on medical personnel and providers of humanitarian assistance, have become increasingly common in the War on Terror, in protest policing, and in counter-insurgent and urban warfare. This article will discuss the ways in which the ideologies and practices of neoliberal governance in the security sector are not only facilitating such practices, but are in fact facilitating their justification as lawful within the customary laws of armed conflict. Moreover, these are practices that until recently were denounced as atrocities and even prosecuted as war crimes. To a certain extent, it would seem reasonable to assume that modern States have ordinarily sought to normalise the atrocities that their security forces commit against civilians, preferring to use the language and logic of the law whenever possible to justify such actions. However, there is a distinct pattern to the tactics that are being normalised today, and this is due in part to the widespread adoption of neoliberal ideologies of governance and administration within the security sector. This is enabling the U.S. and its allies to institute what Agamben (2005) has discussed as a permanent state of exception within the ordinary law, and the normalisation of atrocity is a key component of this. The post-war period has seen an increase in attention to war crimes and the codification of the laws of war, and this has given us such instruments as the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and the United Nations Responsibility to Protect Protocol (UN Res., 2009), as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross which continues to address pressing issues in humanitarian law (Melzer, 2008). At the same time, though, the neoliberalisation of security governance is significantly weakening protections for civilians by permitting and justifying attacks against them as being customary under the laws of armed conflict. There is very little that international law would have to offer such civilians if the harms they suffer are rendered lawful as customary practices of war. Yet, this is indeed what is happening, and one can canvass the above strategies and perceive that their impact on their target populations consists not only of intentional deaths, but also injuries, mayhem, and widespread social dislocations that serve to further fracture and marginalise such populations. Whether they are used to justify counter-insurgent strikes in Iraq or Afghanistan, military intervention in Libya, or protest policing in regimes experiencing the Arab Spring, the strategies of what Abrahamsen and Williams (2011) have termed “globalised security governance” are designed to be waged not against states and lawful combatants, but against 'failed States' and 'non-State actors' – categories that are essentially euphemisms for civilians. The present article focuses on the neoliberal ideologies embedded within globalised governance, arguing that these are having serious negative impacts on the development of civil institutions and political mobilisation within a societies already fractured by conflict. Moreover, this development further reinforces the political power of the military hegemons that wield these strategies – whether these are the U.S. in Afghanistan and Iraq, NATO in Libya, or United Nations peacekeepers on the borders of Kosovo and Serbia. The article will first review the orthodox thinking concerning the customary laws of armed conflict, particularly the traditional 'two element' theory that posits that customary norms can be determined by examining the elements of actual state practice and the state's opinio juris that the norm is a legally binding one. It will then present critical alternatives to this view, which posit that customary law is a kind of discursive practice, where customary laws emerge from the overarching normative and ideological framework within which customary norms are articulated and by reference to which they are justified. The second section then describes how neoliberal ideologies of governance have shifted the normative framework within which we understand and justify the customary laws of war, and focuses in particular on how neoliberal ideologies of management have radically decentralised and disaggregated the traditional military chain-of-command. It is argued that neoliberal ideologies of individualisation, privatisation, and strategies of risk management are used to promote the use of force against civilians as seemingly legitimate acts of 'self-defence' against unknown and unknowable risks – risks that emerge from a conflict zone which the actions of the security forces themselves have rendered endemically dangerous. The third section will then illustrate this logic at work through reference to a specific case of atrocities committed against civilians, using the example of Collateral Murder, which is a piece video footage that was recorded by the U.S. First Air Cavalry Brigade in Iraq on 12 July 2007. This footage, which was released in April 2010 by WikiLeaks, depicts the killing of civilians, including civilians who were collecting bodies and aiding the wounded. This case study will then be supplemented by a range other examples which illustrate how justifications for civilian atrocities are becoming increasingly widespread throughout the security sector. The argument that I wish to make is not that such acts are illegal under the normative framework of the customary laws of war, but instead that this normative framework itself is being shifted by neoliberal strategies of security governance in such a way as to normalise atrocities within the customary laws of armed conflict. In order to make this argument, I will pull together diverse strands of thinking in the nature of customary law, the organising principles of the laws of war, and the history of the doctrine of the chain-of-command, and discuss how these have all been disaggregated and reconfigured by the neoliberalisation of governance in the security sector. The argument that is developed through the grasping together of these strands will then be illustrated through reference to the events depicted in Collateral Murder, and linked to broader set of examples from elsewhere in the security sector, so as to demonstrate the increasing extent to which these norms are shared. In so doing, I will be examining the problem of intentional – and seemingly justifiable – civilian atrocities from a number of different points of view. More specifically, though, the starting point will be a focus on the customary law principle of distinction, which requires that security forces distinguish between civilian and military targets. Civilians are liable to attack only for such time as they have taken up arms and are actively posing a threat, or if they are part of an organized armed group such that they perform a “continuous combat function” (Melzer, 2008). This article argues that the neoliberalisation of the security sector has shifted the criteria for attack from one based upon an individual's status as a combatant to one of defining and containing risk. Security forces in global war zones are thus shifting the criteria for attack to one in which they use armed force to define and then manage 'risky populations' in a way that subverts the ability of the humanitarian law to regulate attacks against civilians. Typically, violations of the principle of distinction and the killing of civilians have been all-to-commonplace, calling into question the ability of the humanitarian law to play such a regulatory role. However, with the transformations in the customary laws of war called into being by the neoliberalisation of security governance, what is at stake is not merely the failure of humanitarian law to protect civilians in conflict zones, but its increasing use as an instrument of their violent repression.

#### Vote negative to affirm the Communist Hypothesis as a political prerequisite. It is necessary to begin from a point outside of the global system of neoliberal capitalism.

Badiou 2009 (Alain, Prof. @ European Graduate … ,*The Meaning of Sarkozy*, pgs. 97-103 bb)

I would like to situate the Sarkozy episode, which is not an impressive page in French history, in a broader horizon. Let us picture a kind of Hegelian fresco of recent world history - by which I do not, like our journalists, mean the triad Mitterrand-Chirac-Sarkozy, but rather the development of the politics of working-class and popular emancipation over nearly two centuries.¶Since the French Revolution and its gradually universal echo, since the most radically egalitarian developments of that revolution, the decrees of Robespierre's Committee of Public Safety on the 'maximum' and Babeuf's theoriza­ tions, we know (when I say 'we', I mean humanity in the abstract, and the knowledge in question is universally available on the paths of emancipation) that communum u the right hypothuu. Indeed, there is no other, or at least I am not aware of one. All those who abandon this hypothesis immediately resign themselves to the market economy, to parliamentary democracy - the form of state suited to capitalism - and to the inevitable and 'natural' character of the most monstrous inequalities.¶What do we mean by 'communism'? As Marx argued in the 1844ManUJcriptJ, communism is an idea regarding the destiny of the human species. This use of the word must be completely distinguished from the meaning of the adjective 'communist' that is so worn-out today, in such expressions as 'communist parties', 'communist states' or 'communist world' - never mind that 'communist state' is an oxymoron, to which the obscure coinage 'socialist state' has wisely been preferred. Even if, as we shall see, these uses of the word belong to a time when the hypothesis was still coming-to-be.¶In its generic sense, 'communist' means first of all, in a negative sense - as we can read in its canonical text The CommunutManijeJto - that the logic of classes, ofthefunda­ mental subordination of people who actually work for a dominant class, can be overcome. This arrangement, which has been that of history ever since antiquity, is not ipevitable. Consequently, the oligarchic power of those who possess wealth and organize its circulation, crystallized in the might of states, is not inescapable. The communist hypothesis is that a different collective organization is practicable, one that will eliminate the inequality ofwealth and even the division of labour: every individual will be a 'multi-purpose worker', and in particular people will circulate between manual and intellectual work, as well as between town and country. The private appropriation of monstrous fortunes and their transmission by inheritance will disappear. The existence of a coercive state separate from civil society, with its military and police, will no longer seem a self-evident necessity. There will be, Marx tells us - and he saw this point as his major contribution - after a brief sequence of 'proletarian dictatorship' charged with destroying the remains of the old world, a long sequence of reorganization on the basis of a 'free association' of producers and creators, which will make possible a 'with­ ering away' of the state.¶'Communism' as such only denotes this very general set of intellectual representations. This set is the horizon of any initiative, however local and limited in time it may be, that breaks with the order of established opinions - the necessity of inequalities and the state instrument for protect­ ing these - and composes a fragment of a politics of emancipation. In other words, communism is what Kant called an 'Idea', with a regulatory function, rather than a programme. It is absurd to characterize communist principles in the sense I have defined them here as utopian, as is so often done. They are intellectual patterns, always actualized in a different fashion, that serve to produce lines of demarcation between different forms of politics. By and large, a particular political sequence is either compatible with these principles or opposed to them, in which case it is reactionary. 'Communism', in this sense, is a heuristic hypothesis that is very frequently used in political argument,¶even if the word itself does not appear. If it is still true, as Sartre said, that 'every anti-communist is a swine', it is because any political sequence that, in its principles or lack of them, stands in formal contradiction with the communist hypothesis in its generic sense, has to be judged as opposed¶ to the emancipation of the whole of humanity, and thus to the properly human destiny of humanity. Whoever does not illuminate the coming-to-be of humanity with the communist hypothesis - whatever words they use, as such words matter little - reduces humanity, as far as its collective becoming is concerned, to animality. As we know, the contemporary - that is, the capitalist name of this animality - is 'competition'. The war dictated by self-interest, and nothing more.¶As a pure Idea of equality, the communist hypothesis has no doubt existed in a practical state since the beginnings of the existence of the state. As soon as mass action opposes state coercion in the name of egalitarian justice, we have the appearance of rudiments or fragments of the communist hypothesis. This is why, in a pamphlet titled De l'uJeologie, which I wrote in collaboration with the late lamented Fran<;oisBalmes and was published in 1976, we proposed to identifY 'communist invariants'.2 Popular revolts, such as that of the slaves led by Spartacus, or that of the German peasants led by Thomas Munzer, are examples of this practical existence of communist invariants.¶ However, in the explicit form that it was given by certain thinkers and activists of the French Revolution, the commu­ nist hypothesis inaugurates political modernity. It was this that laid low the mental structures of the ancien regime, yet without being tied to those 'democratic' political forms that the bourgeoisie would make the instrument for its own pursuit of power. This point is essential: from the beginning, the communist hypothesis in no way coincided with the 'democratic' hypothesis that would lead to present-day parliamentarism. It subsumes a different history and different events. What seems important and creative when illuminated by the communist hypothesis is different in kind from what bourgeois-democratic historiography selects. That is indeed why Marx, giving materialist foundations to the first effective great sequence of the modern politics of emancipation, both took over the word 'communism' and distanced himself from any kind of democratic 'politicism' by maintaining, after the lesson of the Paris Commune, that the bourgeois state, no matter how democratic, must be destroyed.¶Well, I leave it to you to judge what is important or not, to judge the points whose consequences you choose to assume against the horizon of the communist hypothesis. Once again, it is the right hypothesis, and we can appeal to its principles, whatever the declensions or variations that these undergo in different contexts.¶Sartre said in an interview, which I paraphrase: If the communist hypothesis is not right, if it is not practicable, well, that means that humanity is not a thing in itself, not very different from ants or termites. What did he mean by that? If competition, the 'free market', the sum of little pleasures, and the walls that protect you from the desire of the weak, are the alpha and omega of all collective and private existence, then the human animal is not worth a cent.¶And it is this worthlessness to which Bush with his aggressive conservatism and crusader spirit, Blair the Pious with his militarist rhetoric, and Sarkozy with his 'work, family, country' discipline, want to reduce the existence of the immense majority of living individuals. And the 'Left' is still worse, simply juxtaposing to this vacant violence a vague spirit of charity. To morbid competItIOn, the pasteboard¶ victories of daddy's boys and girls, the ridiculous supermen¶ of unleashed finance, the coked-up heroes of the planetary¶ stock exchange, this Left can only oppose the same actors¶ with a bit of social politeness, a little walnut oil in the wheels,¶crumbs of holy wafer for the disinherited - in other words,¶ borrowing from Nietzsche, the bloodless figure of the 'last man,.¶ To put an end once and for all to May '68 means agreeing that our only choice is between the hereditary nihilism of finance and social piety. It not only means accepting that communism collapsed in the Soviet Union, not only acknowledging that the PartiCommuniste Fran<;ais has been wretchedly defeated, but also and above all it means abandoning the hypothesis that May '68 was a militant invention precisely aware ofthe failure ofstate 'communism'. And thus that May '68, and still more so the five years that followed, inaugurated a new sequence for the genuine communist hypothesis, one that always keeps its distance from the state. Certainly, no one could say where all this might lead, but we knew in any case that what was at stake was the rebirth of this hypothesis.¶If the thing that Sarkozy is the name of succeeds in imposing the necessity of abandoning any idea of a rebirth of this kind, if human society is a collection of individuals pursuing their self-interest, if this is the eternal reality, then it is certain that the philosopher can and must abandon the human animal to its sad destiny.¶ But we shall not let a triumphant Sarkozy dictate the meaning of our existence, or the tasks of philosophy. For what we are witnessing in no way imposes such a renunciation of the communist hypothesis, but simply a consideration of the moment at which we find ourselves in the history of this hypothesis.

#### Our ethical responsibility is to reject capitalism – it makes structural violence both anonymous and natural which ensures unending violence and outweighs the aff

Slavoj Zizek and Glyn Daly, Senior Lecturer in Politics in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at University College, Northampton, 2004, Conversations With Zizek, p. 14-16

For Zizek it is imperative that we cut through this Gord­ian knot of postmodern protocol and recognize that our ethico-political responsibility is to confront the constitutive violence of today’s global capitalism and its obscene naturalization/anonymization of the millions who are subju­gated by it throughout the world. Against the standardized positions of postmodern culture — with all its pieties con­cerning ‘multiculturalist’ etiquette — Zizek is arguing for a politics that might be called ‘radically incorrect’ in the sense that it breaks with these types of positions and focuses instead on the very organizing principles of today’s social reality: the principles of global liberal capitalism. This requires some care and subtlety. For far too long, Marxism has been bedevilled by an almost fetishistic economism that has tended towards political mor­bidity. With the likes of Hilferding and Gramsci, and more recently Laclau and Mouffe, crucial theoretical advances have been made that enable the transcendence of all forms of economism. In this new context, however, Zizek argues that the problem that now presents itself is almost that of the opposite fetish. That is to say, the prohibitive anxieties surrounding the taboo of economism can function as a way of not engaging with economic reality and as a way of im­plicitly accepting the latter as a basic horizon of existence. In an ironic Freudian-Lacanian twist, the fear of economism can end up reinforcing a de facto economic necessity in respect of contemporary capitalism (i.e. the initial prohibi­tion conjures up the very thing it fears). This is not to endorse any kind of retrograde return to economism. Zizek’s point is rather that in rejecting economism we should not lose sight of the systemic power of capital in shaping the lives and destinies of humanity and our very sense of the possible. In particular we should not overlook Marx’s central insight thatin order to create a uni­versal global system the forces of capitalism seek to conceal the politico-discursive violence of its constructionthrough a kind of gentrification of that system. What is persistently denied by neo-liberals such as Rorty (1989) and Fukuyama (1992) is thatthe gentrification of global liberal capitalism is one whose ‘universalism’ fundamentally reproduces and depends upon a disavowed violence that excludes vast sectors of the world’s population. In this way, neo-liberal ideology attempts to naturalize capitalism by presenting its out­comes of winning and losing as if they were simply a matter of chance and sound judgement in a neutral marketplace. Capitalism does indeed create a space for a certain diver­sity, at least for the central capitalist regions, but it is neither neutral nor ideal and its price in terms of social exclusion is exorbitant. That is to say, the human cost in terms of inherent global poverty and degraded ‘life-chances’ cannot be calculated within the existing economic rationale and, in consequence, social exclusion remains mystified and name­less (viz, the patronizing reference to the ‘developing world’. And Zizek’s point is that this mystification is mag­nified through capitalism’s profound capacity to ingest its own excesses and negativity: to redirect (or misdirect) social antagonisms and to absorb them within a culture of differ­ential affirmation. Instead of Bolshevism, the tendency today is towards a kind of political boutiquism that is readily sus­tained by postmodern forms of consumerism and lifestyle. Against thisZizek argues for a new universalism whose primary ethical directive is to confront the fact that our forms of social existence are founded on exclusion on a global scale. While it is perfectly true that universalism can never become Universal (it will always require a hegemonic-par­ticular embodiment in order to have any meaning), what is novel about Zizek’s universalism is that it would not attempt to conceal this fact or to reduce the status of the abject Other to that of a ‘glitch’ in an otherwise sound matrix.

### PQD

#### No readiness impact---even explicit tension over goals and missions just causes the military to cave

Yoo 9 – John Yoo, Fletcher Jones Distinguished Visiting Professor of Law, Chapman University School of Law; Professor of Law, School of Law, University of California, Berkeley; Visiting Scholar, American Enterprise Institute, May 2009, “THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL ADMINISTRATIVE LAW ISSUE: ADMINISTRATIVE LAW UNDER THE GEORGE W. BUSH ADMINISTRATION: LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD: ARTICLE: ADMINISTRATION OF WAR,” Duke Law Journal, 58 Duke L.J. 2277, p. lexis

Applied to the military context, it is worth identifying how the Bush and Clinton administration and civilian preferences may have diverged from those of the armed forces. Unlike the Clinton administration, both the civilian and military leadership were on the same page in the area of budget and personnel. Under the Bush administration, military spending rose sharply, both in absolute terms and as a share of the federal budget. As a percentage of the federal budget, Defense Department spending rose from 15.6 percent in 2001 ($ 290 billion) to 21 percent in 2008 ($ 651 billion). n104 Civilian and military leaders may very well have disagreed, however, over how that money should be spent. As noted earlier, President Bush and Secretary Rumsfeld favored a restructuring of the Army to emphasize smaller, lighter, and more lethal units that could deploy more quickly [\*2296] to fight in smaller conflicts. n105 Army officers may well have favored keeping the focus on the large armored units designed for a broad conflict against a major power such as Russia or China n106 - hence the conflict over the Crusader artillery system and the Comanche attack helicopter. n107 This tension signaled a larger difference over the nation's strategic goals in the wake of the Cold War's end. Civilians wanted a force shaped for the smaller conflicts, civil wars, nation building, and humanitarian missions that characterized the 1990s. Military leaders preferred the conflicts envisioned by the "Powell doctrine," n108 which emphasized defeating an enemy quickly with overwhelming force, defined goals, and a clear exit strategy. n109

The pressure of external events may have exacerbated these differences. The actual combat phases of both the Afghanistan and Iraq wars were relatively short and involved few casualties for American forces. Whereas the latter was a regular international conflict between two conventionally armed forces, the former involved special forces, covert units, air power, and irregular allies fighting a mixture of loosely organized militia units and terrorist groups. Afghanistan required the United States to pivot quickly from defeating the Taliban and al Qaeda units to rebuilding a national government in cooperation with the Northern Alliance victors - a task still unfinished. Nation building is at odds with the Powell doctrine, because it requires military units to perform a police function over the civilian population, with goals that are hard to measure and difficult to achieve, and with no preset exit date. Iraq called for yet a different kind of strategy, that of counterinsurgency, which also deviated from the preferred focus on high-technology weapons systems, armored units and air superiority fighters, and [\*2297] large-scale conventional warfare. Instead, the armed forces eventually had to surge in large numbers of ground troops who patrolled in urban environments, cooperated with local leadership structures, and relied on intelligence to defeat al Qaeda operatives and Sunni resistance fighters. The Army had engaged in counterinsurgency operations in South Vietnam, sometimes to great effect, but had since lost its expertise in favor of the tactics and strategies needed for a conventional conflict. n110

#### Hegemony fails at resolving conflicts.

Maher 11**—PhD candidate in Political Science @ Brown**

Richard, Ph.D. candidate in the Political Science department at Brown University, The Paradox of American Unipolarity: Why the United States Will Be Better Off in a Post-Unipolar World, 11/12/2010 Orbis, ScienceDirect

And yet, **despite this material preeminence, the United States sees its political and strategic influence diminishing around the world. It is involved in two costly and destructive wars**, in Iraq and Afghanistan, where success has been elusive and the end remains out of sight. **China has adopted a new assertiveness** recently, on everything from U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, currency convertibility, and America's growing debt (which China largely finances). **Pakistan,** one of America's closest strategic allies, **is facing the threat of social and political collapse. Russia is using its vast energy resources to reassert its dominance** in what it views as its historical sphere of influence**. Negotiations with North Korea and Iran have gone nowhere** in dismantling their nuclear programs. **Brazil's growing economic and political influence offer another option for partnership and investment for countries in the Western Hemisphere. And relations with Japan,** following the election that brought the opposition Democratic Party into power, **are at their frostiest in decades**. To many observers**, it seems that America's vast power is not translating into America's preferred outcomes**. As the United States has come to learn, **raw power does not automatically translate into the realization of one's preferences, nor is it necessarily easy to maintain one's predominant position in world politics**. There are many costs that come with predominance – material, political, and reputational**. Vast imbalances of power create apprehension and anxiety in others**, in one's friends just as much as in one's rivals. In this view, it is not necessarily *American* predominance that produces unease but rather American *predominance*. **Predominance also makes one a tempting target, and a scapegoat for other countries’ own problems and unrealized ambitions**. Many a Third World autocrat has blamed his country's economic and social woes on an ostensible U.S. conspiracy to keep the country fractured, underdeveloped, and subservient to America's own interests. **Predominant power likewise breeds envy, resentment, and alienation**. How is it possible for one country to be so rich and powerful when so many others are weak, divided, and poor? Legitimacy—the perception that one's role and purpose is acceptable and one's power is used justly—is indispensable for maintaining power and influence in world politics**.** **As we witness the emergence** (or re-emergence) **of great powers in other parts of the world, we realize that American predominance cannot last forever. It is** inevitable **that the distribution of power and influence will become more balanced in the future, and that the United States will necessarily see its relative power decline**. While the United States naturally should avoid hastening the end of this current period of American predominance, it should not look upon the next period of global politics and international history with dread or foreboding. It certainly should not seek to maintain its predominance at any cost, devoting unlimited ambition, resources, and prestige to the cause. In fact, contrary to what many have argued about the importance of maintaining its predominance, **America's position in the world**—both at home and internationally—**could very well be strengthened once its era of preeminence is over. It is, therefore, necessary for the United States to start thinking about how best to position itself in the “post-unipolar” world.**

**No SCS war**

Chaibi 3/4/13 – 3rd year visiting student from Princeton University in the Department of Engineering Science (Abraham, “The outlook for continuing stability in the South China Sea”, <http://politicsinspires.org/the-outlook-for-continuing-stability-in-the-south-china-sea/>, CMR)

**What** then **is the evidence suggesting a continued reluctance to engage in full-scale military confrontation**? Although in the past conflict has often arisen between economically interdependent nations (viz. the previous peak of global trade in 1914), **the China-ASEAN relationship is one of fundamental interdependence** of production, visible in the prevalence of international supply chaining in manufacturing processes, rather than solely trade and labour movement[i]. **The burgeoning economic interdependence and growth of neighbouring states contributes a major incentive to prevent a conflagration**. $**5.3 trillion of trade,** of which approximately 20% is US, **transits the South China Sea annually and any interruption would not only severely restrict regional trade revenues, but would** also **very likely guarantee US military intervention**[ii]. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is becoming increasingly interconnected and 2015 will mark a key turning point with the opening of internal ASEAN borders for free movement of labor. The ASEAN bloc has also concluded a number of reconciliation agreements with China. Regarding security, both the 2002 Code of Conduct and the 2011 Guidelines to the Code of Conduct are intended to help coordinate diplomacy and maintain peace in South China Sea disputes. **Economically China has been ASEAN’s largest trading partner since 2009,** and at its opening in 2010 the ASEAN-China free trade area (ACFTA) became the largest in the world by population. These arrangements come at a time when growing estimates of the value of the natural resources contained in the South China Sea are generating pressures associated with ensuring energy security.¶ Economic interdependence between China and ASEAN, however, is not the sole factor at play. In areas with considerable interstate tension sub-state actors have often contributed to the deterioration of international relations, most prominently with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand tipping Europe into World War I. **Recent developments in state-level Chinese political and military discourse reflect a strong interest in cooperation**. **Chinese President** Hu **Jintao**’s 2011 discussions with Filipino President Corazon Aquino firmly **expressed the hope that “the countries concerned may put aside disputes and actively explore forms of common development in the relevant sea areas**”[iii]. Additionally in 2011 the Chinese State Council Information Office released a white paper with a similar emphasis on joint development. Yet China is also reported to have developed internal fractures in its South China Sea policy, with a number of different ministries controlling paramilitary units that are not under express government oversight[iv]. For example, the Bureau of Fisheries Administration (BFA) now directs a relatively well-equipped law enforcement fleet that is tasked with patrolling Chinese-owned fishing areas. Such interest groups repeatedly instigate minor disputes with their ASEAN counterparts and the US navy that exacerbate state-level discussions and risk eventually drawing unintended consequences (characteristically, in 2004 two BFA vessels obstructed a US Navy surveillance ship in the Yellow Sea).¶ The region has also seen a rise in high-tech militarization, with rapid development in areas ranging from aircraft carriers and submarines to cyber-espionage; this is likely to further increase due to the 2011 US “pivot to Asia” and military surge. The pivot is considered to be a sign that the US intends to continue playing a leadership role in East Asia, a strategy at odds with China’s vision[v]. An associated complication is the imprecise definition of US commitments to its ally nations in the event of disputes in contested territories, especially vis-à-vis the Philippines and Vietnam, and the possibility that alliances will be used to escalate a small battle into a regional affair. The US is making efforts to address these complications; for the first time since RIMPACS’s creation in 1971, China has been invited to participate in a US-led naval exercise. Positive near-term repercussions of growing US involvement have also been postulated; analysts suggest that one of the root causes behind Chinese interest in cooperation is the fear that aggression in the South China Sea will drive other parties to strengthen their ties with the US[vi].¶ **The relative wealth of economic and diplomatic compromises on all sides presents a compelling argument that under current conditions, disputes in the South China Sea will continue to be restrained to small-scale skirmishes that do not threaten overall stability**. This is not to say that the increase in regional tension is insignificant, but rather that **the involved parties all have a strong interest in maintaining mutual growth and have demonstrated their willingness to make strategic sacrifices to maintain the status quo.** Furthermore as China is the common link in the majority of the disputes, it is probable that it will be at the heart of any conflict — and **China has frequently shown restraint in this regard** (though not so, for example, in Tibet). In terms of China’s priorities, policy analysts tend to agree that if China were to begin a large-scale military campaign, Taiwan would most likely be the focus of its aggression[vii].

### Allies

#### No offense – NATO is useless – extending the alliance only risks entanglement wars

Ted Galen Carpenter, 3/30/2009 “NATO at 60: A Hollow Alliance”, CATO Institute, http://www.cato.org/pub\_display.php?pub\_id=10067,

Although NATO has added numerous new members during the past decade, most of them possess minuscule military capabilities. Some of them also have murky political systems and contentious relations with neighboring states, including (and most troubling) a nuclear-armed Russia. Thus, NATO's new members are weak, vulnerable, and provocative — an especially dangerous combination for the United States in its role as NATO's leader. There are also growing fissures in the alliance about how to deal with Russia. The older, West European powers tend to favor a cautious, conciliatory policy, whereas the Central and East European countries advocate a more confrontational, hard-line approach. The United States is caught in the middle of that intra-alliance squabble. Perhaps most worrisome, the defense spending levels and military capabilities of NATO's principal European members have plunged in recent years. The decay of those military forces has reached the point that American leaders now worry that joint operations with U.S. forces are becoming difficult, if not impossible. The ineffectiveness of the European militaries is apparent in NATO's stumbling performance in Afghanistan. NATO has outlived whatever usefulness it had. Superficially, it remains an impressive institution, but it has become a hollow shell — far more a political honor society than a meaningful security organization. Yet, while the alliance exists, it is a vehicle for European countries to free ride on the U.S.military commitment instead of spending adequately on their own defenses and taking responsibility for the security of their own region. American calls for greater burden-sharing are even more futile today than they have been over the past 60 years. Until the United States changes the incentives by withdrawing its troops from Europe and phasing out its NATO commitment, the Europeans will happily continue to evade their responsibilities. Today's NATO is a bad bargain for the United States. We have security obligations to countries that add little to our own military power. Even worse, some of those countries could easily entangle America in dangerous parochial disputes. It is time to terminate this increasingly dysfunctional alliance.

#### Judicial review of drones will be a rubber-stamp – crushes *international norms* and *allied cooperation* – turns case

Rona 13 (Gabor, International Legal Director of Human Rights First, “The pro-rule of law argument against a 'drone court'”, 2/27, <http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/judicial/285041-the-pro-rule-of-law-argument-against-a-drone-court>, CMR)

The instinct to regulate the government's claimed unilateral killing power is understandable. But a U.S. court empowered to issue death warrants against people who have not been charged, let alone convicted, would be a revolutionary re-write of separation of powers and of the very meaning of judicial review. It would be unjust, ineffective, and counterproductive. It may be unconstitutional as well.

A “drone court” would be unjust because the proposed target would be unable to appear and make the case for preserving his life. A secret judicial process in which the right to life is at stake but the owner of that life has no say is an affront both to American values and international legal principles.

While doing much harm, a “drone court” would do little, if any, good. Supporters like the idea because it appears to provide some check on the President’s secretive exercise of this lethal unilateral power. But what judge would risk preventing the interception of a terrorist? What’s more likely is that the drone court would be a rubber stamp, creating only the appearance, not the reality, of justice.

In wartime, the president may authorize killing of members of enemy armed forces or anyone else directly participating in hostilities. In an unconventional war such as this one, where the definition of the “enemy” and its “armed forces” isn’t always clear, the president needs to disclose how he defines that enemy and determines who is a member of its armed forces or otherwise participating in its fight against the United States, so that we can have some assurance he’s not killing the wrong people. A secret court would have no special expertise in making that determination.

Outside an active armed conflict, the legal standards are different: a suspect can be targeted for death only if he poses an “imminent threat” to human life that cannot be thwarted by non-lethal means. Here a “drone court” would be especially useless. We wouldn’t want the military to have to jump through judicial hoops to thwart a truly imminent attack. If the threat is imminent, there is, by definition, no time to seek judicial review, and if there is time, the threat is, by definition, not imminent.

But a “drone court” would be worse than ineffective: it would harm national security. Throughout the “war on terror,” policies that offend international law, including the broad scope of the government's claimed authority to kill, have inhibited allies from sharing essential intelligence with the United States and damaged the country’s reputation as a beacon on human rights. A secret court would only reinforce the perception that the United States concocts its own secret rules while insisting that other countries follow the international public ones.

### Yemen

**No Link between drones and AQAP – alt causes are overwhelming**

**Swift 12** – adjunct professor of national security studies at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and a fellow at the University of Virginia's Center for National Security Law (Christopher, THE DRONE BLOWBACK FALLACY STRIKES IN YEMEN AREN'T PUSHING PEOPLE TO AL-QAEDA, July 5, <http://www.yementimes.com/en/1587/opinion/1097/The-d-rone-blowback-fallacy-Strikes-in-Yemen-aren%27t-pushing-people-to-Al-Qaeda.htm>, CMR)

Last month, **I traveled to Yemen to study how AQAP operates and whether the conventional understanding of the relationship between drones and recruitment is correct**. While there, **I conducted 40 interviews with tribal leaders, Islamist politicians, Salafist clerics and other sources**. **These subjects came from 14 of Yemen's 21 provinces**, most from rural regions. Many faced insurgent infiltration in their own districts. Some of them were actively fighting AQAP. Two had recently visited terrorist strongholds in Jaar and Zinjibar as guests. **I conducted each of these in-depth interviews using structured questions and a skilled interpreter**. I have withheld my subjects' names to protect their safety -- a necessity occasioned by the fact that some of them had survived assassination attempts and that others had recently received death threats.¶ These men had little in common with the Yemeni youth activists who capture headlines and inspire international acclaim. As a group, they were older, more conservative and more skeptical of U.S. motives. They were less urban, less wealthy, and substantially less secular. But to my astonishment, **none** **of the individuals** I interviewed **drew a causal relationship between** U.S. **drone strikes and Al-Qaeda recruiting**. Indeed, **of the 40 men in this cohort, only five believed that U.S. drone strikes were helping Al-Qaeda more than they were hurting it**.¶ Al-Qaeda exploits U.S. errors, to be sure. As the Yemen scholar Gregory Johnsen correctly observes, the death of some 40 civilians in the December 2009 cruise missile strike on Majala infuriated ordinary Yemenis and gave AQAP an unexpected propaganda coup. But **the fury produced** **by** such **tragedies is not systemic, not sustained and**, ultimately, **not sufficient**. As much as Al-Qaeda might play up civilian casualties and U.S. intervention in its recruiting videos, the Yemeni tribal leaders I spoke to reported that **the factors driving young men into the insurgency are overwhelmingly economic**. ¶ From Al-Hodeida in the west to Hadramaut in the east, **AQAP is building complex webs of dependency within Yemen's rural population. It gives idle teenagers cars, qat, and rifles** -- the **symbols of Yemeni manhood**. It pays salaries (up to $400 per month) that lift families out of poverty. It supports weak and marginalized sheikhs by digging wells, distributing patronage to tribesmen and punishing local criminals. As the leader of one Yemeni tribal confederation told me, “**Al-Qaeda attracts those who can't afford to turn away**.”¶ Religious figures echoed these words. Although critical of the U.S. drone campaign, **none of the Islamists and Salafists I interviewed believed that drone strikes explain Al-Qaeda's burgeoning numbers**. “**The driving issue is development**,” an Islamist parliamentarian from Hadramout province said. “Some districts are so poor that joining Al-Qaeda represents the best of several bad options.” (Other options include criminality, migration and even starvation.) A Salafi scholar engaged in hostage negotiations with AQAP agreed. “Those who fight do so because of the injustice in this country,” he explained. “A few in the north are driven by ideology, but in the south it is mostly about poverty and corruption.”

**AQAP isn’t a threat—their impacts are hype**

**Gerges 12**—Prof of IR @ London School of Economics (“The Rise and Fall of Al-Qaeda: Debunking the Terrorism Narrative”, 1/3/2012, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/fawaz-gerges/the-rise-and-fall-of-alqa_b_1182003.html>, CMR)

**The popular uprisings** **in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain have** not only shaken the foundation of the authoritarian order in the Middle East, but they have also **hammered a deadly nail in the coffin of a terrorism narrative** which has painted Al-Qaeda as the West's greatest threat. At least, they should have. Yet **despite** Osama **bin Laden's killing** in May, the dwindling of his group to the palest shadow of its former self and the protest of millions across the Arab world for whom the group never represented, **Al-Qaeda holds a grasp on the Western imagination**. **Few** Americans and **Westerners realize the degree to which their fear of terrorism is misplaced**, making closure over to the costly War on Terror difficult, if not impossible. **Shrouded in myth and inflated by a self-sustaining industry of** so-called **terrorism "experts" and a well-funded national security industrial complex** whose numbers swelled to nearly one million, **the power of Al-Qaeda can only be eradicated when the fantasies around the group are laid to rest.** Myth 1: Al-Qaeda has been operational for more than two decades Contrary to the conventional terrorism narrative, Al-Qaeda has not been a functional organization with the goal of targeting the West for the past 20 years. By the time the American forces expelled bin Laden and his associates from their base in Afghanistan at the end of 2001, Al-Qaeda, as we know it today, was only five years old. At the end of the Afghan war in 1989, none of the leading figures -- Sheikh Abdullah Azzam, Ayman al-Zawahiri, nor bin Laden -- called for targeting the United States or the West. Even after the catalyst for change in bin Laden's thinking -- the American military intervention in the Gulf in 1990 and its permanent stationing of troops in Saudi Arabia -- the group did not translate this hostility into concrete action. Rather, it was during bin Laden's time in Sudan in the mid-1990s where he combined business practices with ideological indoctrination. Myth 2: Al-Qaeda has lots of boots on the ground **At its height of its power** in the late 1990s, **Al-Qaeda had** between **1,000** and 3,000 **members**. **Transnational jihadism** of the Al-Qaeda variety **has**, in fact, **never had a large constituency, nor a solid base of popular support**: Al-Qaeda has never been a viable social movement, but truly a fringe group without mass appeal among Muslim opinion. Contrary to received wisdom, **September 11 did not turn out to be Al-Qaeda's baptism by fire**, a force multiplier, a game changer. There was no river of young recruits to rise up and join the fight against the head of kufr (impiety) -- the U.S. -- as had happened with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the late 1970s. Western intelligence officials believe that **there are fewer than 200 surviving members of Al-Qaeda**, **based mainly in Pakistan and Afghanistan** and mostly unskilled composed of cooks, drivers, bodyguards and food soldiers. Myth Three: Al Qaeda has the same philosophy as other militant Islamist organizations While distinctions are rarely made between domestic jihadis and transnational Al-Qaeda types, or between Al-Qaeda and politically based Islamists, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas or Hizbullah, Al-Qaeda, with deep historical roots in Muslim societies, is an ideological orphan within the military Islamist family, an ambitious venture founded and led by a small vanguard. Grouping all these organizations together glosses over a history of ideological struggles within militant Islamist groups and even among Al Qaeda's inner sanctum of leaders over the concept of transnational jihad. From its origins in the late 1950s until the mid-1990s, a period of almost forty years, the militant Islamist movement known as "jihadism" was inward-looking, obsessed with replacing "renegade" secular Muslim rulers with Qur'anic-based states or states governed by the sharia (Islamic law). In the 1990s bin Laden and Zawahiri twisted these ideologies to suit their purposes of fighting the 'far enemy' -- the U.S. and its close Western allies -- which they believed would attract enough followers to build an army and momentum enough for their nearer battles. Myth Four: While Al-Qaeda Central has suffered a defeat with the loss of bin Laden, local 'branches' of Al-Qaeda in Yemen, Iraq, Pakistan, Somalia and Indonesia will continue to try to attack the U.S. and the West **The material links** and connections **between local branches and Al-Qaeda Central are tenuous at best**: **far from being an institutionally coherent social movement,** **Al-Qaeda is a loose collection of small groups and factions that tend to be guided by charismatic individuals and are more local than transnational in outlook**. Most victims are therefore Muslim civilians. Further, these branches tend to be as much a liability for the long term strategic interests of Al-Qaeda Central as they are assets. Abu Musab Zarqawi, the emir of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, proved to be Al-Qaeda Central's worst enemy. He refused to take orders from bin Laden or Zawahiri and, in fact, acted against their wishes, according to his own desires. Like Zarqawi, **local** groups or **franchises -- like** Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (**AQAP**) or Al-Qaeda of the Islamic Maghreb -- **which the terrorism narrative often paints as being closely aligned and commanded by Al-Qaeda Central** in fact **have** **proven repeatedly that they run by their own local** and contextualized **agendas**, **not** those set among the inner sanctum of **Al-Qaeda Central.** Myth Five: The War on Terror has made Americans safer and has decreased the likelihood of attacks on the country There is a clear causal link between incidences of homegrown terrorism in the West and the post-9/11 wars fought in Afghanistan and Iraq, and more recently in Pakistan and Yemen. Far from weeding out individual terrorists drone by drone to put an end to Al-Qaeda and its violence, the American offensive since 9/11 has fed into the Al-Qaeda narrative which paints the West as a Judeo-Christian crusader and, ironically, inspired a new generation of homegrown radicals. Despite their apparent tactical success, U.S. counterterrorism measures like drone attacks further fuel anti-American sentiments and calls for vengeance. Yet neither the U.S. national security apparatus nor terrorism experts acknowledge a link between the new phenomenon of bottom-up extremism and the U.S. War on Terror, particularly in Afghanistan-Pakistan. Further, **despite the phenomenal expansion of the intelligence machine as part of the War on Terror, this machine has failed to detect the few serious attacks and plots against the U.S. homeland,** such as the Fort Hood, Texas, shooting that left thirteen dead, the so-called underwear bomber plot, or the 2009 Christmas Day bomb attempt, which was thwarted not by one of the almost one million individuals with top-secret clearances employed to find lone terrorists but by an alert airline passenger who saw smoke coming from a seatmate. In the Times Square bombing, an alert vendor called the police after he saw smoke coming out of a parked SUV. Even when the U.S. pays more than $5 billion for 1 million employees with security clearances to hunt members of Al-Qaeda, **absolutely security cannot exist**. The security of the West is organically linked to that of the rest of the world. And **U.S. leaders must think twice before pursuing** counterterrorism **measures which alienate Muslim public opinion and breed homegrown terrorists**. \*\*\* **The war with Al-Qaeda is over**. Western leaders must level with their citizens: **Al-Qaeda poses only a security irritant**, not a serious threat. Terrorism cannot be eradicated with drone attacks or even massive military interventions, all of which are, in any case, costly. Rather than battling against a mythic foe, **the U.S.** and Western powers **should** expedite the **withdrawal** of soldiers **from Muslim territories** **where their presence is a painful reminder of the European colonial legacy of domination and subjugation.**

#### No WMD terrorism – lack of desire and capability – empirically the threat is overblown

Mueller 11. John Mueller, Professor and Woody Hayes Chair of National Security Studies, Mershon Center for International Security Studies and Department of Political Science, “The Truth About al Qaeda”, 8/2/2011, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/68012/john-mueller/the-truth-about-al-qaeda?page=show>, CMR

The chief lesson of 9/11 should have been that small bands of terrorists, using simple methods, can exploit loopholes in existing security systems. But instead, **many** preferred to **engage in mass**ive **extrapolation**: **If 19 men could hijack four airplanes** simultaneously, the thinking went, then **surely al Qaeda would soon make an atomic bomb.** As a misguided Turkish proverb holds, "If your enemy be an ant, imagine him to be an elephant." The new information unearthed in Osama bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan, suggests that the United States has been doing so for a full decade. **Whatever al Qaeda's threatening rhetoric and occasional nuclear fantasies, its potential as a menace**, particularly as an atomic one, **has been much inflated**. **The public has** now **endured a decade of dire warnings about** the imminence of a **terrorist atomic attack**. In 2004, the former CIA spook Michael Scheuer proclaimed on television's 60 Minutes that it was "probably a near thing," and in 2007, the physicist Richard Garwin assessed the likelihood of a nuclear explosion in an American or a European city by terrorism or other means in the next ten years to be 87 percent. By 2008, Defense Secretary Robert Gates mused that what keeps every senior government leader awake at night is "the thought of a terrorist ending up with a weapon of mass destruction, especially nuclear." **Few**, it seems, **found** much **solace in** the fact **that** **an al Qaeda computer** seized in Afghanistan in 2001 **indicated** that **the group's budget for research on w**eapons of **m**ass **d**estruction (almost all of it focused on primitive chemical weapons work) **was** some $2,000 to $4,000. In the wake of the killing of Osama bin Laden, officials now have more al Qaeda computers, which reportedly contain a wealth of information about the workings of the organization in the intervening decade. A multi-agency task force has completed its assessment, and according to first reports, it has found that **al Qaeda members have** **primarily been engaged in dodging drone strikes and complaining about how cash-strapped they are**. Some **reports suggest** **they've** also **been looking at quite a bit of** pornography. The full story is not out yet, but **it seems** breathtakingly unlikely **that the miserable little group has** had **the time or inclination,**

**let alone the money, to set up and staff a uranium-seizing operation, as well as a** fancy, super-high-tech **facility to fabricate a bomb**. **It** is a process that **requires trusting corrupted foreign collaborators** and other criminals, **obtaining and transporting** highly guarded **material**, **setting up a** machine **shop staffed with top scientists** and technicians, **and rolling the** heavy, cumbersome, and untested finished **product into position to be detonated by a skilled crew**, all the **while attracting no attention from outsiders.** The documents also reveal that after fleeing Afghanistan, bin Laden maintained what one member of the task force calls an "obsession" with attacking the United States again, even though 9/11 was in many ways a disaster for the group. It led to a worldwide loss of support, a major attack on it and on its Taliban hosts, and a decade of furious and dedicated harassment. And indeed, bin Laden did repeatedly and publicly threaten an attack on the United States. He assured Americans in 2002 that "the youth of Islam are preparing things that will fill your hearts with fear"; and in 2006, he declared that his group had been able "to breach your security measures" and that "operations are under preparation, and you will see them on your own ground once they are finished." Al Qaeda's animated spokesman, Adam Gadahn, proclaimed in 2004 that "the streets of America shall run red with blood" and that "the next wave of attacks may come at any moment." The **obsessive desire notwithstanding**, such **fulminations have clearly lacked substance**. Although hundreds of millions of people enter the United States legally every year, and countless others illegally, **no true al Qaeda cell has been found in the country since 9/11** and exceedingly few people have been uncovered who even have any sort of "link" to the organization. The closest effort at an al Qaeda operation within the country was a decidedly nonnuclear one by an Afghan-American, Najibullah Zazi, in 2009. Outraged at the U.S.-led war on his home country, Zazi attempted to join the Taliban but was persuaded by al Qaeda operatives in Pakistan to set off some bombs in the United States instead. Under surveillance from the start, he was soon arrested, and, however "radicalized," he has been talking to investigators ever since, turning traitor to his former colleagues. Whatever training Zazi received was inadequate; he repeatedly and desperately sought further instruction from his overseas instructors by phone. At one point, he purchased bomb material with a stolen credit card, guaranteeing that the purchase would attract attention and that security video recordings would be scrutinized. Apparently, his handlers were so strapped that they could not even advance him a bit of cash to purchase some hydrogen peroxide for making a bomb. For al Qaeda, then, the operation was a failure in every way -- except for the ego boost it got by inspiring the usual dire litany about the group's supposedly existential challenge to the United States, to the civilized world, to the modern state system. Indeed, **no** Muslim **extremist has succeeded in detonating** even **a simple bomb in the U**nited **S**tates **in the last ten years**, and except for the attacks on the London Underground in 2005, neither has any in the United Kingdom. **It seems** wildly unlikely **that al Qaeda is remotely ready to go nuclear**. Outside of war zones, the amount of killing carried out by **al Qaeda** and al Qaeda linkees, maybes, and wannabes throughout the entire world since 9/11 stands at perhaps a few hundred per year. That's a few hundred too many, of course, but it scarcely presents an existential, or elephantine, threat. And **the likelihood that a**n **American will be killed by a terrorist** of any ilk **stands at one in 3.5 million per year**, even with 9/11 included. **That probability will remain unchanged** unless terrorists are able to increase their capabilities massively -- and obtaining nuclear weapons would allow them to do so. Although al Qaeda may have dreamed from time to time about getting such weapons, no other terrorist group has even gone so far as to indulge in such dreams, with the exception of the Japanese cult **Aum Shinrikyo**, which leased the mineral rights to an Australian sheep ranch that sat on uranium deposits, purchased some semi-relevant equipment, and tried to buy a finished bomb from the Russians. That experience, however, **cannot be very encouraging to** the would-be atomic **terrorist**. Even though it was flush with funds and undistracted by drone attacks (or even by much surveillance), **Aum Shinrikyo abandoned its atomic efforts in frustration very early on. It then moved to bio**logical **weapons**, another complete failure that inspired its leader to suggest that fears expressed in the United States of a biological attack were actually a ruse to tempt terrorist groups to pursue the weapons. **The group did** finally **manage to release some sarin gas** in a Tokyo subway **that killed 13 and led to the group's terminal shutdown, as well as to 16 years** (and counting) **of pronouncements that WMD terrorism is the wave of the future. No elephants there, either**.

## 2NC

### Sonar Add on

#### 2. Accidents impossible---

#### a. Safeguards

Ryabikhin et al. ‘9 [Dr. Leonid Ryabikhin, Executive Secretary, Committee of Scientist for Global Security and Arms Control; Senior Fellow, EastWest Institute, General (Ret.) Viktor Koltunov, Deputy Director, Institute for Strategic Stability of Rosatom, and Dr. Eugene Miasnikov, Senior Research Scientist, Center for Arms Control, Energy and Environmental Studies, 21-23 June 2009, “De-alerting: Decreasing the Operational Readiness of Strategic Nuclear Forces\*” Discussion paper presented at the seminar on “Re-framing De-Alert: Decreasing the Operational Readiness of Nuclear Weapons Systems in the U.S.-Russia Context” in Yverdon, Switzerland, http://www.ewi.info/system/files/RyabikhinKoltunovMiasnikov.pdf]

Most of the experts define de-alerting as implementing some reversible physical changes in a weapon system that would significantly increase time between the decision to use the weapon and the actual moment of its launch. The proponents of this concept consider it as one of the ways to maintain strategic stability. They provide the following arguments in support of this concept. 􀂃 Radical changes have occurred in US-Russian relations. Russia and the United States are building strategic partnership relationship. In such situation the high alert readiness of strategic offensive forces targeted at each other does not correspond to the character of our relations. 􀂃 Strategic nuclear forces high alert readiness in combination with a concept of launch-on-warning strike increases the risk of “accidental” nuclear war (as a result of mistakes in the C3I system, inadequate situation analysis, mistaken decision-making, unauthorized action of personnel or even terrorists, provocation from the “third” states or non-state actors, etc.); 􀂃 False signals about missile attacks obtained from early warning system that may trigger an accidental launch. This assumption was very popular when the Russian early warning system was weakened as a result of collapse of the Soviet Union. Analysis of the above **arguments** shows, that they do not have solid grounds. **Today Russian and U.S. ICBMs are** not targeted at any state**. High alert status of the Russian and U.S. strategic nuclear forces has not been an obstacle for building a strategic partnership. The issue of the possibility of an “accidental” nuclear war** itself **is** hypothetical. **Both states have developed and implemented constructive organizational and technical measures that practically exclude launches resulting from unauthorized action of personnel or terrorists. Nuclear weapons are maintained under** very strict system of control **that excludes any accidental** or unauthorized **use and guarantees that these weapons can only be used provided that there is an appropriate authorization by the national leadership**. Besides that it should be mentioned that even the Soviet Union and the United States had taken important bilateral steps toward decreasing the risk of accidental nuclear conflict. **Direct emergency telephone “red line” has been established** between the White House and the Kremlin in **1963**. **In 1971** **the** USSR and USA signed **the Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Nuclear War Threat**. **This Agreement established the actions of each side in case of even a hypothetical accidental missile launch and it contains the requirements for the owner of the launched missile to deactivate and eliminate the missile.** Both the Soviet Union and the United States have developed proper measures to observe the agreed requirements.

#### 3. Accidental launch would land in the ocean

Slocombe ‘9

[Walter B. Slocombe, J.D. Harvard Law, Former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and Senior advisor for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, 21-23 June 2009, “De-Alerting: Diagnoses, Prescriptions,

and Side-Effects\*” Discussion paper presented at the seminar on “Re-framing De-Alert: Decreasing the Operational

Readiness of Nuclear Weapons Systems in the U.S.-Russia Context” in Yverdon, Switzerland http://www.ewi.info/system/files/Slocombe.pdf]

Moreover, in recent years, both the US and Russia, as well as Britain and China, have modified their procedures so that even if a nuclear-armed missile were launched, it would go not to a “real” target in another country but – at least in the US case - to empty ocean. In addition to the basic advantage of insuring against a nuclear detonation in a populated area, the fact that a missile launched in error would be on flight path that diverged from a plausible attacking trajectory should be detectable by either the US or the Russian warning systems, reducing the possibility of the accident being perceived as a deliberate attack. De-targeting, therefore, provides a significant protection against technical error.5

### Fmwk

#### The role of the judge should be to guide students toward ethically constructing advocacies – this means debate should focus on how we think about problems and not just the particular policy, so you should look at systems of warism versus pacificism and not the singular event of their impact scenarios – fiat isn’t real and we’re not policymakers – the only thing that matters is the value of our scholarship and the ability to translate that into political activity – and deprioritize issues of link uniqueness and transitions war – our link arguments prove there’s a larger set of social relations the plan creates and the standpoints we take in relation to that are important

Bleiker 3 Roland, Professor of International Relations, University of Queensland “Discourse and Human Agency” Contemporary Political Theory. Avenel: Mar 2003.Vol. 2, Iss. 1;  pg. 25

Confronting the difficulties that arise with this dualistic dilemma, I have sought to advance a positive concept of human agency that is neither grounded in a stable essence nor dependent upon a presupposed notion of the subject. The ensuing journey has taken me, painted in very broad strokes, along the following circular trajectory of revealing and concealing: discourses are powerful forms of domination. They frame the parameters of thinking processes. They shape political and social interactions. Yet, discourses are not invincible. They may be thin. They may contain cracks. By moving the gaze from epistemological to ontological spheres, one can explore ways in which individuals use these cracks to escape aspects of the discursive order. To recognize the potential for human agency that opens up as a result of this process, one needs to shift foci again, this time from concerns with Being to an inquiry into tactical behaviours. Moving between various hyphenated identities, individuals use ensuing mobile subjectivities to engage in daily acts of dissent, which gradually transform societal values. Over an extended period of time, such tactical expressions of human agency gradually transform societal values. By returning to epistemological levels, one can then conceptualize how these transformed discursive practices engender processes of social change. **I have used everyday forms of resistance to illustrate how discourses not only** frame **and** subjugate **our thoughts and behaviour, but also offer possibilities for human agency. Needless to say, discursive dissent is not the only practice of resistance that can exert human agency. There are many political actions that seek** immediate changes **in policy or institutional structures, rather than 'mere' shifts in societal consciousness. Although some of these actions undoubtedly achieve results, they are often not as potent as they seem. Or, rather, their** enduring effect **may well be primarily discursive, rather than institutional.** Nietzsche (1982b, 243) already knew that **the greatest events 'are not our loudest but our stillest hours.' This is why he stressed that the world revolves 'not around the inventors of new noise, but around** the inventors of new values.' **And this is why, for Foucault too, the** crucial site **for political investigations are** not institutions**, even though they are often the place where power is inscribed and crystallized. The fundamental point of anchorage of power relations, Foucault claims, is always located** outside institutions**, deeply entrenched within the social nexus. Hence,** instead of looking at power from the vantage point of institutions, one must analyse institutions from the standpoint of power relations (Foucault, 1982, 219-222).

#### And this debate is about competing epistemologies. We cannot access the government but we can act ethically as students and educators to create space for true politics.

**BADIOU2010** [ALAIN, The Communist Hypothesis Translated by David Macey and Steve Corcoran 2010 p 252-257

Let's recapitulate as simply as possible. A truth is the political real. History, even as a reservoir of proper names, is a symbolic place. The ideological operation of the Idea of communism is the imaginary projection of the political real into the symbolic fiction of History, including in its guise as a representation of the action of innumerable masses via the One of a proper name. The role of this Idea is to support the individual's incorporation into the discipline of a truth procedure, to authorize the individual, in his or her own eyes, to go beyond the Statist constraints of mere survival by becoming a part of the body-of-truth, or the subjectivizable body. We will now ask: why is it necessary to resort to this ambiguous operation? Why do the event and its consequences also have to be exposed in the guise of a fact - often a violent one that IS accompanied by different versions of the 'cult of personality'? What is the reason for this historical appropriation of emancipatory politics? The simplest reason is that ordinary history, the history of individual lives, is confined within the State. The history of a life, with neither decision nor choice, is in itself a part of the history of the State, whose conventional mediations are the family, work, the homeland, property, religion, customs and so forth. The heroic, but individual, projection of an exception to all the above - as is a truth procedure - also aims at being shared with everyone else; it aims to show itself to be not only an exception but also a possibility that everyone can share from now on. And that is one of the Idea's functions: to project the exception into the ordinary life of individuals, to fill what merely exists with a certain mea'mre of the extraordinary. To convince my own immediate circle - husband or wife, neighbours and friends, colleagues - that the fantastic exception of truths in the making also exists, that we are not doomed to lives programmed by the constraints of the State. Naturally, in the final analysis, only the raw, or militant, experience of the truth procedure will compel one person or another's entry into the bodyoftruth. But to take him or her to the place where this experience is to be found - to make him or her a spectator of, and therefore partly a participant in, what is important for a truth the mediation of the Idea, the sharing of the Idea, are almost always required. The Idea of communism (regardless of what name it might otherwise be given, which hardly matters: no Idea is definable by its name) is what enables a truth procedure to be spoken in the impure language of the State and thereby for the lines of force by virtue of which the State prescribes what is possible and what i s impossible to be shifted for a time. In this view of things, the most ordinary action is to take someone to a real political meeting, far from their home, far from their predetermined existential parameters, in a hostel of workers from Mali, for example, or at the gates of a factory. Once they have come to the place where politics is occurring, they will make a decision about whether to incorporate or withdraw.But in order for them to come to that place, the Idea and for two centuries, or perhaps since Plato, it has been the Idea of communism - must have already shifted them in the order of representations, of History and of the State. The symbol must imaginarily come to the aid of the creative flight from the real. Allegorical facts must ideologize and historicize the fragility of truth. A banal yet crucial discussion with four workers and a student in an ill-lit room must momentarily be enlarged to the dimensions of Communism and thus be both what it is and what it will have been as a moment in the local construction of the True. Through the enlargement of the symbol, it must become visible that 'just ideas' come from this practically invisible practice.The fiveperson meeting in an out-of-the-way suburb must be eternal in the very expression of its precariousness. That is why the real must be exposed in a fictional structure.

### Link

### Perm

#### State link

**MARTIN 99** [Brian, *Ghandi Marg*, 21 (3) <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/pubs/99gm.html>

From the point of view of nonviolence, **a crucial feature of capitalism is its links with systems of violence, notably the military and police**. For some capitalist countries, which are run as repressive states, this connection is obvious. But for capitalist countries with representative government, the connections between the military, police and capitalist social relations are less overt. For most of the time, state violence is not required to defend capitalism, since most people go along with the way things are. **If the challenge to capitalism is violent, such as by a revolutionary party that uses bombings or assaults, then police and military forces are used to crush the challengers**. But sometimes there are serious nonviolent challenges, especially when workers organise. Troops are typically called out when workers in a key sector (such as electricity or transport) go on strike, when workers take over running of a factory or business, or when there is a general strike. Spy agencies monitor and disrupt groups and movements that might be a threat to business or government. Police target groups that challenge property relations, such as workers and environmentalists taking direct action. At the core of capitalism is private property. **Military and police power is needed to maintain and extend the system of ownership.** It should be noted that petty theft and organised crime are not major challenges to the system of property, since they accept the legitimacy of property and are simply attempts to change ownership in an illegal manner. Criminals are seldom happy for anyone to steal from them. **Principled challenges to property, such as squatting and workers' control, are far more threatening.** Many people, especially in the United States, believe that government and corporations are antagonistic, with opposite goals. **When governments set up regulations to control product quality or pollution, some corporate leaders complain loudly about government interference. But beyond the superficial frictions, at a deeper level the state operates to provide the conditions for capitalism**. The state has it own interests, to be sure, especially in maintaining state authority and a monopoly on what it considers legitimate violence, but it depends on capitalist enterprises for its own survival, notably through taxation. In capitalist societies, **states and capitalism depend on and mutually reinforce each other.**

### Impact

#### Focus on easily identifiable flashpoints of conflict misses the point – only focusing on the background or objective violence can solve root cause – cannot be viewed from the same stand point – the call to act will be strong but responding creates a stop-gap which prevents engaging in criticisms of capital

Zizek 2008 [Slavoj Violence p 1-4 ]
If there is a unifying thesis that runs through the bric-a-brac of reflections on violence that follow, it is that a similar paradox holds true for violence. At the forefront of our minds, the obvious signals of violence are acts of crime and terror, civil unrest, international conflict. But we should learn to **step back,** to disentangle ourselves from the fascinating lure of this directly visible “subjective” violence, violence performed by a clearly identifiable agent. We need to perceive the contours of the background which generates such outbursts. A step back enables us to identify a violence that sustains our very efforts to fight violence and to promote tolerance. This is the starting point, perhaps even the axiom, of the present book: subjective violence is just the most visible portion of a triumvirate that also includes two objective kinds of violence. First, there is a “symbolic” violence embodied in language and its forms, what Heidegger would call “our house of being.” As we shall see later, this violence is not only at work in the obvious—and extensively studied—cases of incitement and of the relations of social domination reproduced in our habitual speech forms: there is a more fundamental form of violence still that pertains to language as such, to its imposition of a certain universe of meaning. Second, there is what I call “systemic” violence, or the often catastrophic consequences of the smooth functioning of our economic and political systems. The catch is that subjective and objective violence **cannot be perceived from the same standpoint:** subjective violence is experienced as such against the background of a non-violent zero level. It is seen as a perturbation of the “normal,” peaceful state of things. However, objective violence is precisely the violence inherent to this “normal” state of things. Objective violence is invisible since it sustains the very zero-level standard against which we perceive something as subjectively violent. Systemic violence is thus something like the notorious “dark matter” of physics, the counterpart to an all-too- visible subjective violence. It may be invisible, but it has to be taken into account if one is to make sense of what otherwise seem to be “irrational” explosions of subjective violence. When the media bombard us with those “humanitarian crises” which seem constantly to pop up all over the world, one should always bear in mind that a particular crisis only explodes into media visibility as the result of a complex struggle. Properly humanitarian considerations as a rule play a less important role here than cultural, ideologico-political, and economic considerations. The cover story of Time magazine on 5 June 2006, for example, was “The Deadliest War in the World.” This offered detailed documentation on how around 4 million people died in the Democratic Republic of Congo as the result of political violence over the last decade. None of the usual humanitarian uproar followed, just a couple of readers’ letters—as if some kind of filtering mechanism blocked this news from achieving its full impact in our symbolic space. To put it cynically, Time picked the wrong victim in the struggle for hegemony in suffering. It should have stuck to the list of usual suspects: Muslim women and their plight, or the families of 9/11 victims and how they have coped with their losses. The Congo today has effectively re-emerged as a Conradean “heart of darkness.” No one dares to confront it head on. The death of a West Bank Palestinian child, not to mention an Israeli or an American, is mediatically worth thousands of times more than the death of a nameless Congolese. Do we need further proof that the humanitarian sense of urgency is mediated, indeed overdetermined, by clear political considerations? And what are these considerations? To answer this, we need to step back and take a look from a different position. When the U.S. media reproached the public in foreign countries for not displaying enough sympathy for the victims of the 9/11 attacks, one was tempted to answer them in the words Robespierre addressed to those who complained about the innocent victims of revolutionary terror: “Stop shaking the tyrant’s bloody robe in my face, or I will believe that you wish to put Rome in chains.”1 Instead of confronting violence directly, the present book casts six sideways glances. There are reasons for looking at the problem of violence awry. My underlying premise is that there is something inherently mystifying in a direct confrontation with it: the overpowering horror of violent acts and empathy with the victims inexorably function as a lure which **prevents us from thinking**. A dispassionate conceptual development of the typology of violence must by definition ignore its traumatic impact. Yet there is a sense in which a cold analysis of violence somehow reproduces and participates in its horror. A distinction needs to be made, as well, between (factual) truth and truthfulness: what renders a report of a raped woman (or any other narrative of a trauma) truthful is its very factual unreliability, its confusion, its inconsistency. If the victim were able to report on her painful and humiliating experience in a clear manner, with all the data arranged in a consistent order, this very quality would make us suspicious of its truth. The problem here is part of the solution: the very factual deficiencies of the traumatised subject’s report on her experience bear witness to the truthfulness of her report, since they signal that the reported content “contaminated” the manner of reporting it. The same holds, of course, for the so-called unreliability of the verbal reports of Holocaust survivors: the witness able to offer a clear narrative of his camp experience would disqualify himself by virtue of that clarity.2 The only appropriate approach to my subject thus seems to be one which permits variations on violence kept at a distance out of respect towards its victims.

#### Capitalism will lead to total collapse of the social and the environment – we must engage in an authentic revolution which is open to the catastrophe we may cause

**Zizek,** Senior Researcher at the Institute for Social Studies, Ljubljana, Slovenia, **2003**

(Slavoj, The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity, page 134-135 gjm)

In some sense, we can in fact argue that, today, we are approaching a kind of "end of time": the self-propelling explosive spiral of global capitalism does seem to point toward a moment of (social, ecological, even subjective) collapse, in which total dynamism, frantic activity, will coincide with a deeper immobility. History will be abolished in the eternal present of multiple narrativizations; nature will be abol­ished when it becomes subject to biogenetic manipulation; the very permanent transgression of the norm will assert itself as the uncondi­tional norm. . . . However, the question "When does ordinary time get caught in the messianic twist?" is a misleading one: we cannot de­duce the emergence of messianic time through an "objective" analysis of historical process. "Messianic time" ultimately stands for the intru­sion of subjectivity irreducible to the "objective" historical process, which means that things can take a messianic turn, time can become "dense," *at any point.*

The time of the Event is not another time beyond and above the "normal" historical time, but a kind of inner loop within this time. Consider one of the standard plots of time-travel narratives: the hero travels into the past in order to intervene in it, and thus change the present; afterward, he discovers that the emergence of the present he wanted to change was triggered precisely through his intervention ­his time travel was already included in the run of things. What we have here, in this radical closure, is thus not simply complete determinism, but a kind of absolute determinism which includes our free act in ad­vance. When we observe the process from a distant vantage point, it appears to unfold in a straight line; what we lose from sight, however, are the subjective inner loops which sustain this "objective" straight line. This is why the question "In what circumstances does the con­densed time of the Event emerge?" is a false one: it involves the rein­scription of the Event back into the positive historical process. That is to say: we cannot establish the time of the explosion of the Event through a close "objective" historical analysis (in the style of "when objective contradictions reach such and such a level, things will ex­plode"): there is no Event outside the engaged subjective decision which creates it-if we wait for the time to become ripe for the Event, the Event will never occur. Recall the October Revolution: the moment when its authentic revolutionary urgency was exhausted was precisely the moment when, in theoretical discussion, the topic of different stages of socialism, of the transition from the lower to a higher stage, took over-at this point, revolutionary time proper was reinscribed into linear "objective" historical time, with its phases and transitions between phases. Authentic revolution, in contrast, always occurs in an absolute Present, in the unconditional urgency of a Now.

It is in this precise sense that, in an authentic revolution, predesti­nation overlaps with radical responsibility: the real hard work awaits us on the morning after, once the enthusiastic revolutionary explosion is over, and we are confronted with the task of translating this explo­sion into a new Order of Things, of drawing the consequences from it, of remaining faithful to it. In other words, the truly difficult work is not that of silent preparation, of creating the conditions for the Event of the revolutionary explosion; the earnest work begins after the Event, when we ascertain that "it is accomplished.”11

### Alt

#### We must have the courage to reinvent and remain faith to the idea of communism. The world of the status quo is not necessary and should be abolished. This radical starting point is good enough to create possibilities for new politics

**BADIOU, 2010** [ALAIN, The Communist Hypothesis Translated by David Macey and Steve Corcoran 2010 p 62-67

Having closed that parenthesis, we can say that we are still struggling with the difficult questions raised by May '68. We are the contemporaries of '68 from the point of view of politics, the definition of politics, and the organized future of politics. I therefore use the word 'contemporary' in the strongest possible sense. Of course, the world has changed, and of course categories have changed. The categories 'student th" k ' d " h' you , workers an peasants now mean sometlng different, and the union and party organizations of those days are now in ruins. But we have the same problem, and are the contemporaries of the problem revealed by May '68: the classical figure of the politics of emancipation was ineffective. Those of us who were politically active in the 1 960s and 1970s did not need the collapse of the USSR to teach us that. Countless new things have been experimented with, tried out and tested both in theory and in the practices that are dialectically bound up with it. And it still goes on thanks to the energy of a handful of activists, intellectuals and workers - and no distinction is made between them - who appear to be working in isolation. They are the guardians of the future and they are inventing the future. But it cannot be said that the problem has been resolved: what new forms of political organization are needed to handle political antagonisms? As in science, until such time as the problem has not been resolved, you have all sorts of discoveries stimulated by the search for a solution. Sometimes, and for the same reason, whole new theories see the light of day, but the problem itself is still there. We can define our contemporaneity with May '68 in similar terms. It is another way of talking about our fidelity to May '68. The decisive issue is the need to cling to the historical hypothesis of a world that has been freed from the law of profit and private interest - even while we are, at the level of intellectual representations, still prisoners of the conviction that we cannot do away with it, that this is the way of the world, and that no politics of emancipation is possible. That is what I propose to call the communist hypothesis. It is in fact mainly negative, as it is safer and more important to say that the existing world is not necessary than it is to say, when we have nothing to go on, that a different world is possible. This is a question of modal logic: how, in political terms, can we move from non-necessity to possibility?Because quite simply, if we accept the inevitability of the unbridled capitalist economy and the parliamentary politics that supports it, then we quite simply cannot see the other possibilities that are inherent in the situation in which we find ourselves. Second, we have to try to retain the words of our language, even though we no longer dare to say them out loud. In '68, these were the words that were used by everyone. Now they tell us: 'The world has changed, so you can no longer use those words, and you know that it WIL'S the language of illusions and terror.' 'Oh yes, we can! And we must!' The problem is still there, and that means that we must be able to pronounce those words. It is up to us to criticise them, and to give them a new meaning. We must be able to go on saying 'people', 'workers', 'abolition of private property', and so on, without being considered has-beens, and without considering ourselves as has-beens. We have to discuss these words in our own field, in our own camp. We have to put an end to the linguistic terrorism that delivers us into the hands of our enemies. Giving up on the language issue, and accepting the terror that subjectively forbids us to pronounce words that offend dominant sensibilities, is an intolerable form of oppression. And finally, we have to realize that all politics is organized, and that the most difficult question is probably that of what type of organization we need. We can resolve it through the multifaceted experiments that begin in '68. For the classic party dispositif, and its social supports, the most important 'battles' were in fact electoral battles, and that is a doctrine that has given all it can give. It is worn out and no longer works, despite the great things it was able to achieve or promote between 1900 and 1960. We have to discuss our fidelity to May '68 on two levels. At the ideological and historical level, we should draw up our own balance sheet for the twentieth century, so that we can reformulate the emancipation hypothesis in contemporary terms, now that the socialist states have failed. And we also know that new local experiments and political battles are going on, and that they will provide the backdrop that will create these new forms of organization. This combination of complex ideological and historical work, and theoretical and practical data about new forms of political organization, is the defining feature of our times. I would readily describe this as the era of the reformulation of the communist hypothesis. Then what is the virtue that means most to us? You know that the revolutionaries of 1 792-94 used the word 'virtue'. Saint-Just asked the crucial question: 'What do those who want neither virtue nor terror want?' His answer was that they wanted corruption. And that indeed is what today's world asks of us: to accept the wholesale corruption of minds under the yoke of commodities and money. The main political virtue we need to fight that now is courage. Not only courage when we face the police - though we will certainly find that - but the courage to defend and practice our ideas and principles, to say what we think, what we want, and what we are doing.To put it in a nutshell: we have to be bold enough to have an idea. A great idea. We have to convince ourselves that there is nothing ridiculous or criminal about having a great idea. The world of global and arrogant capitalism in which we live is taking us back to the 1840s and the birth of capitalism. Its imperative, as formulated by Guizot, was: 'Get rich!' We can translate that as 'Live without an idea!' We have to say that we cannot live without an idea. We have to say: 'Have the courage to support the idea, and it can only be the communist idea in its generic sense.' That is why we must remain the contemporaries of May '68. In its own way, it tells us that living without an idea is intolerable. And then a long and terrible resignation set in. Too many people now think that there is no alternative to living for oneself, for one's own interests. Let us have the courage to cut ourselves off from such people. I am a philosopher, so let me tell you something that has been said again and again since Plato's day. It is very simple. I am telling you as a philosopher that we have to live with an idea, and that what deserves to be called a real politics begins with that conviction.

## 1AR

### Rubber Stamp

#### The courts are toothless – they defer from making decisions and when they do, they simply rubberstamp what the executive wants

Devins 10 – Professor of Law and Professor of Government, College of William & Mary (February, Neal, “Symposium: Presidential Power In Historical Perspective: Reflections on Calabresi and Yoo's the Unitary Executive: Talk Loudly and Carry a Small Stick: The Supreme Court and Enemy Combatants” 12 U. Pa. J. Const. L. 491, Lexis)

From 1952 (when the Supreme Court slapped down President Truman's war-time seizure of the steel mills) n108 until 2004 (when the Court reasserted itself in the first wave of enemy combatant cases), the judiciary largely steered clear of war powers disputes. n109 In part, the Court deferred to presidential desires and expertise. The President sees the "rights of governance in the foreign affairs and war powers areas" as core executive powers. n110 Correspondingly, the President has strong incentives to expand his war-making prerogatives. n111 For its part, the Court has limited expertise in this area, and, as such, is extremely reluctant to stake out positions that may pose significant national security risks. n112 The Court, moreover, is extremely reluctant to risk elected branch opprobrium. Lacking the powers of purse and sword, the Court cannot ignore the risks of elected branch non-acquiescence. n113

Against this backdrop, the Court's repudiation of the Bush administration's enemy combatant initiative appears a dramatic break from past practice. Academic and newspaper commentary back up this claim - with these decisions being labeled "stunning" (Harold [\*513] Koh), n114 "unprecedented" (John Yoo), n115 "breathtaking" (Charles Krauthammer), n116 "astounding" (Neal Katyal), n117 "sweeping and categorical" (New York Times), n118 and "historic" (Washington Post and Wall Street Journal). n119 Upon closer inspection, however, the Court's decisions are anything but a dramatic break from past practice. Part I detailed how Court rulings tracked larger social and political forces. In this Part, I will show how the Court risked neither the nation's security nor elected branch non-acquiescence. n120 The Court's initial rulings placed few meaningful checks on the executive; over time, the Court - reflecting increasing public disapproval of the President - imposed additional constraints but never issued a ruling that was out-of-sync with elected government preferences. Separate and apart from reflecting growing public and elected government disapproval of Bush administration policies, the Court had strong incentives to intervene in these cases. The Bush administration had challenged the Court's authority to play any role in national security matters. n121 This frontal assault on judicial power prompted the Court to stand up for its authority to "say what the law is." In Part III, I will talk about the Court's interest in protecting its turf - especially in cases implicating individual rights.

### 2nc UQ wall

#### Democrats are beginning to pressure Obama, BUT he has been able to stop the imposition of sanctions - Congress is ready to impose more sanctions for any missteps –Obama’s careful push is key to buying time for talks to succeed

Kara Rowland 3/22/14 “Senate Dems join House in pressing Obama again about final Iran nuclear deal”, <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2014/03/22/senate-dems-join-house-in-pressing-obama-again-about-final-iran-nuclear-deal/>

Senate Democrats are joining House lawmakers in pressing President Obama again on nuclear negotiations with Iran, insisting the president hold Tehran to iron-clad international agreements and keep them apprised of developments including the need for new sanctions.¶ The letter was signed Friday by 23 Democratic senators and is nearly identical to the one recently sent by 216 House Republicans and 179 House Democrats.¶ “As negotiations progress, we expect your administration will continue to keep Congress regularly apprised of the details,” the Senate letter reads. “And because any long-term sanctions relief will require congressional action, we urge you to consult closely with us … so that we can act swiftly to consider additional sanctions.”¶ While lawmakers from both chambers also said they have no desire for military conflict, they argued the United States “must keep all options on the table to prevent this dangerous regime from acquiring nuclear weapons.”¶ The United States and other world leaders reached an interim deal in November with Iran that calls for the rouge country to agree to inspections as it halts or scales back parts of its nuclear program to get below bomb-making capacity, in exchange for the easing of some international sanctions.¶ The White House has since then succeeded in stopping Congress from voting to imposing more sanctions, asking instead for additional time for a diplomatic solution to prevail.¶ "I am convinced that we should only relieve pressure on Iran in return for verifiable concessions that will fundamentally dismantle Iran's nuclear program," committee Chairman Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., said during a Senate hearing last month.¶ However, the July 20 deadline for the temporary deal is fast approaching. And hopes for a final agreement appear to be dwindling now that Russia -- an ally of Iran and a potential go-between in the nuclear talks -- has angered world powers by annexing the Crimea region of Ukraine.¶ The lawmakers expressed support for Obama, calling themselves a “partner” in bringing Iran to the negotiating table. But they warned of Iran’s history of “delay” and “deception.” And they expressed deep concern about that country’s state sponsorship of terrorism, “horrendous” human rights record and its threats against U.S. ally Israel.¶ “We do not seek to deny Iran a peaceful nuclear energy program, but we are gravely concerned that Iran's industrial-scale uranium enrichment capability and heavy water reactor being built … could be used for the development of nuclear weapons,” said the Senate Democrats’ letter, signed by such strong Obama supporters as Michigan’s Carl Levin and Missouri’s Claire McCaskill.¶ The lawmakers called for Tehran to "fully and verifiably" implement its Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

### Impacts

#### Turns terrorism – biggest link, guts solvency

Avraham 9/9

Rachel, “Analysis: The Main Terror Threat is Iran, Not Syria”, <http://www.jerusalemonline.com/rachel/analysis-the-main-terror-threat-is-iran-not-syria-1579>, CMR

Speaking at the World Summit on Counter-Terrorism, Maj. General Amos Gilad reiterated that the “main effort should be to prevent Iran from going nuclear. Israel has to focus on this threat. **A nuclear Iran can change the entire order in the Middle East.**” He claimed that **Iranian officials have even admitted** that **their nuclear program will help terrorist organizations** like Hezbollah, **by providing them with a** nuclear umbrella **that will** protect them against retaliation whenever they engage in acts of terrorism, thus thwarting Israeli and western counter-terror measures. ¶ Prof. Uzi Arad, head of the National Security Council, added that from an international legal perspective, Iran is also a greater violator than Syria. While emphasizing that there are many atrocities being committed in Syria as we speak and that Assad has done “terrible things,” he claims that the Geneva Convention only prohibits using chemical weapons on foreign fighters, not ones own citizens. Furthermore, Syria never ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention, implying that Syria cannot be held legally responsible for using chemical weapons against her own people.¶ To the contrary, Arad emphasized that Iran has violated the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, to which Iran ratified, by internationally seeking to develop nuclear weapons. “Their level of breach is higher than the Syrians,” Arad stated. Additionally, he believes that “from a strategic point of view, our eyes should be on Iran, even if you look at Syria.” **Iran is the** main sponsor **of terrorism in the Middle East**, while Syria is merely a proxy state of Iran. ¶ Israeli Defense Minister Boogie Ya’alon emphasized, “**When we talk about states that support terrorism, Iran** tops the list.” He stated that Iran supports terrorism around the world as a means to export their revolution to other nations, with a special emphasis on Shiite communities in countries like Lebanon and Bahrain. He accused Iran of taking advantage of the instability caused by the Arab Spring to promote radical Islam. ¶ Ya’alon stated that Iran exploits the fact that the majority of states in the Middle East were artificially formed by the Sykes-Picot Agreement and were only held together by a dictator, causing these countries to descend into chaos once the dictator was overthrown. He also noted that Iran was behind the attempted assassination of the Saudi Ambassador, as well as the Burgas terror assault and numerous attacks on Israeli embassies, demonstrating the extent to which Iran is a threat to world peace. ¶ These **Israeli security experts view Iran’s nuclear program to be a threat to global security**, while Assad’s regime is mainly a threat to his own people, even though there are spillovers into the Golan Heights and other areas. To confirm this point, Arad claims that more Americans support the United States attacking Iran to prevent the country from becoming a nuclear power than starting a war to protect the Syrian people from Assad’s atrocities, since the American people understand that Iran is a greater global threat than Syria.

### AT: Talks Fail

#### Progress now

Michael Adler 3/19/2014 (an expert on Iranian nuclear issues at the Woodrow Wilson Center, writes regularly on the issue for Breaking Defense) “Russia Threatens To Derail Iran Talks Over Ukraine”, <http://breakingdefense.com/2014/03/russia-threatens-to-derail-iran-talks-over-ukraine/>

The heights of joy or despair were never going to be tested in Vienna this time around. The talks are at a nitty-gritty technical phase.¶ A senior US official told reporters after the meetings in the Austrian capital that the two sides got “down to business and into the details.” The talks on reaching a comprehensive agreement with Iran over its nuclear program had begun in Vienna in February, after an interim agreement reached last year that Iran would not expand its nuclear work and in return would get relief from sanctions which have slashed its oil sales and crippled its economy. The two sides are hoping to reach a comprehensive agreement by July.¶ The two sides are still just getting started, the US official said. “You can’t just dive into the negotiations without setting the table. I think we’ve done that,” the official said.¶ European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton and Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif said in a statement that the two sides had discussed enrichment, the Arak reactor, civil nuclear cooperation and sanctions. A diplomat told Breaking Defense that each of the four plenary sessions in Vienna were dedicated to one of these topics. The big issues were: the Arak heavy-water reactor, which is under construction, and could produce plutonium, a potential bomb material; and how many and what type centrifuges Iran would be able to keep of the thousands it now has installed to enrich uranium into what could be either nuclear power fuel or the explosive core for atom bombs.¶ Said the US official: “We feel we made progress in identifying where the gaps exist, and are working to bridge those gaps on these and other issues.” The seven-party talks will continue in a third round April 7-9.

### AT: Cullis – Obama Cant Res

#### Cullis simply show the arc of the disad – they see obstacles but conclude that successful sanctions balance is likely by the time the deal must be signed – Obama requires political resources to protect the diplomatic process and squeeze leeway from Congress over the next few months

Trita Parsi and Tyler Cullis Wednesday, March 26, 2014. “Iran Sanctions,” <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-9-240311-Iran-sanctions>

It is clear that any final nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1 will require deep and creative thinking on how to provide the US and its European partners confidence in the peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear programme, all the while respecting Iran’s nuclear rights. Understandably, expert opinion has focused on forging a delicate balance between the parties and their respective interests in this regard. Less discussed, however, is what will need to happen in the US should that balance be found. This is troubling, especially in light of the fact that the White House might not have the power at present to meet its commitments if and when a nuclear deal is agreed to. As a recent NIAC report demonstrates, the president is deeply constrained in his ability to lift the robust energy and financial sanctions Congress has imposed on Iran. Under current law, the best the president can offer Iran are time-limited waivers that he promises to renew for as long as Iran keeps to its commitments under a nuclear deal and for as long as he remains in office. Whether succeeding administrations would feel similarly bound to a nuclear deal that might well prove a political thunderbolt is unclear. If this is supposed to inspire the confidence required for Iran to agree to strong and sustained nuclear concessions, we’d do well to reconsider. Any deal that allows Congress to litigate and re-litigate the issue every six months is not one that Iran will feel comfortable hanging its hat on. The White House is aware of the problem. On the eve of the latest round of talks in Vienna, a senior administration official noted that the White House is “doing a considerable amount of work…to understand in great detail how to unwind the sanctions.” Presumably, US negotiators have also communicated to the Iranians what is possible at present in terms of sanctions relief. But if so, therein lies the problem. If the US is offering limited and reversible sanctions relief to Iran’s negotiators, Iran might well reciprocate with similarly limited and reversible concessions on its nuclear programme. This is especially likely to be the case as Iran’s negotiators came into the talks explicitly conditioning a nuclear deal on the dual principles of proportionality and reciprocity: limits to Iran’s nuclear programme would be balanced out by what the US offered in return. In other words, the US could not ask for more while giving less. Moreover, by withholding from the president the ability to lift sanctions on a more permanent basis than available at present, we distort the logic that ostensibly informed sanctions advocates. Under this logic, Congress would impose sanctions on Iran so that if and when a nuclear deal was ever agreed to, lifting the sanctions would come with a cost to Iran. That cost would be measured out in the limits it placed on Iran’s nuclear programme. But if the president is unable to relieve the sanctions on a permanent basis, this logic is defeated. It does not matter whether Iran is willing to concede important elements of its nuclear programme. The White House is simply unable to match Iran’s concessions with sanctions relief of its own. That is why it is critical that the White House and allies in Congress look closely at the current authorisations for the president to relieve the sanctions and consider what needs to take place if and when a nuclear deal is reached. It is entirely possible that Iran and the P5+1 reach agreement in the next several months. If so, the White House must be prepared to meet its commitments under a nuclear deal and, in so doing, ensure that Iran does the same.

#### And, as long as Obama keeps it close, he will be able to do what is necessary and solidify traction against hawks – can paint them as war mongers to win political positioning

### Link

#### Court action links—decisions politicized

Eric Hamilton, “Politicizing the Supreme Court,” STANFORD LAW REVIEW, 8—30—12, www.stanfordlawreview.org/online/politicizing-supreme-court

To state the obvious, Americans do not trust the federal government, and that includes the Supreme Court. Americans believe politics played “too great a role” in the recent health care cases by a greater than two-to-one margin.[1] Only thirty-seven percent of Americans express more than some confidence in the Supreme Court.[2] Academics continue to debate how much politics actually influences the Court, but Americans are excessively skeptical. They do not know that almost half of the cases this Term were decided unanimously, and the Justices’ voting pattern split by the political party of the president to whom they owe their appointment in fewer than seven percent of cases.[3] Why the mistrust? When the Court is front-page, above-the-fold news after the rare landmark decision or during infrequent U.S. Senate confirmation proceedings, political rhetoric from the President and Congress drowns out the Court. Public perceptions of the Court are shaped by politicians’ arguments “for” or “against” the ruling or the nominee, which usually fall along partisan lines and sometimes are based on misleading premises that ignore the Court’s special, nonpolitical responsibilities. The Framers of the Constitution designed a uniquely independent Supreme Court that would safeguard the Constitution. They feared that the political branches might be able to overwhelm the Court by turning the public against the Court and that the Constitution’s strict boundaries on congressional power would give way. As evidenced in the health care cases, politicians across the ideological spectrum have played into some of the Framers’ fears for the Constitution by politicizing the decision and erasing the distinction between the Court’s holding and the policy merits of the heath care law. Paradoxically, many of the elected officials who proudly campaign under the battle cry of “saving our Constitution” endanger the Court and the Constitution with their bombast. Politicization of the Supreme Court causes the American public to lose faith in the Court, and when public confidence in the Court is low, the political branches are well positioned to disrupt the constitutional balance of power between the judiciary and the political branches.

### AT: Ukrain

#### Ukraine is why PC is key – if Russia knows Obama is investing PC on Iran it gives them a greater incentive to support negotiations – they’ll bluff, but won’t walk out now

Davis, 3—21-14, Carlo. “Russia Threatened to Nix the Iran Talks. Does It Really Have That Power?” The New Republic, <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/117116/russia-threatens-p51-iran-talks-does-it-really-have-power>

A day after slapping travel bans on John McCain, Mary Landrieu, and John Boehner, Russia’s Vladimir Putin called today for a temporary halt in his tit-for-tat sanctions battle with the United States and the E.U. over his annexation of Crimea. But despite the truce—if it can indeed be called that—more serious battlegrounds between Russia and the West are already coming into view. On Wednesday, Russia gave the first real confirmation that the struggles over Crimea could leak over into the crucial ongoing multi-party talks on Iran’s nuclear program. Regarding the talks between Iran and the P5+1 coalition, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told Interfax News Agency, "We wouldn’t like to use these talks as an element of the game of raising the stakes, taking into account the sentiments in some European capitals, Brussels and Washington ... but if they force us into that, we will take retaliatory measures here as well." The subtext was clear to anyone familiar with gangster movies and their cliches: Nice nuclear weapons talks you got here … it’d be a shame if something happened to them. But as much as Russia clearly relishes the leverage it holds over the last best hope for President Obama’s foreign policy legacy, it’s unclear how much control they have over the success of the talks—or if scuttling them would even be in Russia’s best interest. After all, Russia has been a constructive member of the Iran negotiations since 2006. Russian cooperation with the talks has been “pretty good so far, considering that … Russia tends to underestimate Iran's nuclear weapons potential,” says Gary Samore, President Obama’s advisor on weapons of mass destruction until 2012. Suzanne Maloney, an expert on Iran at the Brookings Institution, agreed that the Russians have been “more than cooperative.” That’s because Russia and the West share the same vested interest in seeing the Iranian nuclear program slowed or halted. (Russia’s interest is arguably larger—its southern border is only 100 miles from Iran and the two countries have long sparred for influence in central Asia.) For the same reason it worked assiduously with the United States and the U.K. in the early 1990s to remove the nuclear threat of Ukraine, Russia is now willing to work with other members of the nuclear club to exclude Iran. And the alternative to a successful nuclear deal—a preemptive attack on Iranian nuclear facilities by Israel, the United States, or their allies—is repugnant to Russia. “Ultimately, if the talks fail, the only alternative for the administration would be some use of force and that obviously isn’t in the Russians’ interest or to their advantage,” said Maloney. For this reason, she called a dramatic shift in Russian approach toward negotiations “highly unlikely.” But Russia also recognizes that the Obama administration has staked a significant amount of political capital

 on the success of the Iran nuclear talks. “The door is open for the Russians to employ this linkage to their advantage,” Robert Litwak, director of international security studies at the Wilson Center, told me. So how might the Russians go about this? None of the experts I spoke to expect Russia to pull out of the Iran talks outright. As Maloney noted, Russia’s presence in the talks is “a key part of their own influence,” and a boycott would remove that immediately while yielding little in the way of desirable results. Unlike a natural gas pipeline, delicate nuclear negotiations cannot be turned off and on at will.