# 1NC Solvency Top-Shelf

#### 1. Geography

#### a. HSR fails—US too big and HSR cannot use traditional railways

Barone, Political Analyst, 12

Michael Barone, a senior political analyst for The Washington Examiner, The Columbus Dispatch, October 14, 2011, http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/editorials/2011/10/14/high-speed-rail-plan-doesnt-make-sense-for-u-s-.html, accessed 6-13-2012.

Moreover, the idea that it would be great to put high-speed rail lines all over the country shows an underappreciation of American geography and of some of the nation’s genuine strengths. High-speed rail can compete with air travel only over limited distances, but the United States is a continental-sized country. Japan and France, as you may have noticed, are a lot smaller. China, which is continent-sized, too, has been building high-speed rail, but it is cutting back now and slowing down the trains after a bad accident. Brazil, also continent-sized, is dropping plans for a Rio de Janeiro-Sao Paulo line. Its airlines and buses already work fine. America’s alleged lag in high-speed rail is also a consequence of our excellence in freight rail. Over three decades after Jimmy Carter’s deregulation, freight rail has squeezed out costs and made shipped goods much cheaper for all of us. Europe and Japan have lousy freight rail and pay more for things. The reason that’s important is that truly high-speed trains cannot use freight-rail tracks. Freight trains travel slower and have a hard time getting out of the way of passenger trains traveling 200 miles per hour. Japan’s bullet train and France’s TGV operate on dedicated tracks specially built for them. That’s expensive. As a frequent traveler from Washington to New York, I’d love to see a real high-speed train in the Northeast Corridor, the only place in the country where it might make economic sense. But if not having one is the price to be paid for the demise of the Obama high-speed-rail boondoggle, I’m happy to pay it.

#### b. Lack of large urban centers ensures failure—no riders

Dr. Samuel Staley, 9

Samuel Staley, Ph.D., senior research fellow at Reason Foundation, teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in urban planning, regulation, and urban economics, was director of urban growth and land-use policy for RF, “The Pragmatic Case Against High-Speed Rail,” Reason Foundation, June 22, 2009, http://reason.org/blog/show/the-pragmatic-case-against-hig, accessed 6-14-2012.

That said, a more important factor may be more straightforward and direct: Certain preconditions are necessary for corridor transit to work, and they don't exist in the U.S. Most fundamentally, intercity rail needs to connect major urban downtowns or large employment centers that are close together--withing a couple hundred miles of each other. (In this respect, the emphasis on density per se is misplaced; the key is the density of the destinations.) We simply don't have that many large downtowns in the U.S. We have several midsize metro areas, but the downtowns are mere shadows of their former selves and contain a very small minority of the region's job base. High-speed rail is doomed to failure under the best of circumstances because it simply can't generate ridership. Spain and Europe is an interesting case in point: high-speed rail connects very large urban centers with populations in the millions that are closely connected as the "bird flies": London-Paris, Paris-Brussels, Paris-Lyon, Hamburg-Berlin, Florence-Rome, Madrid-Barcelona. Many of these cities are also very large: London and Paris both boast populations greater than 10 million. Rome, Berlin, Madrid, and Barcelona have populations between 2 million and 5 million. In the U.S., Chicago is a metro area of close to 10 million, and its downtown population is about 500,000, but Detroit's entire city is below 900,000 and Cleveland's citywide population is below 500,000. The U.S. has very few corridors that fit the criteria necessary to sustain serious and viable high-speed rail. So, ideology aside, a national network of high-speed rail simply doesn't make sense.

#### 2. HSR fails—not cost-effective

Vranich, 8

Joseph Vranich, has been involved in rail passenger issues for more than thirty-five years, was President/CEO of the High Speed Rail Association, and Wendell Cox, principal of Demographia, a St. Louis region-based public policy firm. He was appointed to three terms on the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, “The California High Speed Rail Proposal: A Due Diligence Report.” September 1, 2008, http://reason.org/files/1b544eba6f1d5f9e8012a8c36676ea7e.pdf, accessed 6-14-2012.

High-speed rail systems have been proposed for the United States and have failed to move ahead in Florida, Texas, Pennsylvania, Ohio and in California between Los Angeles and San Diego. All of these projects have been canceled for a variety of reasons, one of which has been the failure to attract commercial investment. Following are summaries of prior studies regarding subsidies, details regarding HSR projects for Texas, Florida and the Los Angeles–San Diego line, and a review of the Northeast Corridor. All have “lessons learned” that are relevant to the California project. The United States in Context The most comprehensive study of the potential for high-speed rail around the United States was prepared for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). This study found that commercial revenues would fall far short of operating and capital costs in all studied corridors (Table 3).54 On average, capital and operating subsidy levels of more than 70 percent would be required. Moreover, in an independent review, Professors William L. Garrison and David M. Levinson say it is doubtful whether without considerable subsidy high-speed rail could be constructed, much less be profitable, in the United States.55

#### 3. No Riders-so it won’t increase enough riders to solve the harms

Dr. Samuel Staley, 9

Samuel Staley, Ph.D., senior research fellow at Reason Foundation, teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in urban planning, regulation, and urban economics, was director of urban growth and land-use policy for RF, “The Pragmatic Case Against High-Speed Rail,” Reason Foundation, June 22, 2009, http://reason.org/blog/show/the-pragmatic-case-against-hig, accessed 6-14-2012.

Reason Foundation has been spending a fair amount of time criticizing high-speed rail initiatives proposed by states such as California and the federal government. Much of the criticism by our analysts as well as others focuses on the fiscal impacts, the poor design of the proposed corridors, and the unwise tactics of proponents that gloss over the many, many problems these initiatives face if implemented in the U.S. Reason Foundation's contribution can be found in its "Due Diligence" report on the California initiative and in our commentaries. Randal O'Toole has made several contributions to the discussion, and his most recent report can be found here. While these criticisms all have merit, we can't lose sight of the fact the biggest reason high-speed rail won't work in the U.S. is that it doesn't make sense as a project funded from general tax revenues. High-speed rail is not a public good and it's not mass transit. It is corridor transit. At best, it's a niche market serving a highly specialized, relatively wealthy, and narrow customer base (high-income business travelers with expense accounts and tourists). It won't relieve urban traffic congestion and its contribution to improving air quality (or reducing carbon dioxide emissions) will be negligible because it won't carry enough riders to make a big difference. These factors undermine high-speed rail justificatons based on public good arguments.

#### 4. HSR fails--Costs and time

Vranich, 8

Joseph Vranich, has been involved in rail passenger issues for more than thirty-five years, was President/CEO of the High Speed Rail Association, and Wendell Cox, principal of Demographia, a St. Louis region-based public policy firm. He was appointed to three terms on the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, “The California High Speed Rail Proposal: A Due Diligence Report.” September 1, 2008, http://reason.org/files/1b544eba6f1d5f9e8012a8c36676ea7e.pdf, accessed 6-14-2012.

The HSR system can be categorized as a “mega-project,” one taking many years to decades and many billions of dollars to construct and put in operation. Such mega-projects run high risks of failing to meet their ridership projections, financial forecasts and other objectives. This analysis compares the CHSRA’s proposed system with major HSR systems operating overseas. It is noteworthy that California is proceeding with HSR plans based on assumptions that may be appropriate to European and Asian environments but hold little applicability in the state. Moreover, it is not clear that the world’s HSR systems have typically covered their operating and capital costs without subsidies—a determination that would be appropriate in a due diligence process for any commercial HSR proposal.

# 1NC Climate

#### High speed rail is empirically proven to not reduce CO2 emissions and in fact emits more CO2 than other trains

John Whitelegg, research leader at the Stockholm Environment Institute, York University, “On the wrong track: Why high-speed trains are not such a green alternative,” The Guardian, April 28, 2009, http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/apr/29/high-speed-rail-travel-europe-uk, accessed 6-15-2012.

The HSR plan is a large and expensive sledgehammer to crack a modestly sized nut. We could stimulate the economy by building 1,000 miles of HSR, but the sums would not stack up in terms of how many jobs this would create per £100,000 spent. If we really want to create jobs in all local economies, rather than drain them away along a very fast railway line, we could insulate 20m homes; make every house a mini-power station to generate and export its own electricity; sort out extremely poor quality commuter railway lines around all our cities; improve inter-regional rail links; and build 10,000 kms of segregated bike paths to connect every school, hospital, employment site and public building to every residential area. These projects would deliver real jobs on a large scale in every city region and local authority, but do not have the high-speed sexiness of new railway lines. HSR is promoted as something that can sort out nasty carbon-producing aircraft on domestic routes. It has done this on the Paris-Lyon and Madrid-Seville lines, but this ability to trash a single air route should not be interpreted as something than can dent the growth of air travel. Germany has one of the largest HSR systems in the world, yet has seen an explosion in internal air travel. HSR does not reduce the fuel consumption of domestic aviation or reduce annual carbon emissions from aircraft. And it produces twice as much CO2 per passenger kilometre as a non-high speed train. If we are serious about reducing our carbon emissions by 80% by 2050, we should not move towards higher speed, more carbon intensive forms of transport and a policy of increasing the mass of travel.

#### The transportation sector is already becoming more fuel efficient which is what their evidence really says is key – HSR will not solve

Randal O’Toole, senior fellow at CATO, “High-Speed Pork,” National Review Online, February 14, 2011, http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/259618/high-speed-pork-randal-otoole, accessed 6-16-2012.

Unlike the interstates, which were paid for exclusively out of gasoline taxes and other highway user fees, all of the capital costs and much of the operating costs of high-speed trains will be subsidized by taxpayers who will rarely ride the trains. This is the way it works in France and Japan, where — despite having population distributions much more conducive to rail travel — residents ride high-speed trains an average of less than 500 miles a year. Nor will high-speed rail offer any environmental benefits. The average intercity auto trip today uses less energy per passenger mile than the average Amtrak train. While it takes a lot of energy to move trains 150 miles per hour or more, autos are getting cleaner and more energy-efficient every year, so by 2025 the average car will be greener than the most efficient train. High-speed rail will do little more than drain our economy. It is foolish to ask taxpayers to spend hundreds of billions on trains that few can afford to use.

#### There are a slew of causes to CO2

Thumma, 12

Dawn Walls-Thumma, “Leading Causes of Global Warming,” National Geographic, 2011, http://greenliving.nationalgeographic.com/leading-causes-global-warming-2177.html, accessed 6-16-2012.

Scientists attribute most of this recent rise in global temperatures to increases in greenhouse gases, although they acknowledge the contributions of changes in land-use, as well as solar radiation and volcanic activity (see Resources 2). Fossil Fuel Combustion The widespread burning of fossil fuels began with the Industrial Revolution, when humankind discovered that the energy from burning fossil fuels like coal could power machinery that performed work faster and more efficiently than reliance on human labor. According to the IPCC, burning fossil fuels is the leading cause of the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change. (See References 2) Energy Generation According to the EPA, more than half of the greenhouse gas emissions produced in the United States come from stationary sources, such as power plants (see References 1). In 2007, 48 percent of U.S. power plants burned coal, and 22 percent used natural gas (see References 3, page 5). Both coal and gas are fossil fuels, and burning them to generate electricity produces greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change (see References 4 and 5). Transportation In 2008, an additional 27 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions produced in the United States came from burning gasoline to power cars, trucks and aircraft. Furthermore, greenhouse gas emissions from transportation are increasing more rapidly than emissions from other sources, according to the EPA. To trim greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, you can carpool and take public transportation, reduce the amount you drive and purchase fuel-efficient vehicles. (See References 6) Agriculture While burning fossil fuels accounts for large emissions of carbon dioxide, agriculture produces the most methane and nitrous oxide worldwide, according to the IPCC (see References 2). In the United States, agriculture accounted for about 7 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in 2005. Agricultural sources of greenhouse gases are myriad. Livestock grazing, waste management and digestive gases contribute half of the emissions produced by agriculture. Nitrogen fertilizers release nitrous oxide and comprise 35 percent of agricultural emissions. Burning fossil fuels to power farm equipment also produces greenhouse gas emissions but constitute only about 13 percent of all emissions. (See Resources 1, pages 1-3) The agriculture sector can employ rotational grazing, manage livestock feed and waste, and judiciously apply nitrogen fertilizers in order to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions resulting from agricultural practices (see Resources 1, page 6).

#### Data indicates that high speed rail would be costly yet inconsequential in regards to CO2 reductions

Joseph Vranich, has been involved in rail passenger issues for more than thirty-five years, was President/CEO of the High Speed Rail Association, and Wendell Cox, principal of Demographia, a St. Louis region-based public policy firm. He was appointed to three terms on the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, “The California High Speed Rail Proposal: A Due Diligence Report.” September 1, 2008, http://reason.org/files/1b544eba6f1d5f9e8012a8c36676ea7e.pdf, accessed 6-14-2012.

One of the most important selling points of HSR has been its claimed potential to reduce CO2 emissions. The data indicates otherwise. The cost per ton of CO2 removed by HSR is projected to be between 39 and 201 times the international IPCC ceiling of $50. HSR has been greatly oversold for its CO2 emission reduction potential. The reality is that HSR’s impact on CO2 would be inconsequential while being exorbitantly costly. California state law requires significant greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions. Highway and air transportation produce greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide (CO2), which is the principal greenhouse gas.420 HSR is routinely cited, both in California and internationally as a very effective way of reducing CO2 emissions. In one document, CHSRA refers to HSR as “earth friendly” and claims that it will reduce CO2 emissions from highways and air transportation by 12.4 billion pounds (this is 5.7 million metric tons).421 A CHSRA presentation to a California Senate committee predicted that HSR would reduce CO2 emissions 8.7 million tons in 2030 and that this amount “meets almost 50 percent of AB 32 greenhouse gas reduction goal.”422 In fact, the recently emerging data from CHSRA shows the HSR CO2 emission impact to be slight (3.1 million tons) at best, and this analysis shows the cost of such reduction to be anything but a bargain.423 In short, CHSRA’s own data indicates that the CO2 emission reduction benefits of HSR have been exaggerated. Even the CHSRA’s corrected CO2 emission reduction projection of 3.1 million annual tons are above those derived from the California Air Resources Board of 2.5 million tons and those estimated in this report, at between 0.6 and 1.8 million tons (described below under “Analysis of Emissions Reduction Scenarios”). International (IPCC) Ceiling While there is wide agreement that CO2 emissions must be reduced, there is also concern that efforts to reduce CO2 emissions must be cost effective. Overly expensive CO2 reduction strategies have the potential to reduce economic growth, increase unemployment and increase poverty levels. 108 Reason Founda tion Thus, to merely quantify a reduction of CO2 from a particular strategy is not the end of the analysis, it is only the beginning. The fundamental questions relate to how much in the context of overall emissions would HSR reduce emissions and, even more importantly, at what cost. Any strategy for reducing CO2 emissions needs to be subjected to a cost test. As is indicated below, no such test was applied by the CHSRA, which in light of California’s world policy leadership in CO2 emission reduction seems unusual.

#### Too many alt causes to air pollution for the plan to save a significant number of people

BROOK et al 04 M.D. and several other doctors writing for Circulation magazine from the American Heart Association [Circulation magazine Robert D. Brook, MD; Barry Franklin, PhD, Chair; Wayne Cascio, MD; Yuling Hong, MD, PhD; George Howard, PhD; Michael Lipsett, MD; Russell Luepker, MD; Murray Mittleman, MD, ScD; Jonathan Samet, MD; Sidney C. Smith, Jr, MD; Ira Tager, MD, “Air Pollution and the Cardiovascular Disease” June 1, 2004, <http://circ.ahajournals.org/cgi/content/full/109/21/2655#SEC1/>] k ward

A brief description of several individual air pollutants is provided first for background. A complete discussion is beyond the scope of this statement, and interested readers may find a more comprehensive review on this subject elsewhere.26 Particulate Matter Airborne Particulate Matter consists of a heterogeneous mixture of solid and liquid particles suspended in air, continually varying in size and chemical composition in space and time (Figure 1). Primary particles are emitted directly into the atmosphere, such as diesel soot, whereas secondary particles are created through physicochemical transformation of gases, such as nitrate and sulfate formation from gaseous nitric acid and sulfur dioxide (SO2), respectively. The numerous natural and anthropogenic sources of PM include motor vehicle emissions, tire fragmentation and resuspension of road dust, power generation and other industrial combustion, smelting and other metal processing, agriculture, construction and demolition activities, residential wood burning, windblown soil, pollens and molds, forest fires and combustion of agricultural debris, volcanic emissions, and sea spray. Although there are thousands of chemicals that have been detected in PM in different locations, some of the more common constituents include nitrates, sulfates, elemental and organic carbon, organic compounds (eg, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons), biological compounds (eg, endotoxin, cell fragments), and a variety of metals (eg, iron, copper, nickel, zinc, and vanadium).

#### Manmade CO2 doesn’t contribute to global warming.

Turnbull, 2011 Andrew, (Former head of British Civil Service), “The Really Inconvenient Truth or ‘It ain’t necessarily so’”, The Global Warming Policy Foundation, http://www.thegwpf.org/images/stories/gwpf-reports/lord-turnbull.pdf

Although there is agreement among scientists that global temperatures have been rising (around 0.8°C in the past 150 years), that CO2 is a greenhouse gas, that CO2 concentrations have been rising; that, other things being equal, a doubling in CO2 concentration would on its own generate about a 1°C increase, there is little agreement beyond that. Virtually every step in the chain of causation is disputed and even the basic data on measurements is challenged. There is huge controversy about the relative contribution of man-made CO2 versus natural forces such as the sun, cosmic rays, clouds and the oceans. Many scientists would support an alternative hypothesis, that the globe has been on a gentle warming trend since the end of the Little Ice Age around two hundred years ago, with alternating periods measured in decades of faster and slower growth, or even periods of moderate decline. Such an alternative view would not justify the alarmism which characterizes much of the public debate.

# 1NC Economic Competiveness

#### High speed rail will cost billions in subsidies and is not cost effective

Lane, 10

Christopher Lane, editorial writer, specializing in economic policy, financial issues and trade, “California’s high-speed rail to nowhere,” Washington Post, January 9, 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/californias-high-speed-rail-to-nowhere/2012/01/09/gIQAZQDamP\_story.html?wpisrc=nl\_opinions, accessed 6-16-2012.

But enough of the inevitable pork-barrel politics. On the merits, high-speed rail would be a questionable investment even if California could afford to build it. LaHood and other boosters marvel at bullet trains in Europe and Japan, insisting simplistically that we need them, too. But the sprawling, decentralized cities of the United States do not make convenient destinations for train travelers. International experience shows that high-speed rail entails expensive debt service and large operating subsidies. This would likely be the case here as well, since, for better or worse, rail must compete with well-established air and car options. Business travel is one ostensible purpose of bullet trains in California, but increasingly people meet via video conference. For these and other reasons, high-speed rail in the United States would lower carbon emissions and reduce traffic far less cost-effectively than would alternative solutions. It’s especially odd for a Democratic president and governor to saddle California with the cost of bullet trains when the state is facing chronic deficits, tax increases and social spending cuts. Maybe this is why polls show that a majority of Californians have turned against the project. It’s still not too late to hit the brakes.

#### Implementation delays prove no short term effect

Rugy and Mitchell, 11

Veronique de Rugy, senior research fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, and Matthew Mitchell, a senior research fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, “WOULD MORE INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING STIMULATE THE ECONOMY?,” MERCATUS, September 2011, http://mercatus.org/sites/default/files/publication/infrastructure\_deRugy\_WP\_9-12-11.pdf, accessed 6-16-2012.

The problems with infrastructure stimulus: There are unique problems with infrastructure stimulus that tend to diminish its chances of success. Chief among these are long implementation delays. The Congressional Budget Office reports that: [F]or major infrastructure projects supported by the federal government, such as highway construction and activities of the Army Corps of Engineers, initial outlays usually total less than 25 percent of the funding provided in a given year. For large projects, the initial rate of spending can be significantly lower than 25 percent.17 Economists from the IMF studied the impact of implementation delays on the multiplier and found that, ―Implementation delays can postpone the intended economic stimulus and may even worsen the downturn in the short run.‖

#### And short term job gains are overstated and overly expensive

Staley 9(Sam, director of urban growth and land use policy for Reason Foundation, “Why High-Speed Rail Fails as a Jobs Program,” August 18 ,http://reason.com/archives/2009/08/18/why-high-speed-rail-fails-as-a)

Setting aside Rep. Cantor's ludicrous 185,000 job creation claims—which are so unreasonably high as to strain credibility, let alone plausibility—even the 20,000 jobs per billion dollars spent figure cited by Gov. Granholm would represent a very expensive public jobs program. At the most basic level, that works out to $50,000 per job and would likely represent a subsidy higher than the wages paid to the typical worker. There are, in fact, better and cheaper ways to create jobs. For example, the federal government could give tax credits to private firms that create new jobs. This type of new jobs subsidy would run about $20,000 per worker and spur up to 1.3 million jobs according analysis by the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research in Michigan.

#### Economic collapse doesn’t cause instability

Fareed Zakaria was named editor of Newsweek International in October 2000, overseeing all Newsweek editions abroad, December 12, 2009, “The Secrets of Stability,” http://www.newsweek.com/2009/12/11/the-secrets-of-stability.html

Others predicted that these economic shocks would lead to political instability and violence in the worst-hit countries. At his confirmation hearing in February, the new U.S. director of national intelligence, Adm. Dennis Blair, cautioned the Senate that "the financial crisis and global recession are likely to produce a wave of economic crises in emerging-market nations over the next year." Hillary Clinton endorsed this grim view. And she was hardly alone. Foreign Policy ran a cover story predicting serious unrest in several emerging markets. Of one thing everyone was sure: nothing would ever be the same again. Not the financial industry, not capitalism, not globalization. One year later, how much has the world really changed? Well, Wall Street is home to two fewer investment banks (three, if you count Merrill Lynch). Some regional banks have gone bust. There was some turmoil in Moldova and (entirely unrelated to the financial crisis) in Iran. Severe problems remain, like high unemployment in the West, and we face new problems caused by responses to the crisis—soaring debt and fears of inflation. But overall, things look nothing like they did in the 1930s. The predictions of economic and political collapse have not materialized at all.

#### Heg unsustainable – multiple constraints ensure collapse and rise of alternatives

Christopher Layne, Chair in National Security at the School of Government and Public Service at Texas A&M University, 09 [“The Waning of U.S. Hegemony—Myth or Reality?: A Review Essay,” International Security, Vol. 34, No. 1, Summer 2009]

For an overview of trends that could affect international politics over the next two decades, a good starting point is the National Intelligence Council’s (NIC’s) Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World.[15](http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/journals/international_security/v034/34.1.layne.html" \l "f15) Global Trends 2025 is not light reading, but it is significantly more insightful and intellectually courageous than typical government reports. Its key geopolitical conclusion is that the U.S.-dominated unipolar world will give way to multipolarity during the next two decades spurred by two causal mechanisms: the emergence of new great powers (and potentially important regional powers); and economic, financial, and domestic political constraints that may erode U.S. capabilities. China, India, and possibly Russia are emerging great powers.[16](http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/journals/international_security/v034/34.1.layne.html" \l "f16) As Global Trends 2025 points out, the rise of China and India to great power status will restore each to “the positions they held two centuries ago when China produced approximately 30 percent and India 15 percent of the world’s wealth” (p. 7). Their ascent is being propelled by “the global shift in relative wealth and economic power” from North America and the Euro-Atlantic world to Asia—a shift “without precedent in modern history” (ibid.). By 2025, China figures to have the world’s second-largest economy (measured by gross domestic product [GDP]) and will be a first-rank military power (p. 30). India, buoyed by its strong economic growth rate, will “strive for a multipolar system with New Delhi as one of the poles” (ibid.). Although both states could encounter speed bumps that might slow—or even derail—their ascents to great power status, the NIC believes that the “chances are good that China and India will continue to rise” (p. 29).[17](http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/journals/international_security/v034/34.1.layne.html" \l "f17)**]** Because of uncertainties about economics, energy prices, domestic governance issues, and especially demography, Russia’s great power trajectory is more problematic than China’s or India’s (pp. 31–32).[18](http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/journals/international_security/v034/34.1.layne.html" \l "f18) Between 2009 and 2025, Russia’s population is forecast to drop from 141 million to below 130 million, affecting the availability of manpower for both the military and the labor pools (pp. 23–24, 30). If Russia overcomes its demographic challenge and continues its revival as a great power, however, the NIC believes it “will be a leading force in opposition to U.S. global dominance” (p. 32). Because its great power status is closely tied to its ability to control both the energy resources and pipelines of Central Asia and the Caucasus, Russia will also seek to reestablish its sphere of influence in the “near abroad” (pp. 32, 82). According to the NIC, in addition to relative decline, the United States will confront other constraints on its international role. U.S. military supremacy will no longer be as dominant as it has been since the Cold War’s end (p. 93). The United States’ soft power may diminish as its liberal model of political and economic development is challenged by authoritarian/statist alternatives (pp. 3, 8–9, 13–14). At home, economic and political constraints may undermine U.S. hegemony. Global Trends 2025 was published just before the full scope of the global financial and economic crisis became apparent. Nevertheless, the NIC did have an inkling of the meltdown’s potential long-term implications for U.S. power. In particular, Global Trends predicts that over the next two decades, the dollar’s role as the international economy’s preeminent reserve currency will erode. Although at the time this issue went to press, the dollar remained strong and will continue to be the reserve currency for some time to come, China’s spring 2009 call to replace the dollar with a new reserve currency signals that the NIC’s long-term worries may be justified.[19](http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy.lib.umich.edu/journals/international_security/v034/34.1.layne.html" \l "f19) **[End Page 153]** As the NIC observes, the financial privileges conferred on the United States by the dollar’s unchallenged reserve currency status have underpinned the preeminent role of the United States in international politics since the end of World War II. Thus, “the dollar’s decline may force the United States into difficult tradeoffs between achieving ambitious foreign policy goals and the high domestic costs of supporting those objectives” (pp. 12, 94, 97). Moreover, the growing dependence of the United States on foreign capital inflows “may curtail U.S. freedom of action in unanticipated ways” (p. 97). The NIC concludes that America’s “interest and willingness to play a leadership role may be more constrained as the economic, military, and opportunity costs of being the world’s leader are reassessed by American voters” (p. 93). Ultimately, although the United States will probably be primus inter pares in a multipolar international system twenty years from now, it will have less power—and foreign policy options—than it has been accustomed to having since 1945 (ibid.).

#### No challengers to competitiveness dominance

Qian 08—reporter of Yale Global [Jiang, February 29th, Is the Sun Setting on US Dominance? – Part II, http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=10435

The proponents of such a "multipolar worldview" often confuse the immense potential of their favored giants with their actual influences. They often overlook the immense internal difficulties these rising giants must overcome to realize their potential. Most importantly, they do not take full account of the strategic interactions between these giants during their simultaneous rise and the strategic opportunities that such interactions present for the US. Among the rising powers, the European Union boasts by far the largest economy, with a strong currency and a comparatively large and prosperous population. However, after a long drive of expansion, Europe faces a serious cohesion problem. It still suffers from a weak security framework that's dependent on NATO and a legalistic rather than executive center in Brussels. Although the EU does chase strategic interests in its proximities such as the central Asia and North Africa, it does so, not for any overreaching vision to compete globally, but mostly for parochial economic reasons. Europe is not yet competing in any "Great Game," for the simple reason that Europe is not yet unified. Recent rejections of the EU constitution show that serious resistance remains towards further integration. After recent stabilization of its economy, a resurgent Russia is often mentioned as a future global power. However, Russia faces severe long-term internal challenges. Its population is declining and aging, its vast Siberia territories hollowing out after the end of Soviet subsidies. Extractive industries such as hydrocarbon, mining and timber account for 80 percent of Russia's exports and 30 percent of its government revenue, whereas its manufacturing industries are mostly outdated and uncompetitive.Russia therefore will have serious issues with its self-image as a major world power, finding it hard to forge an assessment of its global role commensurate with its long-term demographic and economic realities. Japan has a similar problem of updating its self-image as the most "advanced" nation in Asia for more than 100 years. Today Japan faces the harsh reality that, after its neighbors catch up, Japan will again find itself a geographically small, resource-poor island nation dependent on trade, living uneasily among large, populous continental neighbors. It has a largely pacifist, prosperous population in a neighborhood still rife with nationalism.Unlike Europe, East Asia has yet to extinguish historical grievances, border disputes and a taste for raw national powers. As Japan itself proved, economic rises, once initiated, can be rapid indeed, so its current economic strength does not guarantee its future influence. Furthermore, barring a rapid re-militarization, Japan's growth in national strengths is bound to be slower than that of its still maturing neighbors, therefore its relative strategic position in East Asia will only grow weaker. Either re-militarization or an erosion of its self-perceived leadership in the region is likely to require a profound reassessment of Japan's postwar consensus of national purposes. India sees itself as an up-and-coming power, proud to be a democracy yet simultaneously aspiring to more traditional "hard" powers. As a diverse and still poor country, it faces immense internal challenges. Its manufacturing base and infrastructure need major overhaul. Beyond these, India is limited by its geographical constraint in the South Asia and the thorn in its side that’s Pakistan. Sandwiched between Pakistan, Burma and the Himalayas, India’s ambition beyond the subcontinent could not blossom until its geographical perimeter is secured. China borders three of the ambitious giants – India, Russia and Japan. China's neighborhood is far tougher than that of either Europe or the US. Like India, China is a large, poor country rife with internal tensions. Unlike Europe or America, its current form of government does not enjoy wide ideological appeal. Compared with Russia’s or even Japan’s, its military is still modernizing. It has recently become fashionable in America and Europe to describe Chinese "expansions" in Africa and South America. But the evidence is mostly economic deals over raw materials. This is not expansionism, but mercantilism. China is indeed playing an active geopolitical game in its immediate environment: Southeast Asia, Central Asia and Korea Peninsula. But this only serves to show that China is still mired in local complexities.

# 2NC/1NR Extensions

## 2NC/1NR Solvency

### Climate-General

#### Environmental benefits are overstated

O’Toole, 10(Randal, Senior Fellow at Cato Institute, “High Speed Rail,” June, http://www.downsizinggovernment.org/transportation/high-speed-rail)

2. Environmental Benefits. The environmental benefits of high-speed rail would be negligible at best. President Obama's moderate-speed trains are expected to be powered by diesel locomotives, which burn petroleum and emit pollutants and greenhouse gases. Even electrically powered, true high-speed rail is unlikely to be clean. California rated its proposal as environmentally sound only by projecting impossibly high ridership numbers and unrealistically assuming that future automobiles and airplanes would be no more energy-efficient than they are today. In 2005, Florida's High-Speed Rail Authority proposed a 125-mph rail line between Tampa and Orlando. The environmental impact statement for the proposal estimated that the trains would produce more nitrogen oxide pollution and volatile organic compounds than would be saved by the automobiles taken off the road.35 It also calculated that operating and maintaining the gas-turbine locomotives would consume 3.5 to 6.0 times as much energy as would be saved by the cars replaced.36 The statement concluded that "the environmentally preferred alternative is the No Build Alternative" because it "would result in less direct and indirect impact to the environment."37 The Tampa-Orlando proposal was subsequently killed, only to be revived by the Obama administration. In January, the Department of Transportation announced that Florida will receive $1.25 billion of the $8 billion in high-speed rail stimulus funding for the route.38

#### Infrastructure spending will not stimulate the economy – could make it worse

Veronique de Rugy, senior research fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, and Matthew Mitchell, a senior research fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, “WOULD MORE INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING STIMULATE THE ECONOMY?,” MERCATUS, September 2011, http://mercatus.org/sites/default/files/publication/infrastructure\_deRugy\_WP\_9-12-11.pdf, accessed 6-16-2012.

Economists have long recognized the value of infrastructure. Roads, bridges, airports, canals, and other projects are the conduits through which goods are exchanged. In many circumstances, private firms can and should be allowed to provide this infrastructure. But in other cases, there may be a role for public provision at the local level.42 But whatever its merits, infrastructure spending is not likely to provide much of a stimulus. As a short-term measure, more deficit-financed infrastructure spending is a risky bet. At best, it is likely to be ineffective; at worst it will be counterproductive. One long-term impact of further stimulus is certain: it would leave the United States deeper in debt at time when we can ill afford it.

### HSR causes warming

#### Construction of high speed rail emits so many GHG emissions that it would be costly if even possible to reduce CO2 in the long run

Joseph Vranich, has been involved in rail passenger issues for more than thirty-five years, was President/CEO of the High Speed Rail Association, and Wendell Cox, principal of Demographia, a St. Louis region-based public policy firm. He was appointed to three terms on the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, “The California High Speed Rail Proposal: A Due Diligence Report.” September 1, 2008, http://reason.org/files/1b544eba6f1d5f9e8012a8c36676ea7e.pdf, accessed 6-14-2012.

Construction of the HSR system will also produce GHG emissions. Planning documents indicate that the energy required to build the system would be “paid back” by 3.8 years of energy savings.453 However, the documents do not convert that analysis to GHG emissions, which again seems unusual given California’s policy leadership in GHG policy. While there is no analysis of construction-related GHG emissions, if the “payback” period on GHG emissions were equal to the energy payback period, then from 3.8 years (under the CHSRA 2030 Base Ridership Projection) to more than 11 years (under the Due Diligence 2030 Base Ridership Projection) could be required. This would materially reduce the already modest GHG reduction impacts of HSR and increase the cost per GHG ton removed to substantially above its already enormously expensive level.

#### High speed rail emits CO2 because its power source comes from fossil fuels

Joseph Vranich, has been involved in rail passenger issues for more than thirty-five years, was President/CEO of the High Speed Rail Association, and Wendell Cox, principal of Demographia, a St. Louis region-based public policy firm. He was appointed to three terms on the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, “The California High Speed Rail Proposal: A Due Diligence Report.” September 1, 2008, http://reason.org/files/1b544eba6f1d5f9e8012a8c36676ea7e.pdf, accessed 6-14-2012.

Each of the scenarios uses the CHSRA assumption in HSR attributable CO2 increases. According to CHSRA, 2,400,000 additional tons of CO2 would be emitted for electricity generation with HSR than without HSR.446 This may seem surprising, given the sometimes repeated claims that HSR does not emit CO2. HSR can be largely carbon neutral if all of the electric power used in its service area is generated by hydro-electric or nuclear facilities. That, however, is not the case in California, and the CHSRA estimates appear to account for that, noting that 58 percent of in-state electrical generation in 2005 came from natural gas and coal.447

### Economy

#### Initial environmental costs outweigh future benefits

O’Toole 8(Randal, senior fellow at CATO, “High-Speed Rail: The Wrong Road for America,” October 31, http://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/highspeed-rail-wrong-road-america)

Although the electrically powered train might be somewhat more energy-efficient and (if the electricity does not come from fossil fuels) less polluting than airplanes, the energy and pollution cost of constructing the rail line (which will require huge amounts of fossil fuels) will be so great that it will take decades of operational savings to pay back that cost. And, soon after those decades are finally up, it will be time to completely rebuild the line—at a high energy as well as fiscal cost. In short, high-speed rail will require a huge amount of public money to build. The decision to build carries a huge risk both that the ultimate cost will be much greater than predicted, and that the ridership and other benefits will be lower—especially since the consulting firms hired to forecast those benefits expect to profit from rail construction. Once built, the environmental benefits will be miniscule and the main effect will be to reduce the availability of private, relatively unsubsidized modes of transportation

## 2NC/1NR Climate

### CO2 not cause Warming

#### C02 doesn’t cause warming

Idso, 11

Idso, 2 Feb 2011, Craig D Idso, PhD and Sherwood B Idso PhD, (Leading geological scientists), “Carbon Dioxide and the Earth’s Future”, CO2science.org, http://www.co2science.org/education/reports/prudentpath/prudentpath.pdf

But could the higher temperatures of the past four interglacials have been caused by higher CO2 concentrations due to some non-human influence? Absolutely not, for atmospheric CO2 concentrations during all four prior interglacials never rose above approximately 290 ppm; whereas the air’s CO2 concentration today stands at nearly 390 ppm. Combining these two observations, we have a situation where, compared with the mean conditions of the preceding four interglacials, there is currently 100 ppm more CO2 in the air than there was then, and it is currently more than 2°C colder than it was then, which adds up to one huge discrepancy for the world’s climate alarmists and their claim that high atmospheric CO2 concentrations lead to high temperatures. The situation is unprecedented, all right, but not in the way the public is being led to believe.

### No Warming—AT Climate Models

#### Computer climate models are flawed

Idso 99

Sherwood B., research physicist for US Department of Agriculture, president of the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change, “Carbon Dioxide and Global Warming” http://www.co2science.org/about/position/globalwarming.php

Inadequate computer climate models are the sources of multiple environmental misperceptions. As strange as it may seem, the frightening prophecies of doom and gloom that are regularly served up to society on a wide variety of environmental topics by an all-too-happy-to-oblige media are invariably derived from a single source of information: the ever-evolving computer climate models that presume to reduce all of the physical, chemical and biological processes that combine to determine the state of earth's climate to a set of mathematical equations out of which the field's practitioners claim to be able to squeeze a reliable forecast of a host of unpalatable things to come. But does any reasonable person think that we even know what all of those complex and interacting processes are? Or that we can reduce them to such a neat and manageable package? Apparently, some people answer these questions in the affirmative, especially those who seek to remake the world into a political structure more to their liking. And they are willing to gamble all that humanity has achieved in the way of modern economic progress on their belief - for we hope it is nothing more sinister - that the admittedly imperfect climate models are basically correct in what they are telling us about future weather. Throwing caution to the wind, therefore, they would have us embark upon a retrogressive policy that would deny us the many known benefits that we and the rest of the biosphere could readily reap from continued and even expanded usage of coal, gas and oil as our primary sources of economically-important, safe and reliable energy generation.

#### Climate models cannot predict the effects of global warming or CO2

Idso 99

Sherwood B., research physicist for US Department of Agriculture, president of the Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change, “Carbon Dioxide and Global Warming” http://www.co2science.org/about/position/globalwarming.php

History and simple logic reveal climate model predictions of CO2-induced global warming to be untenable. The fact that there have been no significant increases in either droughts, floods or hurricanes over the past two centuries of modest global warming poses an important question. What should be easier to predict: the effects of global warming on extreme weather events or the effects of elevated atmospheric CO2 on global temperature? The first part of this question should, in principle, be answerable; for it is well defined in terms of the small number of known factors likely to play a role in linking the independent variable (global warming) with the specified weather phenomena (droughts, floods and hurricanes). The latter part of the question, on the other hand, is ill-defined and possibly even unanswerable; for there are many factors - physical, chemical and biological - that could well be involved in linking CO2 (or causing it not to be linked) with global temperature. If, then, the climate models cannot correctly predict what should be relatively easy for them to correctly predict (the effect of global warming on extreme weather events), why should we believe what they say about something infinitely more complex (the effect of a rise in the air's CO2 content on mean global air temperature)? Clearly, we should pay the models no heed in the matter of future climate - especially in terms of predictions based on the behavior of a non-meteorological parameter (CO2) - until they can reproduce the climate of the past - based on the behavior of one of the most basic of all true meteorological parameters (temperature). And even when (or if!) the models solve this part of the problem, we should still reserve judgment on their forecasts of global warming; for there will yet be a vast gulf between where they will be at that time and where they will have to go to be able to meet the much greater challenge to which they aspire.

### No Warming—AT IPCC

#### The IPPC is is scientifically unsound

Jaffe ‘06

Jaffe, Mark. Energy writer for the Denver Post business desk. ‘Global Warming?’. 26 December 2006. <http://www.denverpost.com/search/ci_4387552>. Accessed 10 July 2011

The dispute led Landsea, who is a former Gray student, to quit as a member of a working group of theUnited Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or IPCC. Trenberth, 61, is the lead author for that working group, whose report is due next year. The IPCC was created to assess - through a set of working groups - scientific, technical and socioeconomic information on climate change. It does not, however, do research. Landsea, in an open letter to the science community, said the science working group was being "motivated by pre- conceived agendas" and was "scientifically unsound."

### No Impact to Warming

#### Global warming does not lead to extinction

Moore 95 (Thomas Gale, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Ph.D. in Economics, Environmental adviser to Ronald Reagan) Stanford University. Global Warming: A Boon to Humans and other Animals.” Winter 1995. <http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_To_Man.html>

Since its origins, the earth has experienced periods significantly warmer than the modern world -- some epochs have been even hotter than the most extreme predictions of global warming -- and times much colder than today. Today's cool temperatures are well below average for the globe in its more than four billion year history.[[21]](http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_to_Man_fn.html#fn20) During one of the warmest such eras the dinosaurs roamed the earth and a rich ecological world flourished. Studies of climate history show as was mentioned above that sharp changes in temperatures over brief periods of time have occurred frequently without setting into motion any disastrous feedback systems that would lead either to a runaway heating that would cook the earth or a freezing that would eliminate all life. In addition, carbon dioxide levels have varied greatly. Ice core data exhibit fluctuating levels of CO2 that do not correspond to temperature changes.[[22]](http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_to_Man_fn.html#fn21) Most past periods display a positive relationship between CO2 and temperature, however, with a relationship roughly corresponding to that of the Global Climate Models.[[23]](http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_to_Man_fn.html#fn22) During interglacial periods high latitudes enjoyed temperatures that were about 5deg. to 11deg.F warmer than today.[[24]](http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boonto%20Man_fn.html#fn23) Middle latitudes experienced temperatures only about 4deg. to 5deg.F warmer. These warmer periods brought more moisture to the Northern Hemisphere with the exception during the Holocene of central North America. At the time of the medieval warm period, temperatures in Europe, except for the area around the Caspian Sea basin, were 1deg. to 3deg.F higher and rainfall more plentiful than today.

#### Global warming does not lead to extinction—empirically proven, people adapt

Moore 95 (Thomas Gale, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Ph.D. in Economics, Environmental adviser to Ronald Reagan) Stanford University. Global Warming: A Boon to Humans and other Animals.” Winter 1995. <http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_To_Man.html>

As the earth warmed with the waning of the Ice Age, the sea level rose as much as 300 feet; hunters in Europe roamed through modern Norway; agriculture developed in the Middle East. For about 3,000 to 4,000 years the globe enjoyed what historians of climate call the Climatic Optimum period -- a time when average world temperatures -- at least in the Northern Hemisphere -- were significantly hotter than today. At its height between 4000 B.C. and 2000 B.C., H.H. Lamb, a leading climate historian, judges that the world was 4deg. to 5deg. Fahrenheit warmer than the twentieth century.[[41]](http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_to_Man_fn.html#fn40) During the relatively short period since the end of glaciation the climate has experienced periods of stability separated by "abrupt transition."[[42]](http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_to_Man_fn.html#fn41) Lamb calculates that at its coldest, during the Mini Ice Age, the temperature in central England for January was about 4.5deg.F colder than today.[[43]](http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_to_Man_fn.html#fn42) He also concludes that in the central and northern latitudes of Europe during the warmest periods, rainfall may have been 10 to 15 percent greater than now and during the coldest periods of the Mini Ice Ages, 5 to 15 percent less.[[44]](http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_to_Man_fn.html#fn43) On the other hand, cooler periods usually suffered from more swampy conditions because of less evaporation.

### AT Warming Kills Economy

#### **Global warming will have no negative effect on the economy—many industries could benefit**

Moore 95 (Thomas Gale, Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Ph.D. in Economics, Environmental adviser to Ronald Reagan) Stanford University. Global Warming: A Boon to Humans and other Animals.” Winter 1995. <http://www.stanford.edu/~moore/Boon_To_Man.html>

Although most of the forecasts of global warming's repercussions have been dire, an examination of the likely effects suggests little basis for that gloomy view. Climate affects principally agriculture, forestry, and fishing. Manufacturing, most service industries, and nearly all extractive industries are immune to climate shifts. Factories can be built in northern Sweden or Canada or in Texas, Central America, or Mexico. Banking, insurance, medical services, retailing, education and a wide variety of other services can prosper as well in warm climates (with air-conditioning) as in cold (with central heating). A few services, such as transportation and tourism, may be more susceptible to weather. A warmer climate will lower transportation costs: less snow and ice will torment truckers and automobile drivers; fewer winter storms -- bad weather in the summer has less disruptive effects and is over quickly -- will disrupt air travel; a lower incidence of storms and less fog will make water transport less risky. Hotter temperatures will leave mining and the extractive industries largely unaffected; they might even benefit oil drilling in the northern seas and mining in the mountains. A warmer climate could, however, change the nature and location of tourism. Many ski resorts, for example, might face less reliably cold weather and shorter seasons. Warmer conditions would mean that fewer northerners would feel the need to vacation in Florida or the Caribbean. On the other hand, new tourist opportunities might develop in Alaska, northern Canada and other locales at higher latitudes or in upper elevations.

#### **Global warming will benefit the United States economy**

Tabarrok ‘05

Tabarrok, Alex. Editor and writer for Marginal Revolution: Small Steps Toward a Much Better World. Quote from Robert Mendelsohn, Edwin Weyerhaeuser Davis Professor of Forest Policy; Professor of Economics; and Professor, School of Management at Yale University. ‘Global Warming and the US Economy’. 12 July 2005. <http://marginalrevolution.com/marginalrevolution/2005/07/global_warming_.html> Accessed 10 July 2010

Yale economist Robert Mendelsohn writes: Climate change is likely to result in small net benefits for the United States over the next century. The primary sector that will benefit is agriculture. The large gains in this sector will more than compensate for damages expected in the coastal, energy, and water sectors, unless warming is unexpectedly severe. Forestry is also expected to enjoy small gains. Added together, the United States will likely enjoy small benefits of between $14 and $23 billion a year and will only suffer damages in the neighborhood of $13 billion if warming reaches 5C over the next century. Recent predictions of warming by 2100 suggest temperature increases of between 1.5 and 4C, suggesting that impacts are likely to be beneficial in the US.

### No Impact to Warming

#### Warming will be slow and won’t have an impact

Lewis 6

Marlo, Senior Fellow @ Competitiveness Enterprise Institute, Scare Mongering as Journalism, 4/28/06, http://cei.org/pdf/5288.pdf

If the “consensus” among climate models in favor of linear (non-accelerating) warming is correct (and if it isn’t, climate models are not reliable enough to guide policymakers anyway), then we are probably in store for about 1.7ºC of warming in the 21 st century. Those models in general do project more than 1.7ºC of warming. But as Michaels points out, the models assume that CO2 levels will increase by 1 percent annually, whereas the observed growth rate since 1975 is less than half that value, about 0.45 percent per year. Therefore, we should expect a warming rate that is not only non-accelerating but also lower than most models project. As it turns out, a moderate, constant rate of warming is exactly what we find in the instrumental record (see figure below). Should we be “very worried” about a 21 st century warming of 1.7ºC warming? No. Economic research indicates that a warming of that magnitude would likely have small net benefits for an advanced industrial economy like that of the United States. Developing countries are not expected to fare as well—but that is an additional reason why economic growth should be their top priority and why they cannot afford to adopt Kyoto-like controls on energy use

### A2 Pollution

#### Their pollution estimates are wrong

O’Toole 9(Randal, senior fellow at CATO, “High-Speed Rail is Not ‘Interstate 2.0,’” September 9, http://www.cato.org/pubs/bp/bp113.pdf)

When announcing his high-speed rail vision, President Obama promised high speed rail would provide “clean, energy-efficient transportation.” 38 Many people assume that trains use significantly less energy and produce less pollution and greenhouse gas emissions than other forms of travel. In fact, passenger rail’s environmental benefits are negligible and costly. Amtrak claims its trains are more energy efficient than driving, but it bases this claim on an assumption that the average automobile has just 1.6 occupants. 39 In fact, autos tend to carry more people in the intercity travel that would compete with high-speed rail. An independent analysis for the California High Speed Rail Authority found that intercity autos average 2.4 people. 40 This makes Amtrak only 8 percent more energy efficient than light trucks and 15 percent less energy efficient than cars. As a Department of Energy report concluded in 2000, “intercity auto trips tend to be relatively efficient highway trips with higher than-average vehicle occupancy rates—on average, they are as energy-efficient as rail intercity trips.” Moreover, the report added, “if passenger rail competes for modal share by moving to high-speed service, its energy efficiency should be reduced somewhat—making overall energy savings even more problematic.” 41 This explains why the Florida High Speed Rail Authority’s analysis of a Tampa-Orlando rail line concluded that “the environmentally preferred alternative is the No-Build Alternative” because it “would result in less direct and indirect impact to the environment.” 42 An objective analysis of other high-speed rail proposals would reach the same conclusion. Not all analyses agree with this assessment.

## 2NC/1NR Economic Competitiveness

#### Economic collapse doesn’t cause instability

Fareed Zakaria was named editor of Newsweek International in October 2000, overseeing all Newsweek editions abroad, December 12, 2009, “The Secrets of Stability,” http://www.newsweek.com/2009/12/11/the-secrets-of-stability.html

Others predicted that these economic shocks would lead to political instability and violence in the worst-hit countries. At his confirmation hearing in February, the new U.S. director of national intelligence, Adm. Dennis Blair, cautioned the Senate that "the financial crisis and global recession are likely to produce a wave of economic crises in emerging-market nations over the next year." Hillary Clinton endorsed this grim view. And she was hardly alone. Foreign Policy ran a cover story predicting serious unrest in several emerging markets. Of one thing everyone was sure: nothing would ever be the same again. Not the financial industry, not capitalism, not globalization. One year later, how much has the world really changed? Well, Wall Street is home to two fewer investment banks (three, if you count Merrill Lynch). Some regional banks have gone bust. There was some turmoil in Moldova and (entirely unrelated to the financial crisis) in Iran. Severe problems remain, like high unemployment in the West, and we face new problems caused by responses to the crisis—soaring debt and fears of inflation. But overall, things look nothing like they did in the 1930s. The predictions of economic and political collapse have not materialized at all.

#### Heg doesn’t solve war

Barbara Conry (former associate policy analyst, was a public relations consultant at Hensley Segal Rentschler and an expert on security issues in the Middle East, Western Europe, and Central Asia at the CATO Institute) and Charles V. Pena (Senior Fellow at the Independent Institute as well as a senior fellow with the Coalition for a Realistic Foreign Policy, and an adviser on the Straus Military Reform Project at the CATO Institute) 2003 “47. US Security Strategy” CATO Handbook for Congress, http://www.cato.org/pubs/handbook/hb108/hb108-47.pdf

Another rationale for attempting to manage global security is that a world without U.S. hegemony would soon degenerate into a tangle of chaos and instability, in which weapons proliferation, genocide, terrorism, and other offensive activities would be rampant. Prophets of such a development hint that if the United States fails to exercise robust political and military leadership today, the world is condemned to repeat the biggest mistakes of the 20th century—or perhaps do something even worse. Such thinking is seriously flawed. First, instability in the international system is nothing new, and most episodes do not affect U.S. vital interests. Furthermore, to assert that U.S. global leadership can stave off otherwise inevitable global chaos vastly overstates the power of any single country to influence world events. Indeed, many of the problems that plague the world today, such as civil wars and ethnic strife, are largely impervious to external solutions. There is little to back up an assertion that only Washington’s management of international security can save the world from political, economic, or military conflagration.

#### Empirically proven

Christopher J. Fettweis (Professor of national security affairs @ U.S. Naval War College) 2010 “Threat and Anxiety in US Foreign Policy,” Survival, Volume 52, Issue 2 April 2010 , pages 59 – 82

One potential explanation for the growth of global peace can be dismissed fairly quickly: US actions do not seem to have contributed much. The limited evidence suggests that there is little reason to believe in the stabilising power of the US hegemon, and that there is no relation between the relative level of American activism and international stability. During the 1990s, the United States cut back on its defence spending fairly substantially. By 1998, the United States was spending $100 billion less on defence in real terms than it had in 1990, a 25% reduction.29 To internationalists, defence hawks and other believers in hegemonic stability, this irresponsible 'peace dividend' endangered both national and global security. 'No serious analyst of American military capabilities', argued neo-conservatives William Kristol and Robert Kagan in 1996, 'doubts that the defense budget has been cut much too far to meet America's responsibilities to itself and to world peace'.30 And yet the verdict from the 1990s is fairly plain: the world grew more peaceful while the United States cut its forces. No state seemed to believe that its security was endangered by a less-capable US military, or at least none took any action that would suggest such a belief. No militaries were enhanced to address power vacuums; no security dilemmas drove insecurity or arms races; no regional balancing occurred once the stabilis-ing presence of the US military was diminished. The rest of the world acted as if the threat of international war was not a pressing concern, despite the reduction in US military capabilities. Most of all, the United States was no less safe. The incidence and magnitude of global conflict declined while the United States cut its military spending under President Bill Clinton, and kept declining as the George W. Bush administration ramped the spending back up. Complex statistical analysis is unnecessary to reach the conclusion that world peace and US military expenditure are unrelated.

### Unsustainable – China/Counterbalancing

#### Chinese economy will make US hegemony unsustainable

**Layne 11**

Christopher Layne, Professor and Robert M. Gates Chair in National Security at Texas A & M University's Bush School of Government and Public Service. His next book, for Yale University Press, is "After the Fall: International Politics, U.S. Grand Strategy, and the End of the Pax Americana." ,Bye bye, Miss American Pie, 28.03.2011, http://theeuropean-magazine.com/223-layne-christopher/231-pax-americana

The epoch of American hegemony is drawing to a close. Evidence of America’s relative decline is omnipresent. According to the Economist, China will surpass the U.S. as the world’s largest economy in 2019. The U.S. relative power decline will affect international politics in coming decades: the likelihood of great power security competitions – and even war – will increase; the current era of “globalization” will end; and the post-1945 Pax Americana will be replaced by a new international order that reflects the interests of China and the other emerging great powers.

#### Hegemony is unsustainable – counterbalancing is inevitable

Maher 11

(Ph.D. candidate in the Political Science department at Brown University, “The Paradox of American Unipolarity: Why the United States May Be Better Off in a Post-Unipolar World”)

Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, world politics has been unipolar, defined by American preponderance in each of the core components of state power--military, economic, and technological. Such an imbalanced distribution of power in favor of a single country is unprecedented in the modern state system. This material advantage does not automatically translate into America's preferred political and diplomatic outcomes, however. Other states, if now only at the margins, are challenging U.S. power and authority. Additionally, on a range of issues, the United States is finding it increasingly difficult to realize its goals and ambitions. The even bigger challenge for policymakers in Washington is how to respond to signs that America's unquestioned preeminence in international politics is waning. This decline in the United States' relative position is in part a consequence of the burdens and susceptibilities produced by unipolarity. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, the U.S. position both internationally and domestically may actually be strengthened once this period of unipolarity has passed.

**Russia and China counterbalancing**

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(Jack David, “US Military Primacy Worth Sacrificing,” National Review, http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/255423/us-military-primacy-worth-sacrificing-jack-david)

In evaluating whether U.S. military programs can be eliminated without imperiling military primacy, it is necessary first to consider what potential adversaries are saying and doing and how their actions will affect the U.S. Two countries of enormous importance in this regard are Russia and China. While our relations with Russia today are not as hostile as they were with the Soviet Union (thankfully), Russia’s reassertion of rights in territories the Soviet Union once occupied is worrisome. Russian air-force fighters already are comparable to the U.S. mainstay, the F15. Russia is developing fighter aircraft comparable to our now-incomparable F22 (production of which has been terminated to save money), and it is continuing to develop nuclear-weapon and other military capabilities explicitly intended to be superior to ours and to defeat us in any conflict. China long has made territorial claims on the regions surrounding it. Some of these are in areas in the western Pacific claimed by other countries. Others are in what the U.S. regards as international waters. It is no secret that China is aggressively building a blue-water navy, has F15-comparable fighters in its own air force, and already is testing an F22-comparable aircraft that will be deployed in very few years. Moreover, the ships, aircraft, missiles, and space and cyber capabilities China is developing, like those of the Russians, are explicitly being designed to defeat U.S. air, naval, and space military capabilities. These facts are significant. They demonstrate elements of U.S. primacy from the perspective of Russia and China, showing what U.S. military resources they regard as impeding their plans. They also show that Russia and China believe there is a significant possibility that they will want to use military force to achieve an objective contrary to U.S. interests. As was the case in Korea in 1953, U.S. military weakness in the late 1930s eased the way for Nazi aggression and invited Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor. At that time, the U.S. military was not remotely prepared for the war. Had the U.S. not been as isolationist and had it spent what was necessary in the 1920s and 1930s to assure itself of military primacy, perhaps Japan and Germany would not have started what became World War II, a war in which 70 million people, including 405,399 Americans, died, and which cost us $337 billion in early-1940s dollars. There is no way to predict with confidence whether Russia or China will use the military power it is developing to resolve differences with other countries, although there is ample evidence that each may. But we can be sure that, if a U.S. interest is involved — Japan or Taiwan, for example — both would consider the U.S.’s military capability before initiating a major military operation. If that happens, what would we do? Would we capitulate to our adversary’s demands, whatever they may be? Would we deploy our military forces in the hope of prevailing? If our military forces prevail, how would we feel about the human and economic costs we suffered in the conflict? Perhaps this scenario was what Defense Secretary Robert Gates had in mind last month when he told the co-chairs of the Deficit Reduction Commission that a 10 percent cut in the defense budget would be a “catastrophe.” “If you want peace, prepare for war.” That advice, which dates back to the time of the Roman Empire, applies today. The U.S. has preserved its political and economic freedom, and the political and economic freedom of its friends, by maintaining military primacy since the 1950s. We must continue to do so.

#### Economic Constraints Kills U.S. Leadership Role

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Christopher Layne, International Security, Volume 34, Number 1, Summer 2009, pp. 147-172 (Review), The Waning of U.S. Hegemony—Myth or Reality? A Review Essay

In particular, Global Trends predicts that over the next two decades, the dollar’s role as the international economy’s preeminent reserve currency will erode. Although at the time this issue went to press, the dollar remained strong and will continue to be the reserve currency for some time to come, China’s spring 2009 call to replace the dollar with a new reserve currency signals that the NIC’s long-term worries may be justified. As the NIC observes, the financial privileges conferred on the United States by the dollar’s unchallenged reserve currency status have underpinned the preeminent role of the United States in international politics since the end of World War II. Thus, “the dollar’s decline may force the United States into difficult tradeoffs between achieving ambitious foreign policy goals and the high domestic costs of supporting those objectives” (pp. 12, 94, 97). Moreover, the growing dependence of the United States on foreign capital inflows “may curtail U.S. freedom of action in unanticipated ways” (p. 97). The NIC concludes that America’s “interest and willingness to play a leadership role may be more constrained as the economic, military, and opportunity costs of being the world’s leader are reassessed by American voters”

### Unsustainable – Overstrech

#### Overstrech inevitable

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Christopher, International Security, Vol. 31, No. 2 (Fall 2006), pp. 7–41, http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/is3102\_pp007-041\_layne.pdf

Although some scholars argue that, as a hegemon the United States is a status quo power, its grand strategy is actually a peculiar mix. The United States is a status quo power in that it aims to preserve the existing distribution of power. Consistent with the logic of offensive realism, however, the United States is also an expansionist state that seeks to increase its power advantages and to extend its geopolitical and ideological reach. To preserve the status quo that favors them, hegemons must keep knocking down actual and potential rivals; that is, they must continue to expand. The Athenian leader Alcibiades captured this reality when, urging the Athenians to mount the (ultimately disastrous) Sicilian expedition, he stated, “We cannot fix the exact point at which our empire shall stop; we have reached a position in which we must not be content with retaining but must scheme to extend it, for, if we cease to rule others, we are in danger of being ruled ourselves.”

#### US overstretch causes war and military attrition

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(Francis Shor, “War in the Era of Declining U.S. Global Hegemony”, Issue 2, 2010, Journal of Critical Globalisation Studies, pp.65-81;,

<http://www.criticalglobalisation.com/Issue2/JCGS_Issue2_War_and_Declining_US_Hegemony.html>, 6/29/2011)

Another very real dilemma for U.S. military imperialism and their global strategies, particularly as a consequence of the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, is imperial overstretch. Both in terms of the eventual costs, estimated in the trillions of dollars just in the case of the war on Iraq, and the continuing drain on military personnel, these wars have further underscored the inherent contradictions of U.S. military imperialism and its war strategies. Even with active troops, counting the National Guard and Reserves, numbering over 2 million, the U.S. military has so depleted its human resources that it has resorted to extending tours in ways that have lowered morale and created even more internal dissent about deployment. Attempts to offset these problems by higher pay inducements, expansion of the numbers, and use of private contractors have only exacerbated the overall contradictions endemic in maintaining the kind of global garrison embodied by U.S. military imperialism. According to world-systems scholar Giovanni Arrighi, besides having “jeopardized the credibility of U.S. military might,” the war and occupation of Iraq may be one of the key components underlying the “terminal crisis of U.S. hegemony,” albeit without diminishing the U.S. role as “the world’s pre-eminent military power” (2005, p. 80). Nonetheless, as pointed out by other scholars (Johnson, 2004; Mann, 2003; Wallerstein, 2003), imperial overstretch was central to the demise of previous empires and now threatens the death of a U.S. empire also bent on fighting debilitating and self-destructive wars.

### Internals – Cooperation

#### Hegemony undermines cooperation

Ikenberry, 6-writer for the democracy journal

G. John Ikenberry, “Liberal International Theory in the Wake of 911 and American Unipolarity,” Princeton Journal, January 22, 2006 <https://www.princeton.edu/~gji3/Microsoft_Word_-_Ikenberry-Liberal-International-Theory-in-the-Wake-of-911-and-American-unipoliarity-Oslo-word%20doc.pdf>, 6-29-11

The United States claims that it cannot play by the same rules as other states because of its unique global security involvements, which make it a special target for political prosecutions. This line of unipolar reasoning leads to what Harvard’s John Ruggie has called American “exemptionalism.” The problem is that other states do not really buy this argument. Either they do not quite buy the American claim that it is providing a public good for the world, or they do not think the public good is worth the price of expanded American exemptionalism. The result is disagreement, contested authority, lost cooperation, and reduced American capacity to realize its security goals. Again, The United States is caught in the security trap.

### Proliferation Mod (1/2)

#### Unipolarity causes state proliferation – survivability and defense are paramount to minor powers

Monteiro, June 13-department of Political Sciences at Yale University

Nuno P. Monteiro, “Balancing Act,” nunomonteiro.org, June 13, 2011, <http://www.nunomonteiro.org/wp-content/uploads/Nuno-Monteiro-Balancing-Act-20110613.pdf>, 6-29-11, JK

Its policies vis-a-vis major powers' economic growth thus acquire a central place in the toolkit with which it manages the systemic balance of military power. Second, my argument suggests that unipolarity presents particular incen­tives for nuclear proliferation. But, as Robert Jervis has noted, the spread of nuclear wea­pons -- the nuclear revolution -- brings with it a decreased salience for the systemic balance of power. For a nuclear power, the systemic balance of power no longer necessarily deter­mines its chances of survival. On the transformational character of proliferation in a unipo­lar world, Jervis writes: This raises the question of what would remain of a unipolar system in a proliferated world. The American ability to coerce others would decrease but so would its need to defend friendly powers that would now have their own deterrents. The world would still be unipolar by most measures and considerations, but many countries would be able to protect themselves, perhaps even against the superpower. How they would use this increased security is far from clear, however. They might inten­sify conflict with neighbors because they no longer fear all-out war, or, on the con­trary, they might be willing to engage in greater co-operation because the risks of becoming dependent on others would be reduced. In any event, the polarity of the system may become less important. Unipolarity -- at least under current circums­tances -- may then have within it the seeds if not of its own destruction, then at least of its modification, and the resulting world would pose interesting challenges to both scholars and national leaders.

#### That causes multiple nuclear wars

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[Victor A., “Proliferation, Missile Defence and American Ambitions,” *Survival,* Summer, p. 87-90]

Further, the large number of states that became capable of building nuclear weapons over the years, but chose not to, can be reasonably well explained by the fact that most were formally allied with either the United States or the Soviet Union. Both these superpowers had strong nuclear forces and put great pressure on their allies not to build nuclear weapons. Since the Cold War, the US has retained all its allies. In addition, NATO has extended its protection to some of the previous allies of the Soviet Union and plans on taking in more. Nuclear proliferation by India and Pakistan, and proliferation programmes by North Korea, Iran and Iraq, all involve states in the opposite situation: all judged that they faced serious military opposition and had little prospect of establishing a reliable supporting alliance with a suitably strong, nuclear-armed state. What would await the world if strong protectors, especially the United States, were [was] no longer seen as willing to protect states from nuclear-backed aggression? At least a few additional stateswould begin to buildtheir own nuclear weaponsand the means to deliver them to distant targets, and these initiatives would spur increasing numbers of the world’s capable states to follow suit. Restraint would seem ever less necessary and ever more dangerous. Meanwhile, more states are becoming capable of building nuclear weapons and long-range missiles. Many, perhaps most, of the world’s states are becoming sufficiency wealthy, and the technology for building nuclear forces continues to improve and spread. Finally, it seems highly likely that at some point, halting proliferation will come to be seen as a lost cause and the restraints on it will disappear. Once that happens, the transition to a highly proliferated world would probably be very rapid. While some regions might be able to hold the line for a time, **the threats posed by wildfire proliferation** in most other areas **could create pressures that would finally overcome all restraint.** Many readers are probably willing to accept that nuclear proliferation is such a grave threat to world peace that every effort should be made to avoid it. However, every effort has not been made in the past, and we are talking about much more substantial efforts now. For new and substantially more burdensome efforts to be made to slow or stop nuclear proliferation, it needs to be established that the highly proliferated nuclear world that would sooner or later evolve without such efforts is not going to be acceptable. And, for many reasons, it is not. First, the dynamics of getting to a highly proliferated world could be very dangerous. Proliferating states will feel great pressures to obtain nuclear weapons and delivery systems before any potential opponent does. **Those who succeed in outracing an opponent may consider preemptive nuclear war before the opponent becomes capable of nuclear retaliation**. Those who lag behind might try to preempt their opponent’s nuclear programme or defeat the opponent using conventional forces. And those who feel threatened but are incapable of building nuclear weapons may still be able to join in this arms race by building other types of weapons of mass destruction, such as biological weapons. Second, as the world approaches complete proliferation, the hazards posed by nuclear weapons today will be magnified many times over. Fifty or more nations capable of launching nuclear weapons means that the risk of nuclear accidents that could cause serious damage not only to their own populations and environments, but those of others, is hugely increased. The chances of such weapons failing into the hands of renegade military units or terrorists is far greater, as is the number of nations carrying out hazardous manufacturing and storage activities. Worse still, in a highly proliferated world there would be more frequent opportunities for the use of nuclear weapons. And more frequent opportunities means shorter expected times between conflicts in which nuclear weapons get used, unless the probability of use at any opportunity is actually zero. To be sure, some theorists on nuclear deterrence appear to think that in any confrontation between two states known to have reliable nuclear capabilities, the probability of nuclear weapons being used is zero.’ These theorists think that such states will be so fearful of escalation to nuclear war that they would always avoid or terminate confrontations between them, short of even conventional war. They believe this to be true even if the two states have different cultures or leaders with very eccentric personalities. History and human nature, however, suggest that they are almost surely wrong. History includes instances in which states ‘known to possess nuclear weapons did engage in direct conventional conflict. China and Russia fought battles along their common border even after both had nuclear weapons. Moreover, logic suggests that if states with nuclear weapons always avoided conflict with one another, surely states without nuclear weapons would avoid conflict with states that had them. Again, history provides counter-examples Egypt attacked Israel in 1973 even though it saw Israel as a nuclear power at the time. Argentina invaded the Falkland Islands and fought Britain’s efforts to take them back, even though Britain had nuclear weapons. Those who claim that two states with reliable nuclear capabilities to devastate each other will not engage in conventional conflict risking nuclear war also assume that any leader from any culture would not choose suicide for his nation. But history provides unhappy examples of states whose leaders were ready to choose suicide for themselves and their fellow citizens. Hitler tried to impose a ‘victory or destruction’’ policy on his people as Nazi Germany was going down to defeat. And Japan’s war minister, during debates on how to respond to the American atomic bombing, suggested ‘Would it not be wondrous for the whole nation to be destroyed like a beautiful flower?” If leaders are willing to engage in conflict with nuclear-armed nations, use of nuclear weapons in any particular instance may not be likely, but its probability would still be dangerously significant. In particular, human nature suggests that the threat of retaliation with nuclear weapons is not a reliable guarantee against a disastrous first use of these weapons. While national leaders and their advisors everywhere are usually talented and experienced people, even their most important decisions cannot be counted on to be the product of well-informed and thorough assessments of all options from all relevant points of view. This is especially so when the stakes are so large as to defy assessment and there are substantial pressures to act quickly, as could be expected in intense and fast-moving crises between nuclear-armed states. Instead, like other human beings, national leaders can be seduced by wishful thinking. They can misinterpret the words or actions of opposing leaders. Their advisors may produce answers that they think the leader wants to hear, or coalesce around what they know is an inferior decision because the group urgently needs the confidence or the sharing of responsibility that results from settling on something. Moreover, leaders may not recognize clearly where their personal or party interests diverge from those of their citizens. Under great stress, human beings can lose their ability to think carefully. They can refuse to believe that the worst could really happen, oversimplify the problem at hand, think in terms of simplistic analogies and play hunches. The intuitive rules for how individuals should respond to insults or signs of weakness in an opponent may too readily suggest a rash course of action. Anger, fear, greed, ambition and pride can all lead to bad decisions. The desire for a decisive solution to the problem at hand may lead to an unnecessarily extreme course of action. We can almost hear the kinds of words that could flow from discussions in nuclear crises or war. ‘These people are not willing to die for this interest’. ‘No sane person would actually use such weapons’. ‘Perhaps the opponent will back down if we show him we mean business by demonstrating a willingness to use nuclear weapons’. ‘If I don’t hit them back really hard, I am going to be driven from office, if not killed’. Whether right or wrong, in the stressful atmosphere of a nuclear crisis or war, such words from others, or silently from within, might resonate too readily with a harried leader. Thus, both history and human nature suggest that nuclear deterrence can be expected to fail from time to time, and we are fortunate it has not happened yet. But the threat of nuclear war is not just a matter of a few weapons being used. It could get much worse. Once a conflict reaches the point where nuclear weapons are employed, the stresses felt by the leaderships would rise enormously. These stresses can be expected to further degrade their decision-making. The pressures to force the enemy to stop fighting or to surrender could argue for more forceful and decisive military action, which might be the right thing to do in the circumstances, but maybe not. And the horrors of the carnage already suffered may be seen as justification for visiting the most devastating punishment possible on the enemy.’ Again, history demonstrates how intense conflict can lead the combatants to escalate violence to the maximum possible levels. In the Second World War, early promises not to bomb cities soon gave way to essentially indiscriminate bombing of civilians. The war between Iran and Iraq during the 1980s led to the use of chemical weapons on both sides and exchanges of missiles against each other’s cities. And more recently, violence in the Middle East escalated in a few months from rocks and small arms to heavy weapons on one side, and from police actions to air strikes and armoured attacks on the other. Escalation of violence is also basic human nature. **Once the violence starts, retaliatory exchanges** of violent acts **can escalate to levels unimagined** by the participants before hand. Intense and blinding anger is a common response to fear or humiliation or abuse. And such anger can lead us to impose on our opponents whatever levels of violence are readily accessible. In sum, **widespread proliferation is likely to lead to an occasional shoot-out with nuclear weapons,** and that such **shoot-outs will have a substantial probability of escalating to the maximum destruction possible** with the weapons at hand. Unless nuclear proliferation is stopped, **we are headed toward a world that will mirror the American Wild West** of the late 1800s. With most, if not all, nations wearing nuclear ‘six-shooters’ on their hips, the world may even be a more polite place than it is today, but **every once in a while we will all gather on a hill to bury the bodies of dead cities or even  whole nations.** This kind of world is in no nation’s interest. The means for preventing it must be pursued vigorously. And, as argued above, a most powerful way to prevent it or slow its emergence is to encourage the more capable states to provide reliable protection to others against aggression, even when that aggression could be backed with nuclear weapons. In other words, the world needs at least one state, preferably several, willing and able to play the role of sheriff, or to be members of a sheriff’s posse, even in the face of nuclear threats.

### A2 oil shocks

#### Oil shocks do not negatively impact the economy directly and the central bank will not react poorly

Gregory White, “Here’s that Ben Bernanke Paper on Oil Shocks and Policy Blunders That Everyone is Talking About,” Business Insider, March 7, 2011, <http://www.businessinsider.com/ben-bernanke-systematic-monetary-policy-and-the-effects-of-oil-price-shocks-2011-3>.

Earlier we mentioned a Ben Bernanke paper from 1997 titled, [Systematic Monetary Policy and the Effects of Oil Price Shocks](http://ideas.repec.org/p/cvs/starer/97-25.html) and while the full thing is definitely worth a read, we have a breakdown for you right here. CNBC is talking about it today, too, in light of the ECB's talk of higher rates. The thesis is that it is central bank monetary policy in reaction to oil [price](http://www.businessinsider.com/ben-bernanke-systematic-monetary-policy-and-the-effects-of-oil-price-shocks-2011-3) spikes that creates economic downturns, not the oil price spike itself. Bernanke and his co-authors Mark Gertler and Mark Watson discover, utilizing a model that removes either the rate hike or the oil spike from the equation, that, when left alone, the economy actually [performs](http://www.businessinsider.com/ben-bernanke-systematic-monetary-policy-and-the-effects-of-oil-price-shocks-2011-3) better. Prices go up, yes, but so does output, and things stabilize a bit within 10 months. On the other hand, a rate hike ends up causing problems for years, reducing output. The implication of this is that Federal Reserve Chair Ben Bernanke has no interest in raising rate for a commodity or oil spike, so long as [prices](http://www.businessinsider.com/ben-bernanke-systematic-monetary-policy-and-the-effects-of-oil-price-shocks-2011-3) remain within Fed range, because it has a damaging impact on output that could send unemployment higher.

#### Previous economic declines were not triggered by oil prices –the U.S. economy is not as impacted by oil markets as people believe

Jerry Taylor, CATO senior fellow, and Peter Van Doren, senior fellow and expert in the regulation of housing, land, energy, the environment, transportation, and labor, “Be Not Afraid,” CATO Institute, September 28, 2007, <http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=8726>)

During the last week of September, 2003, oil was selling in U.S. spot markets for $23.86 a barrel. If one asked economists back then what would happen to the economy if oil prices were to hit $80 four years hence, they would have almost certainly predicted economic ruin. But the inflation, unemployment, and recession that supposedly follow oil price shocks are nowhere on the macroeconomic radar screen. If the economy goes into a tailspin, it will be in response to bad news in the housing market, not the oil market. The lesson to be derived from this is pretty clear: While oil-price spirals are certainly nothing for consumers to celebrate, the widespread belief that the health of the American economy is held hostage to oil markets is, for the most part, incorrect.

#### Proponents’ projections of ridership are based on flawed studies

Joseph Vranich, has been involved in rail passenger issues for more than thirty-five years, was President/CEO of the High Speed Rail Association, and Wendell Cox, principal of Demographia, a St. Louis region-based public policy firm. He was appointed to three terms on the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, “The California High Speed Rail Proposal: A Due Diligence Report.” September 1, 2008, http://reason.org/files/1b544eba6f1d5f9e8012a8c36676ea7e.pdf, accessed 6-14-2012.

The high speed rail service proposed by the CHSRA will not have the effects on ridership that it claims. The CHSRA has been increasing forecasted ridership over time and has issued a Base Projection of 65.5 million intercity riders and a High Projection of 96.5 million intercity riders for 2030. The CHSRA ridership projections are considerably higher than independent figures developed for comparable California systems in Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and University of California Berkeley studies. Using generous assumptions this Due Diligence Report projects a 2030 base of 23.4 million intercity riders, 64% below the CHSRA’s base of 65.5 million intercity riders, and a 2030 high of 31.1 million intercity riders, nearly 60% below the CHSRA’s high of 96.5 million. In short, the CHSRA’s ridership projections are absurdly high. The CHSRA projects ridership intensity (passengermiles per route-mile) to be far above levels achieved on HSR systems in France, the balance of the European Union, and Japan (see Ridership Intensity figure). Each of these markets is considerably more favorable for HSR and it would thus be expected that California ridership intensity would be lower. Moreover, the CHSRA’s projected load factor (share of seats filled on average) is far higher than what is found on HSR systems elsewhere around the world (see California HSR Load Factors figure).The CHSRA’s ridership projections rely on extraordinarily low fares that are far below current levels on other HSR systems. For example, the projected San Francisco–Los Angeles unrestricted business class fare is proposed to be $70 in 2030 (2006$) while today’s business class fares Tokyo– Osaka are $135, Paris–Marseille $140 and New York–Washington $172. The CHSRA’s artificially low fares—unlikely to be achieved—could be a substantial element in driving the absurdly high ridership projections.