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**Obama is pushing Congress to resolve the debt ceiling – political capital is key to success and solving a government shut down**

Pace 9/12 Julie, AP White House correspondent, Syria debate on hold, Obama refocuses on agenda, The Fresno Bee, 9/12/13, http://www.fresnobee.com/2013/09/12/3493538/obama-seeks-to-focus-on-domestic.html

With a military strike against Syria on hold, President Barack Obama tried Thursday to reignite momentum for his second-term domestic agenda. But his progress could hinge on the strength of his standing on Capitol Hill after what even allies acknowledge were missteps in the latest foreign crisis.¶ "It is still important to recognize that we have a lot of things left to do here in this government," Obama told his Cabinet, starting a sustained White House push to refocus the nation on matters at home as key benchmarks on the budget and health care rapidly approach.¶ "The American people are still interested in making sure that our kids are getting the kind of education they deserve, that we are putting people back to work," Obama said.¶ The White House plans to use next week's five-year anniversary of the 2008 financial collapse to warn Republicans that shutting down the government or failing to raise the debt limit could drag down the still-fragile economy. With Hispanic Heritage Month to begin Monday, Obama is also expected to press for a stalled immigration overhaul and urge minorities to sign up for health care exchanges beginning Oct. 1.¶ Among the events planned for next week is a White House ceremony highlighting Americans working on immigrant and citizenship issues. Administration officials will also promote overhaul efforts at naturalization ceremonies across the country. On Sept. 21, Obama will speak at the Congressional Black Caucus Gala, where he'll trumpet what the administration says are benefits of the president's health care law for African-Americans and other minorities.¶ Two major factors are driving Obama's push to get back on track with domestic issues after three weeks of Syria dominating the political debate. Polls show the economy, jobs and health care remain Americans' top concerns. And Obama has a limited window to make progress on those matters in a second term, when lame-duck status can quickly creep up on presidents, particularly if they start losing public support.¶ Obama already is grappling with some of the lowest approval ratings of his presidency. A Pew Research Center/USA Today poll out this week put his approval at 44 percent. That's down from 55 percent at the end of 2012.¶ Potential military intervention in Syria also is deeply unpopular with many Americans, with a Pew survey finding that 63 percent opposing the idea. And the president's publicly shifting positions on how to respond to a deadly chemical weapons attack in Syria also have confused many Americans and congressional lawmakers.¶ "In times of crisis, the more clarity the better," said Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., a strong supporter of U.S. intervention in Syria. "This has been confusing. For those who are inclined to support the president, it's been pretty hard to nail down what the purpose of a military strike is."¶ For a time, the Obama administration appeared to be barreling toward an imminent strike in retaliation for the Aug. 21 chemical weapons attack. But Obama made a sudden reversal and instead decided to seek congressional approval for military action.¶ Even after administration officials briefed hundreds of lawmakers on classified intelligence, there appeared to be limited backing for a use-of-force resolution on Capitol Hill. Rather than face defeat, Obama asked lawmakers this week to postpone any votes while the U.S. explores the viability of a deal to secure Syria's chemical weapons stockpiles.¶ That pause comes as a relief to Obama and many Democrats eager to return to issues more in line with the public's concerns. The most pressing matters are a Sept. 30 deadline to approve funding to keep the government open — the new fiscal year begins Oct. 1 — and the start of sign-ups for health care exchanges, a crucial element of the health care overhaul.¶ On Wednesday, a revolt by tea party conservatives forced House Republican leaders to delay a vote on a temporary spending bill written to head off a government shutdown. Several dozen staunch conservatives are seeking to couple the spending bill with a provision to derail implementation of the health care law.¶ The White House also may face a fight with Republicans over raising the nation's debt ceiling this fall. While Obama has insisted he won't negotiate over the debt limit, House Speaker John Boehner on Thursday said the GOP will insist on curbing spending.

**The Cuba lobby will block the plan – it costs capital to get past it**

**LeoGrande, 13 -** professor in the department of government at American University's School of Public Affairs in Washington, D.C.(William, “The Cuba Lobby” Foreign Policy, 4/11,

<http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/04/11/the_cuba_lobby_jay_z>

Today, U.S. relations with Latin America are suffering from an equally irrational policy toward Cuba -- a policy designed in the 1960s to overthrow Fidel Castro's government and which, more than 50 years later, is no closer to success. Like U.S. policy toward China in the 1950s and 1960s, policy toward Cuba is frozen in place by a domestic political lobby, this one with roots in the electorally pivotal state of Florida. The Cuba Lobby combines the carrot of political money with the stick of political denunciation to keep wavering Congress members, government bureaucrats, and even presidents in line behind a policy that, as President Barack Obama himself admits, has failed for half a century and is supported by virtually no other countries. (The last time it came to a vote in the U.N. General Assembly, only Israel and the Pacific island of Palau sided with the United States.) Of course, the news at this point is not that a Cuba Lobby exists, but that it astonishingly lives on -- even during the presidency of Obama, who publicly vowed to pursue a new approach to Cuba, but whose policy has been stymied thus far. Like the China Lobby, the Cuba Lobby isn't one organization but a loose-knit conglomerate of exiles, sympathetic members of Congress, and nongovernmental organizations, some of which comprise a self-interested industry nourished by the flow of "democracy promotion" money from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). And like its Sino-obsessed predecessor, the Cuba Lobby was launched at the instigation of conservative Republicans in government who needed outside backers to advance their partisan policy aims. In the 1950s, they were Republican members of Congress battling New Dealers in the Truman administration over Asia policy. In the 1980s, they were officials in Ronald Reagan's administration battling congressional Democrats over Central America policy. At the Cuba Lobby's request, Reagan created Radio Martí, modeled on Radio Free Europe, to broadcast propaganda to Cuba. He named Jorge Mas Canosa, founder of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF), to chair the radio's oversight board. President George H.W. Bush followed with TV Martí. Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.) authored the 1996 Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, writing the economic embargo into law so no president could change it without congressional approval. Founded at the suggestion of Richard V. Allen, Reagan's first national security advisor, CANF became one of the most powerful ethnic foreign-policy organizations in the United States and was the linchpin of the Cuba Lobby until Mas Canosa's death in 1997. "No individual had more influence over United States policies toward Cuba over the past two decades than Jorge Mas Canosa," the New York Times editorialized. In Washington, CANF built its reputation by spreading campaign contributions to bolster friends and punish enemies. In 1988, CANF money helped Joe Lieberman defeat incumbent Sen. Lowell Weicker, whom Lieberman accused of being soft on Castro because he visited Cuba and advocated better relations. Weicker's defeat sent a chilling message to other members of Congress: challenge the Cuba Lobby at your peril. In 1992, according to Peter Stone's reporting in National Journal, New Jersey Democrat Sen. Robert Torricelli, seduced by the Cuba Lobby's political money, reversed his position on Havana and wrote the Cuban Democracy Act, tightening the embargo. Today, the political action arm of the Cuba Lobby is the U.S.-Cuba Democracy PAC, which hands out more campaign dollars than CANF's political action arm did even at its height -- more than $3 million in the last five national elections.

**Failure collapses the economy – goes global and past events don’t disprove**

Davidson 9/10 Adam, co-founder of NPR’s “Planet Money,” Our Debt to Society, New York Times, 9/10/13, http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/15/magazine/our-debt-to-society.html?pagewanted=all

If the debt ceiling isn’t lifted again this fall, some serious financial decisions will have to be made. Perhaps the government can skimp on its foreign aid or furlough all of NASA, but eventually the big-ticket items, like Social Security and Medicare, will have to be cut. At some point, the government won’t be able to pay interest on its bonds and will enter what’s known as sovereign default, the ultimate national financial disaster achieved by countries like Zimbabwe, Ecuador and Argentina (and now Greece). In the case of the United States, though, it won’t be an isolated national crisis. If the American government can’t stand behind the dollar, the world’s benchmark currency, then the global financial system will very likely enter a new era in which there is much less trade and much less economic growth. It would be, by most accounts, the largest self-imposed financial disaster in history.¶ Nearly everyone involved predicts that someone will blink before this disaster occurs. Yet a small number of House Republicans (one political analyst told me it’s no more than 20) appear willing to see what happens if the debt ceiling isn’t raised — at least for a bit. This could be used as leverage to force Democrats to drastically cut government spending and eliminate President Obama’s signature health-care-reform plan. In fact, Representative Tom Price, a Georgia Republican, told me that the whole problem could be avoided if the president agreed to drastically cut spending and lower taxes. Still, it is hard to put this act of game theory into historic context. Plenty of countries — and some cities, like Detroit — have defaulted on their financial obligations, but only because their governments ran out of money to pay their bills. No wealthy country has ever voluntarily decided — in the middle of an economic recovery, no less — to default. And there’s certainly no record of that happening to the country that controls the global reserve currency.¶ Like many, I assumed a self-imposed U.S. debt crisis might unfold like most involuntary ones. If the debt ceiling isn’t raised by X-Day, I figured, the world’s investors would begin to see America as an unstable investment and rush to sell their Treasury bonds. The U.S. government, desperate to hold on to investment, would then raise interest rates far higher, hurtling up rates on credit cards, student loans, mortgages and corporate borrowing — which would effectively put a clamp on all trade and spending. The U.S. economy would collapse far worse than anything we’ve seen in the past several years.¶ Instead, Robert Auwaerter, head of bond investing for Vanguard, the world’s largest mutual-fund company, told me that the collapse might be more insidious. “You know what happens when the market gets upset?” he said. “There’s a flight to quality. Investors buy Treasury bonds. It’s a bit perverse.” In other words, if the U.S. comes within shouting distance of a default (which Auwaerter is confident won’t happen), the world’s investors — absent a safer alternative, given the recent fates of the euro and the yen — might actually buy even more Treasury bonds. Indeed, interest rates would fall and the bond markets would soar.¶ While this possibility might not sound so bad, it’s really far more damaging than the apocalyptic one I imagined. Rather than resulting in a sudden crisis, failure to raise the debt ceiling would lead to a slow bleed. Scott Mather, head of the global portfolio at Pimco, the world’s largest private bond fund, explained that while governments and institutions might go on a U.S.-bond buying frenzy in the wake of a debt-ceiling panic, they would eventually recognize that the U.S. government was not going through an odd, temporary bit of insanity. They would eventually conclude that it had become permanently less reliable. Mather imagines institutional investors and governments turning to a basket of currencies, putting their savings in a mix of U.S., European, Canadian, Australian and Japanese bonds. Over the course of decades, the U.S. would lose its unique role in the global economy.¶ The U.S. benefits enormously from its status as global reserve currency and safe haven. Our interest and mortgage rates are lower; companies are able to borrow money to finance their new products more cheaply. As a result, there is much more economic activity and more wealth in America than there would be otherwise. If that status erodes, the U.S. economy’s peaks will be lower and recessions deeper; future generations will have fewer job opportunities and suffer more when the economy falters. And, Mather points out, no other country would benefit from America’s diminished status. When you make the base risk-free asset more risky, the entire global economy becomes riskier and costlier.

**Nuclear war**

Friedberg and Schoenfeld 8Aaron, Prof. Politics. And IR @ Princeton’s Woodrow Wilson School and Visiting Scholar @ Witherspoon Institute, and Gabriel, Senior Editor of Commentary and Wall Street Journal, “The Dangers of a Diminished America” <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122455074012352571.html>

Then there are the dolorous consequences of a potential collapse of the world's financial architecture. For decades now, Americans have enjoyed the advantages of being at the center of that system. The worldwide use of the dollar, and the stability of our economy, among other things, made it easier for us to run huge budget deficits, as we counted on foreigners to pick up the tab by buying dollar-denominated assets as a safe haven. Will this be possible in the future? Meanwhile, traditional foreign-policy challenges are multiplying. The threat from al Qaeda and Islamic terrorist affiliates has not been extinguished. Iran and North Korea are continuing on their bellicose paths, while Pakistan and Afghanistan are progressing smartly down the road to chaos. Russia's new militancy and China's seemingly relentless rise also give cause for concern. If America now tries to pull back from the world stage, it will leave a dangerous power vacuum. The stabilizing effects of our presence in Asia, our continuing commitment to Europe, and our position as defender of last resort for Middle East energy sources and supply lines could all be placed at risk. In such a scenario there are shades of the 1930s, when global trade and finance ground nearly to a halt, the peaceful democracies failed to cooperate, and aggressive powers led by the remorseless fanatics who rose up on the crest of economic disaster exploited their divisions. Today we run the risk that rogue states may choose to become ever more reckless with their nuclear toys, just at our moment of maximum vulnerability. The aftershocks of the financial crisis will almost certainly rock our principal strategic competitors even harder than they will rock us. The dramatic free fall of the Russian stock market has demonstrated the fragility of a state whose economic performance hinges on high oil prices, now driven down by the global slowdown. China is perhaps even more fragile, its economic growth depending heavily on foreign investment and access to foreign markets. Both will now be constricted, inflicting economic pain and perhaps even sparking unrest in a country where political legitimacy rests on progress in the long march to prosperity. None of this is good news if the authoritarian leaders of these countries seek to divert attention from internal travails with external adventures.

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**Cuba’s dual economy is shifting towards peso currency unification – now is key**

**Scarpaci, 10** (Joseph L. Scarpaci. Holds a Doctorate from the University of Florida in urban-economic geography and Latin American Studies, with a concentration in Health Services Administration. “Cuba: Doors to Monetary Unification”. The Havana Consulting Group LLC. 2010. http://thehavanaconsultinggroups.com/index.php?option=com\_content&view=article&id=342%3Acuba-doors-to-monetary-unification&catid=47%3Aeconomy&lang=en)//JuneC//

Administrators and experts in Cuban state agencies released the ‘news’ that in 2013-2014 the island’s dual currency will be replaced by a single one, called the CUP or Cuban peso. Comments, albeit vague and lacking high-level confirmation, sound the alarm as the next steps in the Cuban economic model unfold. In Cuba, these kinds of remarks often precede important decisions. Eliminating the dual currency, which has been in effect since August 1993, is one of the most important structural changes needed in the country. However, it is also the most complicated and profound change that the Cuban government will face, particularly given the risks among the many social and economic conditions present today. A Gradual Process Shifting to a single currency cannot turn into a sort of ‘shock therapy’ if political suicide is to be avoided. Instead, the process should be carried out in stages, perhaps in carefully orchestrated trimesters. Doing so would allow authorities to assess the single currency impact on the market and to implement corrective measures for a gradual transition to a single currency. The year 2014 would, tentatively, be the most reasonable date to conclude the process according to government officials. But this goal seems illusory rather than within easy reach. At a minimum, Cuba would require three or four years to phase this in. Two million state workers currently burden the Cuban market. Efforts to develop the private sector have thus far not been attractive to these public workers.  Eliminating the ballast that the monthly salary of these two million workers represents is an inevitable first step if the government wants results from combining the two current currencies. How can the market be stimulated to achieve this? By opening up opportunities for professionals, the construction trades, the building-materials sector, and private-sector supply chains would be a good start. Other measures include allowing private-sector imports, eliminating state monopolies and the limitations placed on agriculture, opening up the sugar industry to foreign investment, and returning lands in perpetuity and not in usufruct by re-establishing trust among farmers as real landowners. Avoiding Collapse Implementing the mechanisms and necessary laws to create jobs in the private sector is what this means. This is the only way to increase worker productivity across the economy and it would increase exports and decrease imports.  Together, these actions would help to create a capital reserve and avoid a collapse that would unleash uncontrollable inflation. However, there are no indications that any of this will transpire in the short run. Therefore, moving towards a single monetary system under current conditions would entail risk and cast considerable doubt would among the Cuban population. If tomorrow the Cuban government were to announce that it will eliminate the convertible peso (CUC) and set the Cuban peso (CUP) on a one-to-one exchange rate with the U.S. dollar, the mean monthly salary of the average worker would change from 455 pesos to 455 dollars, creating artificial purchasing power. High market demand under such a scenario would quickly exhaust the supply of dollars at the state money-exchange offices within 48 hours. It would produce a level of scarcity not seen in the last two decades and without reserves to replenish supplies. The black market would then control exchange rates and at exorbitant prices. Not a Very Realistic Scenario Common sense tells us that this scenario is unrealistic and impossible, even though in Cuba, one never knows. Finding the right mechanism to shift to a single currency under the current conditions is like walking on a very loose tight rope The Cuban government has implemented a few measures to create the appropriate conditions for a unified currency, all of which suggests that a gradual process with clearly defined stages is in place. Among the expected measures that we might cite are allowing Cubans to purchase goods in hard-currency stores by using Cuban pesos that are pegged to market rates and the use of pre-paid magnetic strip cards that carry CUP currency. In a similar way, letting self-employed workers (***cuentapropistas***) the ability to pay taxes in regular Cuban pesos (presently 24 equal one Cuban convertible peso, or CUC), using pesos to pay for the sale of houses and cars, and increasing wholesale prices would also move the economy in the right direction. However, even those measures would be inadequate because the market requires other actions such as gradually lowering the CUC money exchange rate with the CUP. Currently, the exchange rate is set at 24 CUP for each CUC for the seller, and 25 to 1 for the buyer. Urgent Adjustments Await At the same time, prices of products and services across the state retail stores need to be adjusted. The reactions of Cubans with saving accounts in CUCs as well as those with accounts in regular pesos (CUPs) are another set of variables that must be considered. How will the balances of these savings accounts be affected? Can accounts in CUCs be changed into dollars or Cuban pesos? Will the black market exchange of dollars go through the roof? What will happen to the checking accounts held by foreign companies on the island? Will those accounts be frozen? The alert is already out in Havana, the most dynamic market on the island, where there is a desperate search for dollars and Euros, and where the purchasing power amounted to $1.62 billion in 2011. The next few months will be a thermometer that monitors the impact of these slow measures and market consequences. There is a countdown underway on the impacts this monetary reform will have and Cubans should be prepared to confront this new reality.

**Dollar flow in Cuba decreases the value of pesos – This recreates the conditions for the dual economy**

**Perez 13** (Yusnaby Perez. “Reports from Cuba: Cuba and the Enslaving System of Two Currencies”. Babalu. 17 April 2013. http://babalublog.com/2013/04/17/reports-from-cuba-cuba-and-the-enslaving-system-of-two-currencies/)//JuneC//

Cuba and the Enslaving System of Two Currencies¶ The dual currency system in Cuba is one of the major economic and social problems of the country. Don’t take my word for it, on several occasions the president of the country, Raul Castro himself (and I have no intention of calling him a dissident) has recognized this. We Cubans have already become accustomed to the existence of the two currencies, and the government has become so entangled in an economic and payment system that it would be very difficult to disentangle it without enormous economic and social — and, of course, political — cost.¶ Lately I’ve dedicated myself to making several comparisons on Twitter about the prices of things in Cuba and their equivalent in months’ wages. To someone who isn’t Cuban and doesn’t live in Cuba, it’s very difficult to understand the Cuban monetary system; which is why I would like to give a brief introduction to it.¶ Historically, Cuba’s currency has been the Cuban peso. This is the only one that has always existed. In the ‘90s, with the opening to tourism on the island, dollars began to come in. At first the use of dollars by Cubans was prohibited and severely punished. I knew people who went to prison for seven years for having one dollar in their wallet.¶ The threatening force that American money on the island represented to the Cuban peso, forced the government to legalize its use by ordinary Cubans and it became the currency that ruled the Cuban market.¶ All the stores, hotels, snack bars, restaurants and general services had their prices in dollars, displacing the Cuban peso. I remember that at the end of the ‘90s my parents rented out a room and I could watch many dollars passing before my eyes.¶ This of course brought a political cost to the Cuban government. The simple fact of devaluing the national currency versus the dollar didn’t bring much satisfaction to Comrade Fidel. From that moment the two-currency system started. Now, how did the Cuban Convertible Peso (CUC) come about. At that time, in 2004, using the excuse that “Bush has prohibited the use of dollars in Cuba,” they decided to withdraw all existing dollars from the population and change them for convertible pesos (CUC). The exchange was 1 for 1.¶ Fidel Castro set a deadline for the exchange and after that date started to charge a 20% tax on exchanging dollars for CUCs. Fidel was very clever, he was left with all the dollars and gave the people CUCs, which are nothing more than pieces of paper printed with the “supposed” backing of the USD. This supposed backing was spent on the Commander’s fabulous idea of buying “rice cookers” to sell to the people. Thus was born the CUC, which up to today has accompanied the Cuban peso in an apparently eternal rivalry.¶ Cubans are paid their wages in Cuban pesos. This is the official currency of Cuba, the “socialist” money. With this money Cubans can pay for some services such as water, light, gas, staple foods, bus fares, a part of the phone bill (because the caller ID and international calls are charged in CUC), their dues to the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR), and a few other things.¶ The rest, such as the food in supermarkets, hotels, services, state restaurants, getting a passport, the departure tax, paperwork, cell phone services, car rental, entry to clubs and discos, drinks, taxis, home appliances, buying school supplies like pencils and erasers, in short, everything that is not “subsidized” is paid for in CUCs (the “capitalist” currency) — and this is 99.2% of everyday things.¶ The Government is fully aware that some Cubans receive remittances from relatives abroad; some get money from tourists in pay for prostitution; some engage in the “disappearance” of goods, corruption…; and the government disregards it on a huge scale to promote the development of the national economy.¶ A convertible peso (CUC) = 25 Cuban pesos (CUP) today. The monthly wages of an ordinary worker are around 375 Cuban pesos, which, applying basic math, gives us a total of 15 CUC a month. Below I show a list of set prices at a supermarket in Cuba.¶ 1 liter of milk = 2.50 CUC¶ 1 kg of rice = 3.15 CUC¶ 1 liter of sunflower oil = 1.50 CUC¶ 12 eggs = 1.80 CUC¶ 1 kg beef = 17.00 CUC¶ The prices of some services are:¶ An ordinary passport = 100.00 CUC¶ A certified birth certificate = 20.00 CUC (expedited = 120.00 CUC)¶ 1 night in the Habana Libre Hotel = 275.00 CUC¶ 1 taxi from Vedado to Habana Vieja = 10.00 CUC¶ Airport Tax = 25.00 CUC¶ 1 minute phone call = 0.35 CUC¶ One international text message = 1.00 CUC¶ 1 1-minute phone call to Germany = 1.80 CUC¶ Shoes, low end = 30.00 CUC¶ So now you can see how little 15.00 CUC, the salary of an ordinary worker, buys.¶ Now let’s continue by looking at the comparison to understand what it means for a Cuban to pay prices in CUC. Consider a staple like milk and the 375 Cuban peso salary of an ordinary Cuban.¶ 1 liter of milk = 2.50 CUC = 62.50 Cuban pesos = 16.7% of the monthly salary of a worker¶ Let’s take Switzerland as a random reference, where the minimum wage is about 3,000 USD. If we apply the same percentages that a Cuban pays for a liter of milk, it would be the equivalent of a Swiss paying 501.00 USD for that same liter of milk in his country.¶ To calculate what it means for a Cuban to buy 1 liter of milk relative to your salary, you can do the following calculation: Take 16.7% of your monthly wages.¶ Imagine that the above result is what you would pay in your country for one liter of milk. A horrible truth? Well the equivalent of this result is what a Cuban in Cuba pays because of the dual currency.

**The social gap created by the dual economy creates instability in Cuba and turns the case – We’ll include a table**

**Herrera and Nakatani 3** (Rémy Herrera and Paulo Nakatani. Researcher at CNRS (National Center of Scientific Research) in France. “THE CUBAN DOLLARIZATION. Reflections for a de-dollarizing process”. http://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/ec/jec9/pdf/A03%20-%20Herrera,%20R%E9my%20y%20Nakatani,%20Paulo.pdf)//JuneC//

The egalitarian wages and incomes structure and the existence of a complete system of public social services constitute the success —largely acknowledged at a worldwide level—, as well as one of the justifications of the revolutionary process. Accordingly, the latter is inevitably destabilized by the fact that a part of Cuban population incomes can no more be based upon labour or a social right (Table 4). 

At the same time, all incentives to work and to increase labour productivity are thrown into confusion by dollarization process.¶ Table 4. Structure of Cuban population total incomes (in percentage, in 1996)¶ Source: INIE (1997)¶ Nevertheless, as almost two third of Cuban people have now access to the dollar, the inequalities are rather to be found in the banking deposits’ concentration. One estimate that, in 2000, 12% of the banking accounts represented 80% of the deposits (against respectively 15% and 70% in 1995). The emergence of a new social stratum, much more richer since holding significant accumulated foreign currencies amounts, exacerbate the internal social contradictions. The rise of these contradictions could strengthen anti-socialist forces, hostile to the Cuban socialist project. At the economic and political levels, the dollarization is hencefore susceptible to generate a certain instability in the island. In such a context, one of the keys of the device implemented by the Cuban state is the strict locker still imposed to private capital accumulation and to private wage-earning hiring.

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**Engagement is the lynchpin of neoliberal expansion into Cuba**

**Wenston & Woods ’08** – Trotskyist political theorist and author and leading members of the International Marxist Tendency (Fred & Alan, “[Vultures hovering over Cuba after Fidel Castro steps down](http://www.cjournal.info/2008/02/20/vultures-hovering-over-cuba-after-fidel-castro-steps-down/)”, http://www.cjournal.info/2008/02/20/vultures-hovering-over-cuba-after-fidel-castro-steps-down/)//VP

They all pretend to be democrats when it comes to Cuba. In reality they are like vultures waiting for the day they can get their beaks and claws into the flesh of Cuba. What they are after is the end of the economic system brought into being by the Cuban revolution. They want capitalism to return to Cuba. That is what they mean by “democracy”! Another fashionable term these days is “engagement”. While Bush sticks to his guns and insists on the embargo being stepped up, the more intelligent bourgeois, both in the USA and Europe are raising the need for “engagement”, i.e. on removing the embargo and opening up trade channels. Does this wing of the bourgeois have different interests or aims? No, they simply understand better than Bush and his obtuse circle of friends that the best way to re-introduce capitalism into Cuba is to lift the embargo, begin trading, flood Cuba with cash and let the process unfold.¶ That is why it is even more disgusting when we hear some reformist elements on the left advocating such “engagement”.What they are actually doing is giving the bourgeois advice on how to remove this thorn in their side**.¶** All this talk of democracy is in fact a cover for the real aims of imperialism. Not so long ago the Financial Times was giving more sober advice. They were suggesting a “Chinese road” for Cuba accompanied by a lifting of the US-sponsored embargo. The Chinese model would envisage an opening up of Cuba to capitalism accompanied by a firm grip on state power at the top.

**Neoliberalism causes extinction**

Darder, 10 – Professor Antonia Darder, Distinguished Professor of Education, University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign (“Preface” in *Critical Pedagogy, Ecoliteracy, & Planetary Crisis: The Ecopedagogy Movement* by Richard V. Kahn, 2010, pp. x-xiii)//VP

**GENDER MODIFIED**

It is fitting to begin my words about Richard Kahn’s Critical Pedagogy, Ecoliteracy, and Planetary Crisis: The Ecopedagogy Movement with a poem. The direct and succinct message of The Great Mother Wails cuts through our theorizing and opens us up to the very heart of the book’s message—to ignite a fire that speaks to **the ecological crisis** at hand; a crisis orchestrated by the inhumane greed and economic brutality of the wealthy. Nevertheless, as is clearly apparent, none of us is absolved from complicity with the devastating destruction of the earth. As members of the global community, we are all implicated in this destruction by the very manner in which we define ourselves, each other, and all living beings with whom we reside on the earth. Everywhere we look there are glaring signs of political systems and social structures that propel us toward **unsustainability and extinction**. In this historical moment, the planet faces some of the most horrendous forms of “[hu]man-made” devastation ever known to humankind. Cataclysmic “natural disasters” in the last decade have sung the environmental hymns of planetary imbalance and reckless environmental disregard. A striking feature of this ecological crisis, both locally and globally, is the **overwhelming concentration of wealth** held by the ruling elite and their agents of capital. This environmental malaise is characterized by the staggering loss of livelihood among working people everywhere; gross inequalities in educational opportunities; an absence of health care for millions; an unprecedented number of people living behind bars; and trillions spent on fabricated wars fundamentally tied to the control and domination of the planet’s resources. The Western ethos of mastery and supremacy over nature has accompanied, to our detriment, the unrelenting expansion of capitalism and its unparalleled domination over all aspects of human life. This hegemonic worldview has been unmercifully imparted through a host of public policies and practices that conveniently gloss over gross inequalities as commonsensical necessities for democracy to bloom. As a consequence, the liberal democratic rhetoric of “we are all created equal” hardly begins to touch the international pervasiveness of racism, patriarchy, technocracy, and economic piracy by the West, all which have fostered the erosion of civil rights and the unprecedented ecological exploitation of societies, creating conditions that now threaten our peril, if we do not reverse directions. Cataclysmic disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina, are unfortunate testimonies to the danger of ignoring the warnings of the natural world, especially when coupled with egregious governmental neglect of impoverished people. Equally disturbing, is the manner in which ecological crisis is vulgarly exploited by unscrupulous and ruthless capitalists who see no problem with turning a profit off the backs of ailing and mourning oppressed populations of every species—whether they be victims of weather disasters, catastrophic illnesses, industrial pollution, or inhumane practices of incarceration. Ultimately, these constitute ecological calamities that speak to the inhumanity and tyranny of material profiteering, at the expense of precious life. The arrogance and exploitation of neoliberal values of consumption dishonor the contemporary suffering of poor and marginalized populations around the globe. Neoliberalism denies or simply mocks (“Drill baby drill!”) the interrelationship and delicate balance that exists between all living beings, including the body earth. In its stead, values of individualism, competition, privatization, and the “free market” systematically debase the ancient ecological knowledge of indigenous populations, who have, implicitly or explicitly, rejected the fabricated ethos of “progress and democracy” propagated by the West. In its consuming frenzy to gobble up the natural resources of the planet for its own hyperbolic quest for material domination, the exploitative nature of capitalism and its burgeoning technocracy has dangerously deepened the structures of social exclusion, through the destruction of the very biodiversity that has been key to our global survival for millennia. Kahn insists that this devastation of all species and the planet must be fully recognized and soberly critiqued. But he does not stop there. Alongside, he rightly argues for political principles of engagement for the construction of a critical ecopedagogy and ecoliteracy that is founded on economic redistribution, cultural and linguistic democracy, indigenous sovereignty, universal human rights, and a fundamental respect for all life. As such, Kahn seeks to bring us all back to a formidable relationship with the earth, one that is unquestionably rooted in an integral order of knowledge, imbued with physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual wisdom. Within the context of such an ecologically grounded epistemology, Kahn uncompromisingly argues that our organic relationship with the earth is also intimately tied to our struggles for cultural self-determination, environmental sustainability, social and material justice, and global peace. Through a carefully framed analysis of past disasters and current ecological crisis, Kahn issues an urgent call for a critical ecopedagogy that makes central explicit articulations of the ways in which societies construct ideological, political, and cultural systems, based on social structures and practices that can serve to promote ecological sustainability and biodiversity or, conversely, lead us down a disastrous path of unsustainability and extinction. In making his case, Kahn provides a grounded examination of the manner in which consuming capitalism manifests its repressive force throughout the globe, disrupting the very ecological order of knowledge essential to the planet’s sustainability. He offers an understanding of critical ecopedagogy and ecoliteracy that inherently critiques the history of Western civilization and the anthropomorphic assumptions that sustain patriarchy and the subjugation of all subordinated living beings—assumptions that continue to inform traditional education discourses around the world. Kahn incisively demonstrates how a theory of multiple technoliteracies can be used to effectively critique the ecological corruption and destruction behind mainstream uses of technology and the media in the interest of the neoliberal marketplace. As such, his work points to the manner in which the sustainability rhetoric of mainstream environmentalism actually **camouflages** wretched neoliberal policies and practices that left unchecked **hasten the annihilation of the globe’s ecosystem**. True to its promise, the book cautions that any anti-hegemonic resistance movement that claims social justice, universal human rights, or global peace must contend forthrightly with the deteriorating ecological crisis at hand, as well as consider possible strategies and relationships that rupture the status quo and transform environmental conditions that threaten disaster. A failure to integrate ecological sustainability at the core of our political and pedagogical struggles for liberation, Kahn argues, is to blindly and misguidedly adhere to an anthropocentric worldview in which emancipatory dreams are deemed solely about human interests, without attention either to the health of the planet or to the well-being of all species with whom we walk the earth.

**The alternative is to reject the 1ac to interrogate neoliberal economic engagement with latin America from the starting point of knowledge production- that is a prerequisite to breaking down neoliberalism**

**Walsh, 12** – Estudios Culturales Latinoamericanos de la Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar (Catherine, “The Politics of Naming”, Cultural Studies, 26.1, Project Muse)//VP

Cultural Studies, in our project, is constructed and understood as more than a field of ‘study’. It is broadly understand as a formation, a field of possibility and expression. And it is constructed as a space of encounter between disciplines and intellectual, political and ethical projects that seek to combat what Alberto Moreiras called the impoverishment of thought driven by divisions (disciplinary, epistemological, geographic, etc.) and the socio-political-cultural fragmentation that increasingly makes social change and intervention appear to be divided forces (Moreiras 2001). As such, Cultural Studies is conceived as a place of plural-, inter-, transand in-disciplinary (or undisciplined) critical thinking that takes as major concern the intimate relationships between culture, knowledge, politics and economics mentioned earlier, and that sees the problems of the region as both local and global. It is a space from which to search for ways of thinking, knowing, comprehending, feeling and acting that permit us to intervene and influence: a field that makes possible convergence and articulation, particularly between efforts, practices, knowledge and projects that focus on more global justice, on differences (epistemic, ontological, existential, of gender, ethnicity, class, race, nation, among others) constructed as inequalities within the framework of neo-liberal capitalism. It is a place that seeks answers, encourages intervention and engenders projects and proposals. It is in this frame of understanding and practice in our Ph.D. programme in Latin-American Cultural Studies at the Universidad Andina Simo´n Bolı´var, that this broad description-definition continues to take on more concrete characteristics. Here I can identify three that stand out: the inter-cultural, the inter-epistemic and the de-colonial. The inter-cultural has been and still is a central axis in the struggles and processes of social change in the Andean region. Its critical meaning was first affirmed near the end of the 1980s in the Ecuadorian indigenous movement’s political project. Here inter-culturality was positioned as an ideological principal grounded in the urgent need for a radical transformation of social structures, institutions and relationships, not only for indigenous peoples but also for society as a whole. Since then, inter-culturality has marked a social, political, ethical project and process that is also epistemological;6 a project and a process that seek to re-found the bases of the nation and national culture, understood as homogenous and mono-cultural. Such call for re-founding does not to simply add diversity to what is already established, but rather to rethink, rebuild and inter-culturalize the nation and national culture, and with in the terrains of knowledge, politics and life-based visions. It is this understanding of the inter-cultural that is of interest. Concretely, we are interested in the spaces of agency, creation, innovation and encounter between and among different subjects, knowledges, practices and visions. Referring to our project of Cultural Studies as (inter)Cultural Studies, enables and encourages us to think from this region, from the struggles, practices and processes that question Eurocentric, colonial and imperial legacies, and work to transform and create radically different conditions for thinking, encountering, being and coexisting or co-living. In a similar fashion, the inter-epistemic focuses on the need to question, interrupt and transgress the Euro-USA-centric epistemological frameworks that dominate Latin-American universities and even some Cultural Studies programmes. To think with knowledges produced in Latin America and the Caribbean (as well as in other ‘Souths’, including those located in the North) and by intellectuals who come not only from academia, but also from other projects, communities and social movements are, for us, a necessary and essential step, both in de-colonization and in creating other conditions of knowledge and understanding. Our project, thus, concerns itself with the work of inverting the geopolitics of knowledge, with placing attention on the historically subjugated and negated plurality of knowledge, logics and rationalities, and with the political-intellectual effort to create relationships, articulations and convergences between them. The de-colonial element is intimately related to the two preceding points. Here our interest is, on one hand, to make evident the thoughts, practices and experiences that both in the past and in the present have endeavoured to challenge the colonial matrix of power and domination, and to exist in spite of it, in its exterior and interior. By colonial matrix, we refer to the hierarchical system of racial civilizational classification that has operated and operates at different levels of life, including social identities (the superiority of white, heterosexual males), ontological-existential contexts (the dehumanization of indigenous and black peoples), epistemic contexts (the positioning of Euro-centrism as the only perspective of knowledge, thereby disregarding other epistemic rationalities), and cosmological (the control and/or negation of the ancestral-spiritual-territorial-existential bases that govern the life-systems of ancestral peoples, most especially those of African Diaspora and of Abya Yala) (see Quijano 1999). At the centre or the heart of this matrix is capitalism as the only possible model of civilization; the imposed social classification, the idea of ‘humanity’, the perspective of knowledge and the prototype life-system that goes with it defines itself through this capitalistic civilizational lens. As Quijano argues, by defending the interests of social domination and the exploitation of work under the hegemony of capital, ‘the ‘‘racialization’’ and the ‘‘capitalization’’ of social relationships of these models of power, and the ‘‘eurocentralization’’ of its control, are in the very roots of our present problems of identity,’ in Latin America as countries, ‘nations’ and States (Quijano 2006). It is precisely because of this that we consider the de-colonial to be a fundamental perspective. Within our project, the de-colonial does not seek to establish a new paradigm or line of thought but a critically-conscious understanding of the past and present that opens up and suggests questions, perspectives and paths to explore. As such, and on the other hand, we are interested in stimulating methodologies and pedagogies that, in the words of Jacqui Alexander (2005), cross the fictitious boundaries of exclusion and marginalization to contribute to the configuration of new ways of being and knowing rooted not in alterity itself, but in the principles of relation, complement and commitment. It is also to encourage other ways of reading, investigating and researching, of seeing, knowing, feeling, hearing and being, that challenge the singular reasoning of western modernity, make tense our own disciplinary frameworks of ‘study’ and interpretation, and persuade a questioning from and with radically distinct rationalities, knowledge, practices and civilizational-life-systems. It is through these three pillars of the inter-cultural, the inter-epistemic and the de-colonial that we attempt to understand the processes, experiences and struggles that are occurring in Latin America and elsewhere. But it is also here that we endeavour to contribute to and learn from the complex relationships between culture-politics-economics, knowledge and power in the world today; to unlearn to relearn from and with perspectives otherwise. Practices, experiences and challenges In this last section, my interest is to share some of the particularities of our doctorate programme/project, now in its third cycle; its achievements and advancements; and the challenges that it faces in an academic context, increasingly characterized regionally and internationally, by disciplinarity, depolitization, de-subjectivation, apathy, competitive individualism and nonintervention. Without a doubt, one of the unique characteristics of the programme/ project is its students: all mid-career professionals mainly from the Andean region and from such diverse fields as the social sciences, humanities, the arts, philosophy, communication, education and law. The connection that the majority of the students have with social and cultural movements and/or processes, along with their dedication to teaching or similar work, helps to contribute to dynamic debate and discussion not always seen in academia and post-graduate programmes. Similarly, the faculty of the programme stand out for being internationally renowned intellectuals, and, the majority, for their commitment to struggles of social transformation, critical thinking and the project of the doctorate itself. The curriculum offering is based on courses and seminars that seek to foment thinking from Latin American and with its intellectuals in all of their diversity comprehend, confront and affect the problems and realities of the region, which are not only local but global. The pedagogical methodological perspective aforementioned works to stimulate processes of collective thought and allow the participants to think from related formations, experiences and research topics and to think with the differences disciplinary, geographical, epistemic and subjective thereby fracturing individualism by dialoguing, transgressing and inter-crossing boundaries. Trans-disciplinarity, as such, is a fundamental position and process in our project. The fact that the graduate students come from an array of different backgrounds provides a plurality in which the methodologicalpedagogical practice becomes the challenge of collectively thinking, crossing disciplinary backgrounds and creating new positions and perspectives, conceived and formed in a trans-disciplinary way. The majority of courses, seminars and professors, also assume that this is a necessary challenge in today’s world when no single discipline and no single intellectual is capable alone of analyzing, comprehending or transforming social reality. Nevertheless, trans-disciplinary gains continue to be a point of criticism and contention, especially given the present trend to re-discipline the LatinAmerican university. As Edgardo Lander has argued (2000a), this tendency reflects the neo-liberalization of higher education, as well as the increasing conservatism of intellectuals, including those that previously identified as or to continue to identify themselves as progressives and/or leftists. To establish oneself in a discipline or presume truth through a discipline, a common practice today, is to reinstall the geopolitics of knowing. This, in turn, strengthens Euro-USA-centrism as ‘the place’ of theory and knowledge. As such, the subject of dispute is not simply the trans-disciplinary aspect of Cultural Studies but also its ‘indisciplinary’ nature, that is, the effort central to our project to include points of view that come from Latin America and thinkers who are not always connected to academia (see Walsh et al. 2002). Our interest is not, as some claim, to facilitate the agendas or cultural agency of subaltern groups or social movements, promote activism or simply include other knowledge forms, but instead to build a different political-intellectual project a political-intellectual project otherwise. Such project gives centrality to the need to learn to think from, together and with Latin American reality and its actors, thereby stimulating convergences, articulations and inter-culturalizations that aim at creating an academia that is committed to life itself. Such a perspective does not eliminate or deny knowledge conceived in Europe or North America usually named as ‘universal’ or its proponents and thinkers. Instead, it incorporates such knowledge as part of a broader canon and worldview that seeks pluriversality, recognizing the importance of places and loci of enunciation. For our project, all of this serves to highlight the doubly complicated situation that is still in flux. On one hand, there is the negative association with trans-disciplinarity and the academic suppositions that accompany it, particularly in the area of research; this requires that our theses be doubly rigorous. And, on the other hand, there is the geopolitical limitation not only of disciplines but also of academic disciplining. To argue, as we do, that knowledge and thought are also produced outside of universities and, in dialogue with Hall, that political movements also produce and provoke theoretic moments and movements, is to question and challenge the academic logic and the authority of a universal and singular reasoning and science. We will, through such questioning and challenges, always be marginalized, placed on the fringe, under a microscope, criticized and disputed. Because of this, the challenges that we have encountered have been many. On one hand, there are those challenges that many face in the Latin-American academic context: the real difficulties of financing, infrastructure and research support. On the other hand, are the challenges that come with the traditional academic disciplinary structure, its de-politization and de-subjectification. Here the challenge is to transgress the established norms of neutrality, distance and objectivity. It is also to confront the standards that give little relevance to historically subjugated groups, practices and knowledges, and to the interlinking of race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality with the structures and models of power and knowledge. It is to make evident past and present struggles that give real meaning to the arguments of heterogeneity, decoloniality and inter-culturality. Here the criticism and dispute comes from many sides: from those who describe these efforts as too politicized (and, as such, supposedly less ‘academic’), uni-paradigmatic (supposedly limited to only one ‘line of thought’), fundamentalist (supposedly exclusionary of those subjects not marked by the colonial wound) and as obsessed with conflict (and therefore far from the tradition of ‘culture’, its letters and object of study). These challenges together with the tensions, criticisms and disputes that they mark often times make the path more difficult. Still, and at the same time, they allow us to clarify the distinctive and unique aspects of our project and its motivations to continue with its course of construction, insurgence and struggle. Our concern here is not so much with the institutionalizing of Cultural Studies. Better yet, and in a much broader fashion, we are concerned with epistemic inter-culturalization, with the de-colonialization and pluriversalization of the ‘university’, and with a thinking from the South(s). To place these concerns, as argued here, within a perspective and a politics of naming: ‘(inter)Cultural Studies in de-colonial code,’ is to open, not close, paths. Conclusion In concluding the reflections I have presented here, it is useful to return to a fundamental point touched by Stuart Hall: ‘intervention’. In particular and with Hall, I refer to the will to intervene in and transform the world, an intervention that does not simply relate to social and political contexts and fields, but also to epistemology and theory. That is to an intervention and transformation in and a de-colonization of the frameworks and logics of our thinking, knowing and comprehending. To commit oneself in mind, body and spirit as Frantz Fanon argued. To consider Cultural Studies today a project of political vocation and intervention is to position and at the same time build our work on the borders of and the boundaries between university and society. It is to seriously reflect on whom we read and with whom we want and/or need to dialogue and think, to understand the very limits or our knowledge. And precisely because of this, it is to act on our own situation, establishing contacts and exchanges of different kinds in a pedagogicalmethodological zeal to think from and think with, in what I have elsewhere called a critical inter-culturality and de-colonial pedagogy (Walsh 2009). In universities and societies that are increasingly characterized by nonintervention, auto-complacency, individualism and apathy, intervention represents, suggests and promotes a position and practice of involvement, action and complicity. To take on such a position and practice and to make it an integral part of our political-intellectual project is to find not only ethical meaning in work on culture and power, but also to give this work some heart. That is to say, to focus on the ever-greater need and urgency of life. To call these Cultural Studies or critical (inter)Cultural Studies is only one of our options, and part of the politics of naming.

## 1NC

**Interpretation - the plan has to be government-to-government – not civil or private economic engagement**

**Daga, 13** - director of research at Politicas Publicas para la Libertad, in Bolivia, and a visiting senior policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation (Sergio, “Economics of the 2013-2014 Debate Topic:

U.S. Economic Engagement Toward Cuba, Mexico or Venezuela”, National Center for Policy Analysis, 5/15, <http://www.ncpa.org/pdfs/Message_to_Debaters_6-7-13.pdf>)

Economic engagement between or among countries can take many forms, but this document will focus on government-to-government engagement through 1) international trade agreements designed to lower barriers to trade; and 2) government foreign aid; next, we will contrast government-to-government economic engagement with private economic engagement through 3) international investment, called foreign direct investment; and 4) remittances and migration by individuals. All of these areas are important with respect to the countries mentioned in the debate resolution; however, when discussing economic engagement by the U.S. federal government, some issues are more important with respect to some countries than to others.

**Violation – the plan targets private and civil businesses in cuba**

**Voting issue-**

**A) limits – a government limit is the only way to keep the topic manageable – otherwise they could use any 3rd party intermediary, lift barriers to private engagement, or target civil society – it makes topic preparation impossible**

**B) negative ground – formal governmental channels are key to predictable relations and trade disads and counterplans that test ‘engagement’**

## 1NC

**The United States federal government should ask the governments of Brazil and Mexico to diplomatically engage Cuba on its behalf. The United States federal government should inform Brazil and Mexico that it will abide by the results of negotiations, and implement any policy changes that negotiations between Brazil, Mexico, and Cuba recommend.**

**CP solves the case and avoids politics**

Iglesias, 12– Commander, US Navy. Paper submitted for the Master of Strategic Studies Degree at the the US Army War College (Carlos, “United States Security Policy Implications of a Post-Fidel Cuba” http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA560408)//VP

GOC = Government of Cuba, FAR = Cuban military

Unlike the policy implications above, the major hurdle to this interest does not come from any continuation of the GOC, but from the rest of the world. International opposition to the perceived fairness and effectiveness of the economic sanctions has long posed an obstacle for U.S. policy. In the global scale, the problem is epitomized by the twenty consecutive years of near unanimous UN General Assembly resolution votes against the embargo. 96 More regionally, Spain and other European Union partners have strongly pushed to loosen sanctions. The arguments are straightforward and pragmatic, “since sanctions in place have not worked, it makes more sense to do things that would work, and (the next obvious one is to) change things.”97 Even more locally, Cuba has managed to generally retain positive feelings among the people of Latin American in spite of the country’s domestic realities.98 The rise of Raúl and any subsequent successions further complicated the problem of mustering international consensus. Several countries in the hemisphere see any new Cuban leadership as fresh 30 opportunities to engage in common interests. The two largest Latin American countries, Brazil and Mexico, have both ascribed to this approach and have indicated their interests in forging new ties since Fidel’s stepped down.99 On the other hand, this international dissention does hold some prospect for leveraging U.S. soft power. An indirect approach would be to coordinate U.S. proxy actions with partner countries interested in Cuba. This has the double benefit of leveraging U.S. soft power without compromising legislated restrictions or provoking hard-line Cuban-American ire. In this approach, burgeoning relations with Brazil and Mexico would be strong candidates. Devoid of the “bullhorn diplomacy” that have marginalized U.S.-Cuban policy efficacy for decades, the U.S. could better engage the island through hemispherical interlocutors. At a minimum, U.S. interests would be advanced through the proxy insights of what is occurring on the island in addition to the potential displacement of anti-American influences (e.g. Chávez). 100

## Relations

**The OAS fails – credibility is inherently ineffective**

**AP 6/4** (Associated Press, “John Kerry seeks changes to OAS,” 6/4/13, http://www.politico.com/story/2013/06/john-kerry-latin-america-oas-changes-92245.html)//SJF

Secretary of State John Kerry is demanding reforms in the 35-nation Organization of American States as he visits Latin America for the first time since taking office.¶ Leading the U.S. delegation in Guatemala to the annual general assembly of the OAS — an organization he has disparaged as ineffective, inefficient and nearly irrelevant — Kerry will try to convince fellow members of the need for major changes in its bureaucracy and a return to its core mission of promoting human rights, democracy and development.¶ Gutierrez dares GOP to vote down bill¶ Bill reduces benefits for lobbyists¶ Rhee's group tripled its budget¶ Balz book: Christie considered 2012¶ Udall brother 'hiked everywhere'¶ SEIU pushes House on immigration¶ Officials traveling with Kerry said he also would be making the case against legalization of marijuana at the national level, lobbying for the election of the U.S. candidate for a hemispheric human rights panel and trying to improve badly damaged relations with Venezuela.¶ Kerry arrived Tuesday at the Guatemalan mountain resort of Antigua and began his two-day program with a meeting with Guatemala’s president.¶ Drugs, U.S. immigration reform and good governance were to top the agenda in those talks, the two men told reporters.¶ The OAS often is criticized in the United States and Kerry wrote a scathing editorial about its failures and need to reform three years ago while he was the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He then introduced legislation in Congress aimed at requiring significant budget reforms in the organization.¶ Just last year, shortly before he was nominated to be secretary of state, Kerry penned a letter to the OAS permanent council with three other senators bemoaning that the group “has been forfeiting its effectiveness” with a lack of strategic focus and fiscal recklessness.**¶** The State Department said Monday that Kerry believed the bloc was an organization of critical importance to the Americas and that his participation in the general assembly was aimed at helping to strengthen it.¶ “The fact that he is going to the OAS and he is spending two days there participating sends a clear signal that he thinks this remains the premier multilateral organization in the hemisphere,” department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.¶ “In order to assure that the OAS retains that status, it must refocus on its core principles,” she said, stressing democracy, human rights, development and regional security. “Strengthening it is of course part of (Kerry’s) agenda and part of what he’ll be focused on in the next couple of days.”¶ As a senator in 2010, Kerry made similar, though not as subtle, points in an opinion piece he co-wrote with Sen. Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), his successor as head of the Foreign Relations Committee.¶ “Sadly, its culture of consensus has often been the breeding ground of the ideas that reflect the lowest common denominator, rather than the highest ambitions of diplomacy and cooperation,” they wrote in The Miami Herald.¶ The pair excoriated the OAS for becoming “a pliable tool of inconsistent political agendas” and suggested that they agreed with critics who called the organization “a grazing pasture for third-string diplomats.”**¶** Psaki played down the last comment, saying she “would hardly call the secretary of state a third-string diplomat.” Kerry’s mere presence at the meeting demonstrates his and the Obama administration’s commitment to improving the OAS, she said.¶ In November 2012, Kerry and Menendez, along with Republican Sens. Richard Lugar of Indiana and Marco Rubio of Florida, wrote that OAS finances had become dangerously precarious and that it must reform, pare back superfluous projects or risk losing support from its prime contributor, the United States.¶ The United States has over the past decades found itself at growing odds with numerous Latin and South American members of the OAS. Many of them, like Venezuela, Nicaragua, Bolivia and Ecuador, are led by leftist or populist leaders who have balked at accepting the dominance of the U.S. in the Americas and pursued policies that often run counter to Washington’s wishes.¶ Apart from Cuba, which has been suspended from the OAS for decades, the U.S. has most differences with Venezuela, whose president, Hugo Chavez, reveled in tweaking Washington until his death last year.

**There is no risk of another major terrorist attack – there have been no domestic attacks since 9/11 and terrorists have learned that such efforts are counterproductive**

**Mueller, 06** (John, Foreign Affairs, September October 2006, p.2)

A fully credible explanation for the fact that the United States has suffered no terrorist attacks since 9/11 is that the threat posed by homegrown or imported terrorists -- like that presented by Japanese Americans during World War II or by American Communists after it -- has been massively exaggerated. Is it possible that the haystack is essentially free of needles? The FBI embraces a spooky I-think-therefore-they-are line of reasoning when assessing the purported terrorist menace. In 2003, its director, Robert Mueller, proclaimed, "The greatest threat is from al Qaeda cells in the U.S. that we have not yet identified." He rather mysteriously deemed the threat from those unidentified entities to be "increasing in part because of the heightened publicity" surrounding such episodes as the 2002 Washington sniper shootings and the 2001 anthrax attacks (which had nothing to do with al Qaeda). But in 2001, the 9/11 hijackers received no aid from U.S.-based al Qaeda operatives for the simple reason that no such operatives appear to have existed. It is not at all clear that that condition has changed. Mueller also claimed to know that "al Qaeda maintains the ability and the intent to inflict significant casualties in the U.S. with little warning." If this was true -- if the terrorists had both the ability and the intent in 2003, and if the threat they presented was somehow increasing -- they had remained remarkably quiet by the time the unflappable Mueller repeated his alarmist mantra in 2005: "I remain very concerned about what we are not seeing." Intelligence estimates in 2002 held that there were as many as 5,000 al Qaeda terrorists and supporters in the United States. However, a secret FBI report in 2005 wistfully noted that although the bureau had managed to arrest a few bad guys here and there after more than three years of intense and well-funded hunting, it had been unable to identify a single true al Qaeda sleeper cell anywhere in the country. Thousands of people in the United States have had their overseas communications monitored under a controversial warrantless surveillance program. Of these, fewer than ten U.S. citizens or residents per year have aroused enough suspicion to impel the agencies spying on them to seek warrants authorizing surveillance of their domestic communications as well; none of this activity, it appears, has led to an indictment on any charge whatever. In addition to massive eavesdropping and detention programs, every year some 30,000 "national security letters" are issued without judicial review, forcing businesses and other institutions to disclose confidential information about their customers without telling anyone they have done so. That process has generated thousands of leads that, when pursued, have led nowhere. Some 80,000 Arab and Muslim immigrants have been subjected to fingerprinting and registration, another 8,000 have been called in for interviews with the FBI, and over 5,000 foreign nationals have been imprisoned in initiatives designed to prevent terrorism. This activity, notes the Georgetown University law professor David Cole, has not resulted in a single conviction for a terrorist crime. In fact, only a small number of people picked up on terrorism charges -- always to great official fanfare -- have been convicted at all, and almost all of these convictions have been for other infractions, particularly immigration violations. Some of those convicted have clearly been mental cases or simply flaunting jihadist bravado -- rattling on about taking down the Brooklyn Bridge with a blowtorch, blowing up the Sears Tower if only they could get to Chicago, beheading the prime minister of Canada, or flooding lower Manhattan by somehow doing something terrible to one of those tunnels APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION One reason al Qaeda and "al Qaeda types" seem not to be trying very hard to repeat 9/11 may be that that dramatic act of destruction itself proved counterproductive by massively heightening concerns about terrorism around the world. No matter how much they might disagree on other issues (most notably on the war in Iraq), there is a compelling incentive for states -- even ones such as Iran, Libya, Sudan, and Syria -- to cooperate in cracking down on al Qaeda, because they know that they could easily be among its victims. The FBI may not have uncovered much of anything within the United States since 9/11, but thousands of apparent terrorists have been rounded, or rolled, up overseas with U.S. aid and encouragement Although some Arabs and Muslims took pleasure in the suffering inflicted on 9/11 -- Schadenfreude in German, shamateh in Arabic -- the most common response among jihadists and religious nationalists was a vehement rejection of al Qaeda's strategy and methods. When Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan in 1979, there were calls for jihad everywhere in Arab and Muslim lands, and tens of thousands flocked to the country to fight the invaders. In stark contrast, when the U.S. military invaded in 2001 to topple an Islamist regime, there was, as the political scientist Fawaz Gerges points out, a "deafening silence" from the Muslim world, and only a trickle of jihadists went to fight the Americans. Other jihadists publicly blamed al Qaeda for their post-9/11 problems and held the attacks to be shortsighted and hugely miscalculated. The post-9/11 willingness of governments around the world to take on international terrorists has been much reinforced and amplified by subsequent, if scattered, terrorist activity outside the United States. Thus, a terrorist bombing in Bali in 2002 galvanized the Indonesian government into action. Extensive arrests and convictions -- including of leaders who had previously enjoyed some degree of local fame and political popularity -- seem to have severely degraded the capacity of the chief jihadist group in Indonesia, Jemaah Islamiyah. After terrorists attacked Saudis in Saudi Arabia in 2003, that country, very much for self-interested reasons, became considerably more serious about dealing with domestic terrorism; it soon clamped down on radical clerics and preachers. Some rather inept terrorist bombings in Casablanca in 2003 inspired a similarly determined crackdown by Moroccan authorities. And the 2005 bombing in Jordan of a wedding at a hotel (an unbelievably stupid target for the terrorists) succeeded mainly in outraging the Jordanians: according to a Pew poll, the percentage of the population expressing a lot of confidence in bin Laden to "do the right thing" dropped from 25 percent to less than one percent after the attack THREAT PERCEPTIONS The results of policing activity overseas suggest that the absence of results in the United States has less to do with terrorists' cleverness or with investigative incompetence than with the possibility that few, if any, terrorists exist in the country. It also suggests that al Qaeda's ubiquity and capacity to do damage may have, as with so many perceived threats, been exaggerated. Just because some terrorists may wish to do great harm does not mean that they are able to. Gerges argues that mainstream Islamists -- who make up the vast majority of the Islamist political movement -- gave up on the use of force before 9/11, except perhaps against Israel, and that the jihadists still committed to violence constitute a tiny minority. Even this small group primarily focuses on various "infidel" Muslim regimes and considers jihadists who carry out violence against the "far enemy" -- mainly Europe and the United States -- to be irresponsible, reckless adventurers who endanger the survival of the whole movement. In this view, 9/11 was a sign of al Qaeda's desperation, isolation, fragmentation, and decline, not of its strength. Those attacks demonstrated, of course, that al Qaeda -- or at least 19 of its members -- still possessed some fight. And none of this is to deny that more terrorist attacks on the United States are still possible. Nor is it to suggest that al Qaeda is anything other than a murderous movement. Moreover, after the ill-considered U.S. venture in Iraq is over, freelance jihadists trained there may seek to continue their operations elsewhere -- although they are more likely to focus on places such as Chechnya than on the United States. A unilateral American military attack against Iran could cause that country to retaliate, probably with very wide support within the Muslim world, by aiding anti-American insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq and inflicting damage on Israel and on American interests worldwide….But while keeping such potential dangers in mind, it is worth remembering that the total number of people killed since 9/11 by al Qaeda or al Qaedalike operatives outside of Afghanistan and Iraq is not much higher than the number who drown in bathtubs in the United States in a single year, and that the lifetime chance of an American being killed by international terrorism is about one in 80,000 -- about the same chance of being killed by a comet or a meteor. Even if there were a 9/11-scale attack every three months for the next five years, the likelihood that an individual American would number among the dead would be two hundredths of a percent (or one in 5,000). Although it remains heretical to say so, the evidence so far suggests that fears of the omnipotent terrorist -- reminiscent of those inspired by images of the 20-foot-tall Japanese after Pearl Harbor or the 20-foot-tall Communists at various points in the Cold War (particularly after Sputnik) -- may have been overblown, the threat presented within the United States by al Qaeda greatly exaggerated. The massive and expensive homeland security apparatus erected since 9/11 may be persecuting some, spying on many, inconveniencing most, and taxing all to defend the United States against an enemy that scarcely exists.

**No timeframe – it would take decades before democracy promotion programs would even begin to be effective**

**Diamond, 00** (Larry Diamond, professor, lecturer, adviser, and author on foreign policy, foreign aid, and democracy. “Democracy Promotion for the Long Haul.” 11-30-00. <http://www.stanford.edu/~ldiamond/papers/AIDpartners.pdf>)

It will not do to promote free and fair elections if we do not effectively promote the other elements of democracy as well. And this is not a short-term agenda. A great danger in political assistance is the temptation to seek a big bang, a breakthrough election, and then phase out and walk way. If we want to be effective in promoting democracy, we have to be prepared to be engaged in countries for a long period of time, in a variety of sectors, and at multiple levels of governance. We have to stick with countries—at least with embattled civil societies—when things get grim, and we to sustain our efforts when a crisis subsides and democrats settle into the protracted, prosaic work of gradually building and reforming democratic institutions. We are swimming against long histories and huge odds. We cannot expect to be able to reverse decades of institutional deformity and decay and to transform deeply entrenched cultures and social structures in a few years. We need a strategic view of democracy promotion for the long term. Ten years on, in most of the countries where we work, we are still in the early stages of the struggle for liberal, accountable, legitimate, and sustainable democracy, in other words, for democratic consolidation.

## Ag

**Cuban urban agriculture isn’t sustainable – economic growth makes labor too expensive**

**Kost, 4** – agricultural economist, Specialty Crops Branch, Economic Research. Service, US Department of Agriculture (William, “CUBAN AGRICULTURE: TO BE OR NOT TO BE ORGANIC?”

<http://www.ascecuba.org/publications/proceedings/volume14/pdfs/kost.pdf>)

Even without an organic approach to food production, is Cuba’s urban gardening system viable? In Cuba, both were an integral part of a common development. That integration is not required. While it is possible to have a high-tech and chemical-based production system in a small-scale gardening environment, it is unlikely to be sustainable at levels sufficient to provide a significant portion of a city’s food needs. Most high-tech and chemical technologies employed respond to economies of scale. Incentives to grow into commercial operations will exist and production will shift away from central cities to areas with less severe constraints on land. Urban gardening systems are also labor-intensive systems. As long as labor is freely available or wages are low elsewhere, urban gardening can afford to utilize high-labor production techniques. As the Cuban economy grows and recovers, the demand for labor in other industries will grow and wages will rise. Because it will be more profitable to work elsewhere, labor would likely be drawn away from the urban gardens. Replacing labor with mechanization could also shift production away from urban locations. Mechanization also generates benefits from economies of scale. Thus, fewer and fewer urban gardens would remain producing for the urban markets.

At the same time, economic growth in Cuba should make commercial agriculture enterprises more profitable, more productive, and better able to supply food to urban markets. Marketing infrastructures should improve. With higher incomes, urban workers would be more able to purchase needed food. Commercial agricultural sources would become increasingly competitive with food from urban gardens, and urban workers would increasingly quit growing their own food. While there might continue to be urban gardens, it is unlikely that they will have a long-term role in providing a substantial portion of urban consumers’ food needs.

**No scenario for environmental destruction causing extinction**

Easterbrook, 3 – Distinguished Fellow, Fulbright Foundation (Gregg, “We’re All Gonna Die!”, Wired Magazine, July, http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/11.07/doomsday.html?pg=1&topic=&topic\_set=)

If we're talking about doomsday - the end of human civilization - many scenarios simply don't measure up. A single nuclear bomb ignited by terrorists, for example, would be awful beyond words, but life would go on. People and machines might converge in ways that you and I would find ghastly, but from the standpoint of the future, they would probably represent an adaptation. Environmental collapse might make parts of the globe unpleasant, but considering that the biosphere has survived ice ages, it wouldn't be the final curtain. Depression, which has become 10 times more prevalent in Western nations in the postwar era, might grow so widespread that vast numbers of people would refuse to get out of bed, a possibility that Petranek suggested in a doomsday talk at the Technology Entertainment Design conference in 2002. But Marcel Proust, as miserable as he was, wrote Remembrance of Things Past while lying in bed.

**Terrorists are not pursuing WMD – it is impractical and against their moral code**

**Parachini, 03** (RAND Policy Analyst, The Washington Quarterly, Putting WMD Terrorism into Perspective, Volume 26 Issue 4, 2003, http://www.twq.com/03autumn/docs/03autumn\_parachini.pdf)

An apparent lack of interest on the part of terrorist groups in acquiring unconventional weapons also helps explain why unconventional weapons attacks are so rare. In the case studies on the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the FARC, and Hamas, political vision, practical military utility, and moral codes all restrained them in part from seeking and using unconventional weapons. In some cases, group leaders indicated to members that the use of chemical or biological weapons would not be legitimate to their struggle. Hamas leader Abu Shannab, for one, stated that the use of poison was contrary to Islamic teachings.22 Although Hamas is a religiously based organization, its struggle to establish a Palestinian state on Israeli territory and to eliminate Israel as a state is decidedly political.

**Cuban farmers are forced into the model out of necessity – there’s no ideological commitment**

**Nelson et al, 8 -** School of Environmental Design and Rural Development, University of Guelph (Erin, “Institutionalizing agroecology: successes and challenges in Cuba” Agriculture and Human Values Journal of the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society © Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2008 10.1007/s10460-008-9156-7)

While this holistic agroecological model of production has received conscious support at the level of agricultural research, development, extension, and policy, the degree to which the Cuban campesinos who participated in the study have internalized ideas about sustainable agriculture is still considerably low. Many demonstrate a desire to return to more conventional methods, and there is a sense that maximizing production is a higher priority for most than honoring commitments to agroecological ideals. While a small number of ideologically committed producers specifically noted a willingness to forgo gains in yield in order to maintain the integrity of ecological production, the majority of the Cuban farmers interviewed based their production decisions on how they could best maximize yields within the framework of economic and political restrictions. As such, they would likely fall into the category of pragmatic organic producers and, should the political and economic conditions in which they live change significantly, there is reason to believe that many would gradually revert from agroecology to conventional farming methods.2 This information suggests that, while policy support can be a useful means of facilitating sustainable agriculture (as many advocates argue), it has limitations and therefore would function best in conjunction with other efforts.

The lack of producer commitment to an agroecological philosophy may represent a significant challenge to the present and future success of the Cuban agroecological movement. Other challenges exist as well. One of the greatest is probably a lack of capital resources, which impedes the progress of agroecological development by limiting the resources available for investment into infrastructure, research, education and extension. However, in spite of these challenges, the Cuban model is still an extremely useful demonstration that viable alternatives to the current conventional agricultural paradigm exist, and that these alternatives can be implemented in a way that helps to ensure environmental sustainability, as well as food security and sovereignty. Cuba’s experience also demonstrates that the state can be a very useful agent in the development of a low-input, locally based, sustainable model of agriculture. As issues such as global climate change and diminishing oil reserves increasingly limit the viability of conventional food production and distribution systems, national governments around the world may need to consider the notion of institutionalizing alternatives. Should this be the case, a great deal could be learned from both the successes and the challenges of the Cuban experience.

**Zero chance the US adopts the Cuban model**

**Pfeiffer, 3** – energy editor for From the Wilderness (Dale, “Cuba-A Hope”, From the Wilderness,

http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/120103\_korea\_2.html)//HA

Resistance to Cuban-style agricultural reform would be particularly stiff in the United States. Agribusiness will not allow all of its holdings and power to be expropriated. Nor is the U.S. government interested in small farms and organic agriculture. The direction of U.S. agriculture is currently towards more advanced technology, greater fossil fuel dependency, and less sustainability. The ability of small farmers and urban gardens to turn a profit is effectively drowned out by the overproduction of agribusiness.

# Block

## 2NC Relations

**OAS cred is unsustainable – distrust and rising alternatives**

**Lee 12** – Senior Production Editor (Brianna, “The Organization of American States,” 4/13/12, http://www.cfr.org/latin-america-and-the-caribbean/organization-american-states/p27945)//SJF

CFR's Shannon K. O'Neil says the OAS's role as a forum for regular, high-level discussions on issues facing the hemisphere is one of its major strengths. Several other analysts have praised the Inter-American Human Rights Commission as a crucial, objective platform for human rights litigation. However, many state leaders and policymakers have also heavily criticized the OAS for its institutional weakness. Christopher Sabatini, senior policy director for the Americas Society/Council of the Americas, says the OAS as a political entity "has declined precipitously in recent years."**¶** However, analysts say, since the Democratic Charter was signed, the organization's consensus around democracy promotion has atrophied.**¶** One of the OAS's major administrative constraints is its consensus model, which requires a unanimous vote to make many of its decisions. As political ideologies have diversified within the region, this has made it difficult for the OAS to make quick, decisive calls to action. The polarization between American states has also led to one of the OAS's other major shortcomings: its many mandates unrelated to the core mission. In 2010, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton urged the OAS to streamline its processes (VOA) from what she called a "proliferation of mandates," noting that the expansion of mandates without proportional expansion of funding made for an "unsustainable" fiscal future.**¶** Election monitoring, one of the OAS's major functions in light of its commitment to democracy, is also restricted by its inability to send election observers without the invitation of state governments. "They can't condemn a country unless that country wants to be condemned," CFR's O'Neil says. Nevertheless, she adds, it has become a norm in many member countries to accept OAS monitors, which she says has been helpful.¶ Within the hemisphere, conflicting views on the OAS's loyalties abound. In the summer 2011 issue of Americas Quarterly, Anthony DePalma sums up the range of mistrust: "Insulza and the OAS itself are widely seen as being bullied by Venezuela (he denies it), as catering to [Venezuelan President] Hugo Chavez's friends in Bolivia, Ecuador and Nicaragua (evidence suggests otherwise) and, strangely, still beholden to the U.S., even though Washington seems to have lost interest."**¶** Chavez has called the OAS a puppet of the United States; at the same time, in July 2011, the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs passed a Republican-sponsored bill to defund the OAS (ForeignPolicy), on the charge that the organization supported anti-democracy regimes in Latin America.¶ Various efforts have been made to create organizations to act as alternatives to the OAS. In 2010, Latin American leaders formed the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), an organization that excludes the United States. Chavez and Ecuadorean President Rafael Correa have expressed the desire for CELAC to eventually supplant the OAS, although Sabatini argues that CELAC is "nothing more than a piece of paper and a dream."¶ Many consider another regional organization, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), to be a useful counterweight to the OAS. UNASUR is regarded by many observers as a means for Brazil to assert its power in the region. O'Neil argues the organization has been able to fulfill some duties that the OAS has been less effective in doing, such as successfully mediating between Ecuador and Colombia during their diplomatic crisis in 2008.¶ Despite the OAS's shortcomings and questions over its continued relevance in the region, there is a strong call to reform the organization rather than eliminate it altogether.

**Their authors use selective definitions of democracy to justify democratic peace theory – they’re empirically wrong**

**Schwartz and Skinner, 99** (Thomas Schwartz, professor of political science at the University of California, Los Angeles. Kiron K. Skinner , W. Glenn Campbell Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. “The Myth of Democratic Pacifism” <http://www.hoover.org/publications/digest/3512216.html>)

What do the facts show? Assuming lax enough tests of democracy, exceptions to democratic pacifism abound. With limited suffrage but the mother of parliaments, Britain fought the United States in 1776 and 1812 and revolutionary France in its comparatively democratic years of 1793 and 1795. In 1848 the United States fought Mexico, not a perfect democracy but a good one for the times: Mexico’s elected Congress chose and deposed President Santa Anna and ratified the terms of peace. In the American Civil War, North and South shared a democratic history of fourscore and several years. One side had slaves, but so had the other, and if they were not democracies there were none. After the Civil War, the hardest cases for democratic pacifism were the Boer and Spanish-American Wars and especially World War I. Woodrow Wilson proclaimed a war for democracy against “Prussian dictatorship,” but that was propaganda. Germany had civil rights, an elected parliament, competing parties, universal male suffrage, and an unparalleled system of social democracy. Although appointed by the kaiser, ministries typically fell when their programs lost parliamentary votes. The kaiser was commander in chief, but so was the king of the Belgians, and so today is the king of Spain, lauded for using that power to defend democracy. On the other side, Britain and France ruled most of their subjects with bullets, not ballots. Britain still had a potent House of Lords, and, unlike Germany, the United States disenfranchised a large minority of adult male citizens: Their color was wrong. Our point is not that Germany was a perfect democracy or the United States no democracy at all, only that democratic pacifists who microscopically examine Germany for nondemocratic bacteria do not subject the Allies to similar scrutiny: Either World War I was between democracies or there were none. We can exclude those and other cases (the U.S.-French Naval War in 1797, Roman Republic versus France in 1849, Franco-Prussian War in 1870, War of the Pacific in 1879, Israel versus Lebanon in 1948 and 1967, United States versus Guatemala in 1954, Ecuador versus Peru in 1981 and 1995, Armenia versus Azerbaijian in 1992, recent Balkan wars, and so on) with tougher tests of democracy, including constitutional longevity. That pretty much shrinks the democratic category to the Cold War democracies, to those states that have continuously enjoyed high-class democratic regimes since soon after World War II. Indeed there have been no wars between them. But mutual democracy is not the best explanation. Pick two states and a year at random and most likely they did not fight then. More important, most of the Cold War democracies formed a North Atlantic cluster riven by no deep disputes but menaced by the Soviet Empire, which did nothing to lure any away. That made them do two things: aim their weapons eastward and pool their forces in a security organization—one strong enough to enforce peace between them if need be. Of the high-class democracies outside NATO, some (Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland) were neutrally clamped between NATO and the Soviet Empire, others (Costa Rica, India, Japan, Australia, New Zealand) lay far from sister democracies, and the remaining few (maybe Ireland, San Marino) were tabbies nestled next to tigers. In their heroic defense of democratic pacifism, political scientists Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett use statistical methods to argue that these explanations are not enough: Mutual democracy still has some effect on mutual peace when one controls for “alliance” and other factors. But alliances are a dime a dozen. No mere alliance, NATO was an armed and integrated organization. To control for “alliance” and find that NATO and our other factors do not fully explain peace between the Cold War democracies is like controlling for “passage of laws” and finding that the Social Security Act does not fully explain why retirees mysteriously received checks after 1935 but not before. Adopt a tough enough test of democracy and democratic pacifism applies to naught but the Cold War democracies. Relax the test just a bit and the doctrine becomes false. But those democracies were either so far apart, so effectively neutralized in the vice jaws of NATO and the Soviet Empire, or so integrally organized against a common foe that the fifty-year peace between them—virtually the whole case for democratic pacifism—has better explanations than the magic of mutual democracy. Yes, “magic.” For no one has plausibly said how mutual democracy blocks war. Democratic pacifism is not the first doctrine to come into vogue among intellectuals, though logic and history point away. Its initial appeal is understandable: If true, it reconciles principle and prudence, gratifying the soft of heart and hard of head in one fell swoop. But true it is not. Why, then, has it survived scrutiny by scholars and statesmen who should know better? The answer we think is the dual use Americans make of the word democracy. It has a descriptive use, marking off states that prize liberty and have popular elections to choose and change governments. But it is also a term of praise, used to distinguish good guys (like us) from bad guys (like them). Since aggressors cannot be democracies (“good guy” use), democracies (descriptive use) cannot be aggressors, can they?

## 2NC Ag

**Cuban ag isn’t sustainable**

Thompson and Stephens, 12 – \* Ph.D. Curriculum and Education Director @ Duke University AND \*\* Marian Cheek Jackson Center

(Charles D. and Alexander, “Visions for Sustainable Agriculture in Cuba and the United States: Changing Minds and Models through Exchange”, Southern States, March 22 2013, http://www.southernspaces.org/2012/visions-sustainable-agriculture-cuba-and-united-states-changing-minds-and-models-through-exchan)//HA

Following the Cuban Revolution (1953–59), the Soviet Union’s (USSR) agricultural imperatives drove the island toward state-run farms, marginalizing many family run operations. The breakup of the USSR in 1990 spelled the end of Soviet agricultural influence but intensified Cuban food shortages. Cuba began to look within for solutions, finding indigenous knowledge and encouraging local innovation. Exaggerated praise for developments in the country’s sustainable agriculture belies the reality that Cuba is no utopia. Popular descriptions often oversimplify the narrative of Cuba’s sustainable agriculture. For example, the website of the Durham, North Carolina, non-profit NEEM (Natural Environment Ecological Management) features a narrative sketch that labels the rise of organic garden collectives in Cuban cities "the urban agriculture miracle."5 Others have suggested that we can expect "an ecological agriculture" in Cuba’s future.6¶ In much sustainable agriculture praise of Cuba, we do not hear that the country (like the U.S.) has confinement hog and chicken houses, that major U.S. food conglomerates are already selling vast quantities of grain and other products there, or that the embargo on trade with Cuba does not apply to U.S. agribusiness. We are not told that thousands work in small farming because they have no other option. ¶ Agricultural work is popular in Cuba, in part, because state-supported income is drying up for hundreds of thousands of wage earners and there is often nowhere else to turn but to small-scale farms and gardens. Yet much of Cuba’s former sugarcane land, once a volatile but powerful economic life-force, is idle and in poor condition. Even with its admirable innovations in sustainable and organic farming, Cuba’s domestic agricultural producers cannot meet the food needs of the island’s population; there is a real sense of food insecurity. Looking for food (in dollar stores, on the black market, legally), is a major pre-occupation for much of the population. Cuba imports at least 80 percent of its food, with much of it coming from its largest trading partners—China and Venezuela. This is hardly a sustainable scenario, and while there does not appear to be starvation in Cuba, food shortages remain a problem, even as the government’s meager food rationing is fading.7 However, household food insecurity is also on the rise in the U.S. today. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture at least 14.5% of U.S. households were food insecure at some time during the year in 2010, up from 11% in 2005.

## 2NC Neoliberalism

**Turns case and shuts down deliberation—implementation focus is reductionist and displaces agency—our argument is that the framework for analysis is itself a political choice**

**Adaman and Madra, 12** – economic professor at Bogazici University in Istanbul and a PhD from UMass-Amherst, economics professor (Fikret and Yahya, Bogazici University, “Understanding Neoliberalism as Economization: The Case of the Ecology”, http://www.econ.boun.edu.tr/content/wp/EC2012\_04.pdf)//VP

States as agents of economization

Neoliberal reason is therefore not simply about market expansion and the withdrawal of the ¶ welfare state, but more broadly about reconfiguring the state and its functions so that the state ¶ governs its subjects through a filter of economic incentives rather than direct coercion. In ¶ other words, supposed subjects of the neoliberal state are not citizen-subjects with political and ¶ social rights, but rather economic subjects who are supposed to comprehend (hence, ¶ calculative) and respond predictably (hence, calculable) to economic incentives (and ¶ disincentives). There are mainly two ways in which states under the sway of neoliberal reason ¶ aim to manipulate the conduct of their subjects. The first is through markets, or market-like ¶ incentive-compatible institutional mechanisms that economic experts design based on the ¶ behaviorist assumption that economic agents respond predictably to economic (but not ¶ necessarily pecuniary) incentives, to achieve certain discrete objectives. The second involves a ¶ revision of the way the bureaucracy functions. Here, the neoliberal reason functions as an ¶ internal critique of the way bureaucratic dispositifs organize themselves: The typical modus¶ operandi of this critique is to submit the bureaucracy to efficiency audits and subsequently ¶ advocate the subcontracting of various functions of the state to the private sector either by fullblown privatization or by public-private partnerships. While in the first case citizen-subjects are treated solely as economic beings, in the second case ¶ the state is conceived as an enterprise, i.e., a production unit, an economic agency whose ¶ functions are persistently submitted to various forms of economic auditing, thereby suppressing ¶ all other (social, political, ecological) priorities through a permanent economic criticism. ¶ Subcontracting, public-private partnerships, and privatization are all different mechanisms ¶ through which contemporary governments embrace the discourses and practices of ¶ contemporary multinational corporations. In either case, however, economic policy decisions ¶ (whether they involve macroeconomic or microeconomic matters) are isolated from public ¶ debate and deliberation, and treated as matters of technocratic design and implementation, ¶ while regulation, to the extent it is warranted, is mostly conducted by experts outside political ¶ life—the so-called independent regulatory agencies. In the process, democratic participation in ¶ decision-making is either limited to an already highly-commodified, spectacularized, mediatized ¶ electoral politics, or to the calculus of opinion polls where consumer discontent can be ¶ managed through public relations experts. As a result, a highly reductionist notion of economic ¶ efficiency ends up being the only criteria with which to measure the success or failure of such ¶ decisions. Meanwhile, individuals with financial means are free to provide support to those in ¶ need through charity organizations or corporations via their social responsibility channels. Here, two related caveats should be noted to sharpen the central thrust of the argument¶ proposed in this chapter. First, the separation of the economic sphere from the social-ecological whole is not an ontological given, but rather a political project. By treating social¶ subjectivity solely in economic terms and deliberately trying to insulate policy-makingfrom ¶ popular politics and democratic participation, the neoliberal project of economization makes a ¶ political choice. Since there are no economic decisions without a multitude of complex and ¶ over-determined social consequences, the attempt to block (through economization) all ¶ political modes of dissent, objection and negotiation available (e.g., “voice”) to those who are ¶ affected from the said economic decisions is itself a political choice. In short, economization is ¶ itself a political project. Yet, this drive towards technocratization and economization—which constitutes the second ¶ caveat—does not mean that the dirty and messy distortions of politics are gradually being ¶ removed from policy-making. On the contrary, to the extent that policy making is being ¶ insulated from popular and democratic control, it becomes exposed to the “distortions” of a ¶ politics of rent-seeking and speculation—ironically, as predicted by the representatives of the ¶ Virginia School. Most public-private partnerships are hammered behind closed doors of a ¶ bureaucracy where states and multinational corporations divide the economic rent among ¶ themselves. The growing concentration of capital at the global scale gives various industries ¶ (armament, chemical, health care, petroleum, etc.—see, e.g., Klein, 2008) enormous amount ¶ of leverage over the governments (especially the developing ones). It is extremely important, ¶ however, to note that this tendency toward rent-seeking is not a perversion of the neoliberal ¶ reason. For much of neoliberal theory (in particular, for the Austrian and the Chicago schools), ¶ private monopolies and other forms of concentration of capital are preferred to government ¶ control and ownership. And furthermore, for some (such as the Virginia and the Chicago ¶ schools), rent-seeking is a natural implication of the “opportunism” of human beings, even ¶ though neoliberal thinkers disagree whether rent-seeking is essentially economically efficient (as ¶ in “capture” theories of the Chicago school imply) or inefficient (as in rent-seeking theories of ¶ the Virginia school imply) (Madra and Adaman, 2010). This reconfiguration of the way modern states in advanced capitalist social formations govern ¶ the social manifests itself in all domains of public and social policy-making. From education to ¶ health, and employment to insurance, there is an observable shift from rights-based policymaking forged through public deliberation and participation, to policy-making based solely on ¶ economic viability where policy issues are treated as matters of technocratic calculation. In this ¶ regard, as noted above, the treatment of subjectivity solely in behaviorist terms of economic ¶ incentives functions as the key conceptual choice that makes the technocratization of public ¶ policy possible. Neoliberal thinking and practices certainly have a significant impact on the ¶ ecology. The next section will focus on the different means through which various forms of ¶ neoliberal governmentality propose and actualize the economization of the ecology.

**Their epistemology is flawed – ultra-right or left parties influence the violence their evidence indicates – causes violence**

**Szentes, 08** – Professor Emeritus of the Corvinus University of Budapest and member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Tamas, “Globalisation and prospects of the world society,” CENTRAL EUROPEAN POLITICAL SCIENCE, Vol. 9, pp 5-6, http://cepsr.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ATT81762.pdf#page=9)//SG

It is to be noted thatthe neo-liberal (and monetarist) economic policy, which has spread in the last few decades all over the world, hardly corresponds to those principles and considerations outlined by the theoretical “fathers” of economic liberalism. The latter (from Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and other classical economists to Alfred Marshall, the greatest representative of neo-classical economics) alwaysemphasised the protection of the interest of the community versus selfish individuals, the responsibility of governments in public health, education, culture,and for taking care of the poor, and also urged efforts to improve the living and cultural level of the working majority.7 Quite contrary to their views, todaythe neo-liberal policy-makers or their advisors wish to make all the fields of social life, including education, health, culture and science, subject to spontaneous market forces, reject the economic role and responsibility of the State in correcting the unfavourable social effects of the market,and oppose income-redistribution in favour of the poor strata, as well as international financial assistance. 8. The views on the effects of globalisation are extremely divergent. Neo-liberals, in general, attribute favourable effects to globalisation, such as the tendency of equalisation of factor incomes, thus also national income levels, and harmonisation of business conditions, economic growth and equilibrium, or in politics: democratisation, etc. They may refer to those naïve and apologetic theses still appearing in most of the standard textbooks of “International Economics”. Many others, including scholars with critical views on world capitalism, and numerous political activists belonging to right-wing nationalist or radical ultra-leftist circles, strongly oppose globalisation.The "anti-globalisation" movements organised by the latter share the belief that the process of globalisation can be stopped by demonstrations, street protests and disorder. They are in a sense similar to those movements in the past, protesting against mechanization(and manifested in the machine-breaking actions of "Luddites"), which blamed the introduction of machines for causing mass unemployment, i.e. identified the effect of technical development with the consequences of the given circumstances under which it was making progress. As it turned out,the growth of unemployment does not necessarily follow from the use of machines, and the efforts to stop mechanisation were doomed to fail. Very oftensuch disequalising effects and harmful consequences are attributed to globalisation itself, as actually following from the given circumstances, i.e. from the prevailing order of structural and institutional relations, international and intra-national systems of the world, under which globalisation has been proceeding. No doubt, insofar asglobalisation is proceeding under the conditions of large-scale inequalities between partners, and no counter- balancing mechanism, counteracting measures of appropriate institutions exist (as yet), it tends to reinforce inequalities and asymmetries of interdependence between those involved. However, demonstrations and resistance campaigns can by no means stop (at best, may slow down only) the process of globalisation. What may actually follow from both the above-mentioned biased approaches is the diversion again of the attention away from the need to changethe prevailing order of the world system, which is burdened by unequal and disequalising conditions.

**Not sustainable- the aff props up the neoliberalist system that organizes social relations around a market model that’s driving the planet toward irreversible collapse**

**De Angelis, 12** – Professor of Political Economy and Development at the University of East London (Massimo, “Crises, Movements and Commons,” Borderlands E-Journal, Vol. 11, No. 2, p. http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol11no2\_2012/deangelis\_crises.pdf)//VP

The world is today traversed by several crises, which raises the pressing question of their solutions. The recurrent and intensified crises of precarity and livelihoods, of environmental degradation, climate change and of social justice, all point to a global context that would require a radical reconfiguration of social relations, a new world, new social systems articulating our production in common. But how and whether these crises will be an opportunity to embark on this journey of transformation of social reproduction is not clear nor is it given. While social contestations are gaining momentum in a variety of theatres and contexts, it is clear that neoliberal capital seems adamant that it can push through a new phase of global governance without questioning the basic structures and policies that have precipitated the financial crisis in 2008 with the consequent intensification of all other crises. Indeed, not only the remaining bundle of social entitlements and rights are under threat under intensifying austerity policies around the world. There are also clear signs that the multimillion dollar operation that rescued banks in 2008 is now being institutionalised into the DNA of modern neoliberal capital governance. In Europe, for example, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) is being set up as a permanent rescue-funding programme to succeed the temporary ad hoc mechanisms set up in the rescue operation of the financial system. Not only ‘the granting of any required financial assistance under the mechanism will be made subject to strict conditionality’ (European Council 2012). Also, upon joining the mechanism, the countries involved will be obliged to contribute funding to the rescue package. Neoliberalism has never been about the withdrawal of the state from welfare, but the shift in the modality of welfare from the poor to the rich. In the first part of the neoliberal period, from the late 1970s, this amounted to slash in social services, privatisation, cut in higher tax rates and subsidies to exporters and incentives to foreign investors. In the middle part from the mid 1990s it was all about finding ways to govern the wasteland created and the conflict generated therein. After the attempt to incite the masses to work for the country in the war on terror period (from 2001), in this last fourth phase after the crisis of 2008, capital demands that public money is functionally funneled into the rescue of banks and the maintenance of the disciplinary function of finance without which modern capitalism could not operate. In the early 1980s we were told to look up at the world of finance for inspiration on how ‘betterment’ for all could be achieved with rigor and entrepreneurial risk taking. In the early 2010s we are told to pay with rigor the austerity necessary to compensate the failed risk taking of the 1%, otherwise the entire paper castle would fall, with us inside. And we are told to accept this is the de-facto norm of our systemic interaction with one another. Yet, in spite of waiving the safety net for the financial system, capital seems to be at an impossible crossroad. On one hand, it needs nonfinancial growth to buffer, accommodate and decompose struggles, and, at the same time, to fulfill its drive for accumulation and allow some debt to be repaid. On the other hand, however, today more than ever, growth can only exacerbate the contradictions at the basis of these struggles, if only because there cannot be any overall growth with simultaneous reduction in greenhouse emissions, nor without an intensification of existing inequalities also caused by the operations of current financial systems that governments are so eager to rescue. This crossroad is not avoided if instead of a future scenario of growth we postulate one of stagnation or de-growth. If on one hand this scenario would somehow mitigate the pressures on climate change, in so far as capitalist relations remain dominant in articulating and valuing social co-operation, it would do so with heavy social costs and at a likely intensification of precarity, social injustice and social conflict against these. In both scenarios, and given the historical experiences in other crises and looking at current dynamics, we can postulate the development of four phenomena. First, the growth of struggles of different sectors within the global society throwing a spanner in the wheel and resisting the reduction in rights and entitlements necessary for further neoliberal governance of the crisis, against debt and demanding some form of re-distributive justice to the state. This is what we will refer to as social movements. Second, the growth of collective self-help solutions to the problems of social reproduction faced by communities. This corresponds to what we call the development of the commons. Third, the development and refinement of capital’s commons cooptation strategies, or what I have elsewhere (De Angelis 2012) called commons fix. Fourth, the development and refinement of strategies of repression of struggles and enclosures of commons. In this paper I will not discuss in detail these four postulated developments, but problematise the interrelation among the first three for the purpose of contributing to the debate over the establishment of alternatives to capitalism.

Indeed, what underpins this analysis is an attempt to answer, or at least develop a framework with which to start to answer an important naïve question. The role of naïve questions, Socrates taught us, is to problematise the systems of knowledge at the basis of our certainties, of our mental schemes through which we give meaning to the world around us and thus intervene in it. In this paper I want to address very big and naïve questions, in fact, meta-questions at the basis of what we may call a critical theory of the commons. How can social movements and struggles change the world? And how can they do it in the direction of a far better place for all (or at least the ‘99%’), more convivial and cohesive, socially economically and environmentally just, where dignity, peace, freedom, autonomy, solidarity, conviviality, equality are not so much articles of faith, but guiding values of an orienting compass of ongoing social transformation? I do not intend nor aspire to provide a firm answer, as this can really be generated through praxis. Here I only want to discuss few points that I believe must be considered as part of the answer.

**Perm gets coopted and is a performative attempt to close off dialogue and preserve an oppressive economic foundation.**

Neubauer, 12 – PhD Student at the School of Communications at Simon Fraser University (Robert J, “Dialogue, Monologue, or Something in Between? Neoliberal Think Tanks in the Americas,” http://ijoc.org/ojs/index.php/ijoc/article/viewfile/1481/789)//VP

As Mato (1997, 2003, 2005, 2008) notes, transnational networks are rarely entirely unified, as elites emerge from different nations with their own institutions, histories, cultures, and political priorities. It is thereby telling that one Dialogue publication from 2009 states that “our membership is politically diverse,” including both “Republicans and Democrats from the United States,” as well as supporters of various “parties and political perspectives from elsewhere in the Americas” (IAD, 2009). This diverse ideological and regional representation may account for the fact that many of the IAD’s Latin directors do not consider themselves neoliberals, with some serving in nominally social democratic governments. As President of Chile, Lagos oversaw the establishment of national unemployment insurance and expansions in public education (ICG, n.d.), while Foxley has argued that states “must develop some kind of social protection for those who are left out of the process of globalization” (Public Broadcasting Service [PBS], 2001). Given this divergence from neoliberal orthodoxy, it is plausible that the Dialogue aims to smooth out tensions and establish a rolling consensus around a reform agenda. This may be made easier in that virtually all Dialogue directors emerge from the economic and political institutions of the transnational neoliberal bloc and state apparatus. Tellingly, there neither seems to be labor representatives nor any members of the New Left among the IAD’s Latin directorate. Therefore, it should be unsurprising that even the Dialogue’s “social democrats” seem to have embraced the overall project of regional neoliberalization. For instance, Foxley has come to “appreciate the strength and the power of the market,” even grudgingly commending Pinochet’s economic program for “deregulating the markets” and “opening up the economy” (PBS, 2001). Regardless of occasional social democratic rhetoric, directors have been intimately involved with processes of neoliberal restructuring and transnational state consolidation. Many have worked in top-level posts with neoliberal IFIs: Director David de Ferranti served as a World Bank Vice-President (Results for Development Institute, n.d.); Foxley was a Governor of the World Bank and the IADB (CGD, n.d.); and Iglesias served as President of the IADB (n.d.) for 17 years. Other directors have been involved with neoliberal privatizations. As President of Brazil, Cardoso oversaw the most sweeping privatization program in the country’s history (Epstein, 1998; View from RBC, 2012). He was instrumental in the 1997 privatization of CVRD, now the world’s second largest mining corporation (and a key holding of Dialogue funder AIG). Cardoso also oversaw the 1998 break-up of Telebras, Latin America's biggest telecommunications firm. Board members have also facilitated transnational state formation through the negotiation and implementation of regional free trade agreements. As president of Chile, Lagos signed “expansive trade agreements with the United States, the European Union and South Korea” (Armington, Lettieri, & Slim, 2005); Iglesias chaired the Uruguay Round of GATT negotiations that gave birth to the WTO (IADB, 2010); and Hills served as chief U.S. trade negotiator during the negotiations for NAFTA and the Uruguay Round, at one time declaring that the United States would open up foreign markets “with a crowbar, if necessary” (Uchitelle, 1990).

**Opposing the embargo is ACCEPTANCE of neoliberal dependency and REJECTION of anti-imperialism**

Haron, 13 (Carleigh, Trinity College, Colonial Trajectory As a Determinant of Economic Development in Cuba and Puerto Rico: A Comparison, <http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1295&context=theses>)

As a newly, fully independent nation with full sovereignty, Cuba had a hard time breaking traditional production patterns of its colonial past and embraced the exploitive sugar economy it developed under colonialism. Albeit, continuing the patterns of monoculture made the island vulnerable, the cushion of sugar production invited Soviet support and allowed the revolutionary government to wield sufficient power to spurn their former (informal) colonizer, the U.S. This failure impeded development and equality in terms of food, exactly what the revolution aimed not to do. With the imposition of the U.S.’ trade embargo and a drop in imports, Cuba scrambled for a way to secure resources. Fortunately, its new ideological character allowed it to forge new trade relations through socialist division of labor, COMECON. With Soviet support, Cuba became the most well-developed Caribbean island; even ranking above the U.S. in the 1989 Physical Quality of Life Index by the Overseas Development Council (11th versus 15th). 124 In this trade arrangement the socialist Soviet nations provided a new market for Cuban sugar to be sold in, reinforcing its status as a monoculture export producer, though now the state owned all elements of production instead of foreign corporations. For three decades, 1959-1989, a whopping 85% of Cuba’s trade was conducted with the Soviet Bloc. 125 It seems that although the revolution intended to break with the past, Cubans seemed to forget that part of the transformation of society should have included restructuring it’s traditional trade dependency, which left Cuban hunger not quite satisfied.

**It’s try or die for the alt—individual resistance is crucial.**

**Makwana 6** (Rajesh, STWR, 23rd November 06, <http://www.stwr.org/globalization/neoliberalism-and-economic-globalization.html>)//VP

Conclusion

Neoliberal ideology embodies an outdated, selfish model of economy. It has been formulated by the old imperial powers and adopted by economically dominant nations. Given the state of the global trade and finance structures, wealthy countries can maintain their economic advantage by pressurizing developing countries to adopt neo-liberal policies – even though they themselves do not. Understandably, many commentators have described this process as economic colonialism.

The ultimate goal of neoliberal economic globalization is the removal of all barriers to commerce, and the privatization of all available resources and services. In this scenario, public life will be at the mercy of volatile market forces, and the extracted profits will benefit the few.

The major failures of these policies are now common knowledge. Many countries, particularly in Latin America, are now openly defying the foreign corporate rule that was forced upon them by the international financial institutions. In these countries, economic ideologies based on competition and self interest are gradually being replaced by policies based on cooperation and the sharing of resources. Changing well-established political and economic structures is a difficult challenge, but pressure for justice is bubbling upward from the public. Change is crucial if the global public is to manage the essentials for life and ensure that all people have access to them as their human right.

## 1NR Politics

**Timeframe – failure to raise the debt ceiling causes quick unraveling of the U.S. and global economy – collapse before November**

Sahadi 9/10 (Jeanne, “Debt ceiling 'X date' could hit Oct. 18”, <http://money.cnn.com/2013/09/10/news/economy/debt-ceiling-bills-coming-due/index.html>)//VP

A new analysis by a think tank shows that **Washington's drop-dead deadline for the debt ceiling could hit as soon as Oct. 18**.¶ Estimating exactly when the Treasury Department will be unable to pay all the bills coming due if Congress fails to raise the nation's legal borrowing limit is notoriously difficult.¶ That's why, in an analysis released Tuesday, the Bipartisan Policy Center put the "X date" between Oct. 18 and Nov. 5.¶ Treasury Secretary Jack Lew has warned that **by mid-October the agency will have only $50 billion in cash on top of incoming revenue.**¶That may sound like a lot. But, as the Bipartisan Policy Center details, **it won't last very long**.¶ If the "X" date turns out to be Oct. 18, Treasury would run about $106 billion short of the money it owes between then and Nov.15. That means it wouldn't be able to pay the equivalent of a third of all the bills due during that period.¶ Here's why: Treasury handles about 80 million payments a month. Those payments are not evenly spaced out so on some days more is owed than on others. And the revenue flowing into federal coffers is unpredictable and varies from day to day.¶ Payments include IRS refunds, Social Security and veterans benefits, Medicare reimbursements for doctors and hospitals, bond interest owed investors, payments to contractors and paychecks for federal workers and military personnel.¶ If Congress fails to act in time, Treasury will have to make difficult -- and legally questionable -- decisions about who should get paid and who should be stiffed. It may decide to pay some bills in full and on time and not others.¶ Or it may decide to delay all payments due on a given day until it has sufficient revenue on hand to pay in full. in a Treasury Inspector General's report that this might be the most plausible and least harmful approach.¶ But under that scenario, **delays would grow over time from a day or two to several weeks**. For example, the payments due to seniors, veterans and active duty military personnel on Nov. 1 wouldn't go out until Nov. 13.¶ In any case, the expectation is that the agency will try to prioritize payments to bond investors over everyone else, lest the financial markets go haywire. Politically, of course, that carries risk, said Steve Bell, the senior director of the Bipartisan Policy Center's economic policy project.¶ "There's a political danger you'll be accused of paying bondholders over Social Security recipients," Bell said.¶ On both Oct. 23 and Nov. 14, $12 billion in Social Security benefits come due, while another $25 billion comes due on Nov. 1, according to the analysis.¶ Meanwhile, on Oct. 24, Treasury will have to roll over $57 billion in outstanding debt and another $115 billion on Oct. 31. Normally that's not a problem, because U.S. Treasury auctions attract a lot of buyers willing to purchase bonds at low rates.¶ But if those rollover dates come after the "X" date, and **the perception is that the United States is defaulting on some of its obligations, Treasury could have trouble finding enough buyers or investors could demand higher interest rates**.¶ The debt ceiling is currently set at $16.7 trillion. That ceiling was reached on May 19, and ever since Treasury has been using a host of special measures to keep the country's borrowing at or below that ceiling. But those measures will be exhausted by mid-October, according to Treasury.¶ If lawmakers want to raise the ceiling enough to get past the 2014 midterm elections in November, the Bipartisan Policy Center estimates they will have to raise it by $1.1 trillion to $17.8 trillion. To top of page

**b.) TURNS CASE – debt default means the plan would be delayed or under-funded – fiat only means the plan passes**

Goldfarb 1-1 [Zachary A. Goldfarb 1-1-2013 Washington Post “‘Fiscal cliff’ deal does little to tame threats from debt ceiling, high unemployment rates” http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/fiscal-cliff/fiscal-cliff-deal-does-little-to-tame-threats-from-debt-ceiling-high-unemployment-rates/2013/01/01/8e4c14aa-5393-11e2-bf3e-76c0a789346f\_story.html]//VP

Leaving the fate of the debt ceiling up in the air will cause anxiety among businesses and individuals, potentially crimping hiring, investing and consumer spending.¶ In many ways, the threat of default in two months is a more serious risk than the Jan. 1 fiscal cliff deadline. If Congress does not increase the debt ceiling, the government will quickly run out of ways to pay the nation’s bills and make interest payments on the nation’s outstanding debt. Any failure by the government to meet its financial obligations could be seen as a default, shaking world financial markets, given the special role that U.S. government bonds play in the global economy.¶ And while a default would be all but certain to push the economy into recession, growth is likely to be slow — and job-market improvement slight — even without such a cataclysmic event. The unemployment rate, which stands at 7.7 percent, is not expected to fall below 7.4 percent by the end of this year, and not below 6 percent until at least 2016 or later.

**Turns disease—saps resources to stop it**

**Silk 93** (Leonard Silk Winter 1993 (prof. of economics @ Pace U.), Foreign Affairs, Dangers of Slow Growth)//VP

Like the Great Depression, the current economic slump has fanned the fires of nationalist, ethnic and religious hatred around the world. Economic hardship is not the only cause of these social and political pathologies, but it aggravates all of them, and in turn they feed back on economic development. They also undermine efforts to deal with such global problems as environmental pollution, the production and trafficking of drugs, crime, sickness, famine, AIDS and other plagues. Growth will not solve all of these problems by itself. But economic growth – and growth alone – creates the additional resources that make it possible to achieve such fundamental goals as higher living standards, national and collective security, a healthier environment, and more liberal and open economies and societies.

**1) GOP will cave because they can’t get Obamacare repealed**

Giroux 9/19

Greg, Bloomberg, Senate Budget Chief Sees Republican Yield on Debt Lifting, 9/19/13, http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-09-19/senate-budget-chief-sees-republican-yield-on-debt-lifting.html

Republicans seeking to curb President Barack Obama’s health-care law probably will capitulate to demands from Democrats to enact a “clean” bill raising the nation’s debt ceiling, the Senate’s top Democratic budget writer said.¶ “I see no deals on the debt ceiling,” Senator Patty Murray of Washington state, who leads the Budget Committee, said in an interview on Bloomberg Television’s “Political Capital with Al Hunt” airing this weekend.¶ “The downside of not paying our bills is our credit-rating tanks,” Murray said. “That affects every family, every business, every community. It affects Main Street. It affects Wall Street.”¶ Murray said she also expects Republicans to relent on their demands for stripping spending from Obama’s health plan as part of action on a spending bill needed to keep the government running after Sept. 30.¶ Republicans led by House Speaker John Boehner of Ohio have clashed with Obama over the debt ceiling, with the lawmakers demanding changes to spending programs as a condition of raising the $16.7 trillion federal borrowing limit.¶ Republicans “will come together with some mishmash policy of everything in the bag they’ve ever promised” to anti-tax Tea Party activists, though “they haven’t been able to get the votes for anything yet,” said Murray, 62, fourth-ranking Democrat in the Senate’s leadership.¶ Federal Reserve¶ As Federal Reserve Chairman Ben S. Bernanke nears the end of his second term in January, Murray said there’s “a very good chance” that Obama will nominate Fed vice chairman Janet Yellen to succeed him.¶ Yellen is “very experienced” and “certainly understands that we need to create jobs, the kind of economic climate that brings stability to families in my home state and across the country,” Murray said.¶ Yellen also would be a “historic choice,” as the first woman to lead the U.S. central bank, Murray said.¶ Yellen became the front-runner to lead the Fed after Larry Summers withdrew from consideration Sept. 15 amid opposition from some Democratic senators. Murray was among the one-third of the 54-member Senate Democratic caucus who signed a July letter urging Obama to appoint Yellen as Bernanke’s successor.¶ The Senate will have to confirm Obama’s nominee.¶ Republicans led by Boehner have said they won’t negotiate with Obama over raising the debt ceiling. The House will act on a debt-ceiling measure that would also reduce the deficit, promote growth and delay Obama’s health-care law by one year, Boehner said at a press conference yesterday.¶ Reduce Deficit¶ “If you’re going to raise the debt ceiling, you should work to reduce the deficit and grow the economy at the same time,” Boehner said.¶ The House plans to vote today on the stopgap spending bill that would finance federal government operations through Dec. 15 while denying money for the president’s health-care overhaul. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid has called that plan “dead on arrival.”¶ Obama would veto the bill because the legislation “advances a narrow ideological agenda that threatens our economy,” the president’s Office of Management and Budget said yesterday in a statement of administration policy.¶ The Democratic-run Senate won’t pass any bill curbing Obama’s top domestic policy achievement, Murray said.¶ ‘Helping Millions’¶ Republicans are demanding to repeal a health-care law “that is already in place, that’s been upheld by the Supreme Court and is helping millions of Americans,” she said.¶ Treasury Secretary Jacob J. Lew told Congress in a letter last month that lawmakers need to raise the borrowing limit by mid-October to remove the threat of a government default.¶ A government shutdown and a failure to raise the debt limit “could have very serious consequences for the financial markets and for the economy,” Bernanke said Sept. 18 as he announced that the Federal Open Market Committee wouldn’t reduce the $85 billion pace of its monthly securities buying.¶ Bernanke “sees what I see right now,” Murray said, that the economy “is starting to get stable again, but there’s a lot of uncertainty around it.”

**2) PC is key – business pressures**

Cowan and Lowder 9/13 Richard and David, Reuters, Analysis: House Republicans go for broke in fiscal battles, 9/13/13, http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/09/13/us-usa-congress-debt-ceiling-analysis-idUSBRE98C04620130913

There are risks for Democrats and Obama too. While polling results showed the public more upset with Republicans then Obama after the "fiscal cliff" fight that led to across-the-board budget cuts, Obama's Gallup approval rating started on a downward trend then from which it has yet to recover, with other polls suggesting that Americans hold all parties in Washington as well as the president responsible for "gridlock."¶ With the deadlines fast-approaching, the maneuvering is well underway.¶ The White House announced that Obama would speak to the Business Roundtable group of big-company chief executives next week. White House spokesman Jay Carney did not offer any details about what Obama will say, but he has used business groups in the past to pressure Congress to avoid fiscal brinkmanship.¶ "We will never accept anything that delays or defunds" Obamacare, Carney stressed again on Thursday.¶ In the U.S. Capitol, the top four Republican and Democratic leaders of the Senate and House met in the office of House of Representative Speaker John Boehner on Thursday to try to plot out a happy ending to their government spending and debt limit challenges. Afterward, Boehner told reporters "there are a million options that are being discussed by a lot of people."¶ But while Republicans control the House, Boehner does not control Republicans.¶ HIGH-STAKES MANEUVER¶ The intra-party fight on such a high-stakes maneuver as coupling Obamacare changes to the debt limit hike is seen as pushing negotiations on the legislation right up to the October or November deadline.

**Turn – thumpers divert the public’s attention- not Obama’s**

**Davis 5/22** (Julie Hirschfeld Davis; May 22, 2013; “Obama Probes Create Immigration Magic as Bill Advances”; Bloomberg; http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-05-23/obama-probes-create-immigration-magic-as-bill-advances.html)//KDUB

The trio of investigations causing headaches for President Barack Obama’s administration has also provided a honeymoon period for the marquee element of his domestic agenda: revising immigration laws. The congressional probes into various government agencies diverted attention at a critical time, allowing the Senate Judiciary Committee a respite from the spotlight as it reached critical compromises on the measure and approved it on a bipartisan 13-5 vote on May 21. The bill would allow the estimated 11 million immigrants living in the U.S. without authorization a chance at citizenship. “It’s like magic -- you distract the audience while the real trick is being done -- and I think right now, while Americans focus on President Obama’s unending difficulties, it’s good news for the Gang of Eight working on immigration,” said Republican strategist Alex Castellanos, referring to the four Republicans and four Democrats who crafted the bill.

**No Syria focus – every credible indicator points to debt ceiling focus for Obama’s PC**

Sink 9/12 – reporter for the Hill (Justin, “Obama signals shift back to economic focus”, The Hill, September 12th, 2013, http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/economy/321793-obama-signals-shift-back-to-focus-on-the-economy)//VP

The White House is signaling it wants to shift back to the economy after two weeks in which the Syrian crisis has dominated President Obama’s schedule and workload.¶ Obama will be “focusing” on issues related to the economy in the coming weeks, White House press secretary Jay Carney said Wednesday at his daily briefing.¶ He said the president wants to push forward with economic policies that the White House believes will grow the middle class.¶ Obama himself in his prime-time address to the nation Tuesday on Syria said voters wanted him focused on the economy and not on Syria. Public support for a military intervention in Syria is low.¶ “I know Americans want all of us in Washington — especially me — to concentrate on the task of building our nation here at home: putting people back to work, educating our kids, growing our middle class,” Obama said.¶ The president had wanted to use the beginning of September to press forward on his economic policies ahead of fights with Congress on government spending and debt.

**The means all parts**

**Merriam-Websters, 8** [Online Collegiate Dictionary, http://www.m-w.com/cgi-bin/dictionary]

4 -- used as a function word before a noun or a substantivized adjective to indicate reference to a group as a whole <the elite>

**“Federal Government” is all three branches**

**Truman Library, No Date** (Harry S. Truman: Library and Museum- One of thirteen presidential libraries, “Three Branches of Government”, <http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/teacher_lessons/3branches/1.htm>) MaxL

Our federal government has three parts. They are the Executive, (President and about 5,000,000 workers) Legislative (Senate and House of Representatives) and Judicial (Supreme Court and lower Courts).