

Realizing the Right to Development

Thomas Pogge

Yale, Leitner Professor of Philosophy and International Affairs

World Poverty Today

Among 7+ billion human beings, about

842 million are **chronically undernourished** (FAO 2013),

2000 million **lack access to essential medicines**

(www.fic.nih.gov/about/plan/exec_summary.htm),

783 million **lack safe drinking water** (MDG Report 2012, p. 52),

1600 million **lack adequate shelter** (UN Special Rapporteur 2005),

1600 million **lack electricity** (UN Habitat, “Urban Energy”),

2500 million **lack adequate sanitation** (MDG Report 2012, p. 5),

796 million adults **are illiterate** ([www.UIS.unesco.org](http://www UIS.unesco.org)),

218 million **children (aged 5 to 17) do wage work outside their household** — often under slavery-like and hazardous conditions: as soldiers, prostitutes or domestic servants, or in agriculture, construction, textile or carpet production. ILO: *The End of Child Labour, Within Reach*, 2006, pp. 9, 11, 17-18.

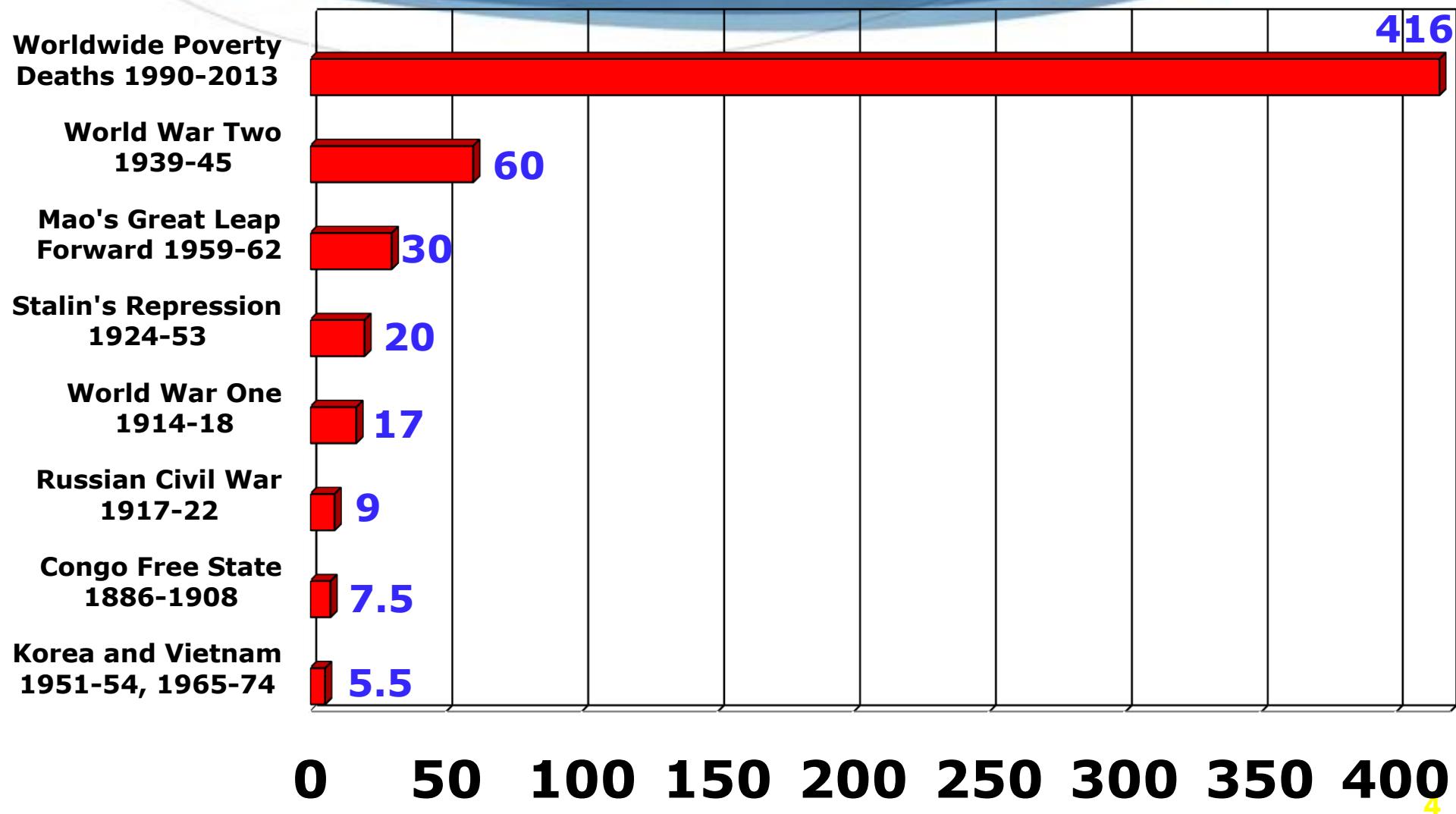
At Least a Third of Human Deaths

— some 18 (out of 57) million per year or 50,000 daily — are due to poverty-related causes, in thousands:

diarrhea (2163) and malnutrition (487),
perinatal (3180) and maternal conditions (527),
childhood diseases (847 — half measles),
tuberculosis (1464), meningitis (340), hepatitis (159),
malaria (889) and other tropical diseases (152),
respiratory infections (4259 — mainly pneumonia),
HIV/AIDS (2040), sexually transmitted diseases (128).

WHO: *World Health Organization, Global Burden of Disease: 2004 Update*, Geneva 2008,
Table A1, pp. 54-59.

Millions of Deaths



The Human Right Least Realized

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services....”

Article 25(1), *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948

Global Household Income Distribution 2008

top 5%

next 15%



fourth

middle

second quintile

Global Private Wealth Distribution 2013

top 0.68%

>\$1m
41%

next 7.74%

>\$100k,<\$1m
42.3%

<\$10k
3%

last 68.73%

>\$10k,<\$100k
13.7%

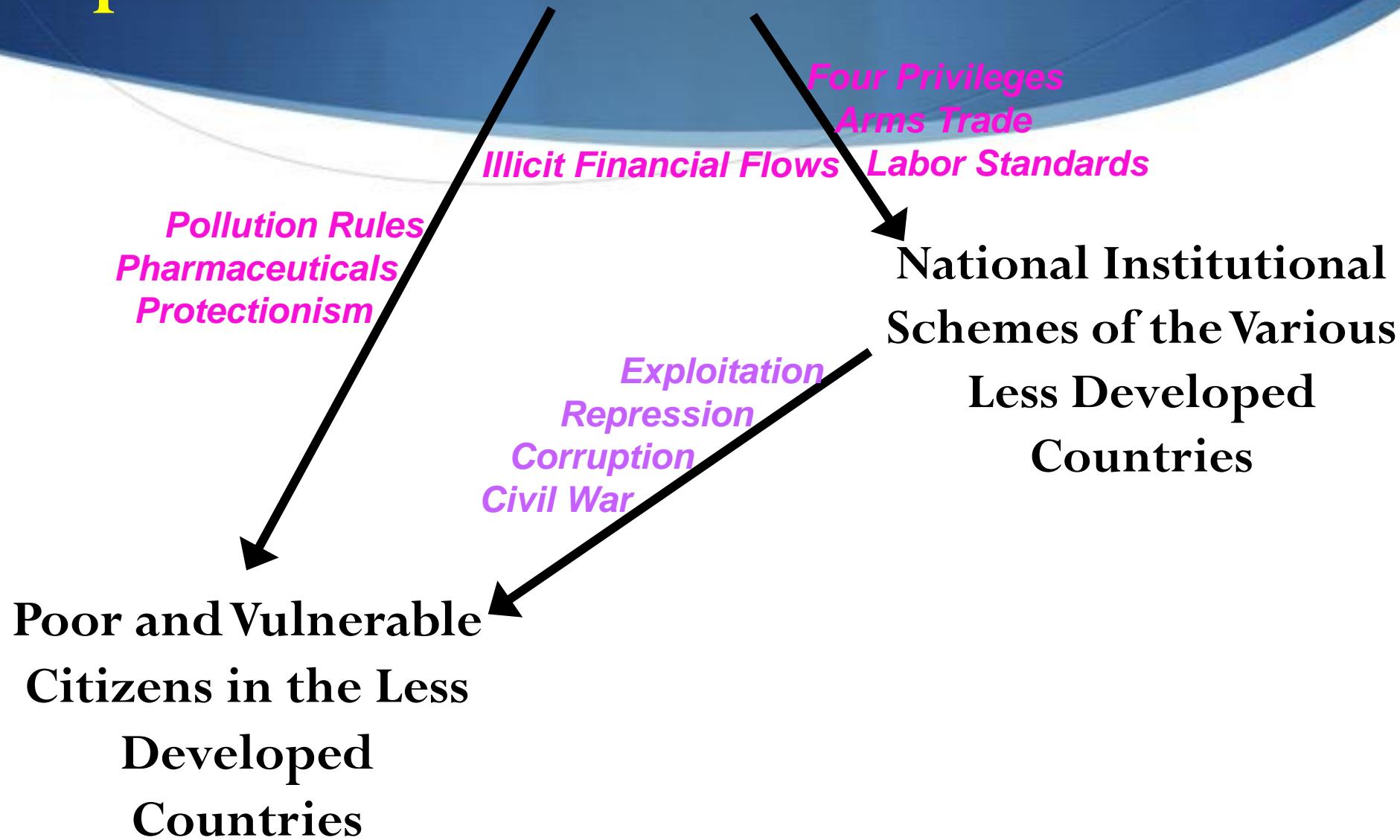
next 22.85%

Human Rights as Moral Claims on (Global) Institutional Arrangements

“Everyone is entitled to a social **and**
international order in which the
rights and freedoms set forth in this
Declaration can be fully realized.”

Article 28, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948

Supranational Institutional Architecture



Inequality Spirals

Regulatory capture makes competitive systems vulnerable to inequality spirals:

The strongest participants have the greatest opportunities and incentives to achieve the expertise and coordination needed for effective lobbying.

They use these opportunities to expand their relative position; then use their increased influence to shift the rules or their application even more in their own favor.

Lobbying Pays

The investment research firm Strategas selects each quarter the fifty S&P 500 companies that spend most on lobbying as a percentage of their assets. The Strategas Lobbying Index based on this exercise has outperformed the S&P 500 by an amazing 11 percent per year over the 2002-2011 period.

The Economist, October 1, 2011

www.economist.com/node/21531014

Beat you in the lobby

Share prices, January 1st 2001=100



Sources: Strategas Research
Partners; Thomson Reuters;
The Economist

*50 most intensive
lobbyists in the S&P 500

Measuring Rates of Return for Lobbying Expenditures: An Empirical Analysis Under the American Jobs Creation Act

ABSTRACT

Raquel Alexander, Susan Scholz, Stephen Mazza*

The lobbying industry has experienced exponential growth within the past decade. ... In this paper we use audited corporate tax disclosures relating to a tax holiday on repatriated earnings created by the *American Jobs Creation Act of 2004* to examine the return on lobbying. We find firms lobbying for this provision have a return in excess of \$220 for every \$1 spent on lobbying.

Supranational Rule Shaping

offers especially high returns from lobbying because such rules emerge in a bargaining environment where

there is **no democratic counterweight or revolutionary danger zone,**

there is **little transparency even *ex post*,**

and **moral restraints are easily dispelled by doubts about their international acceptance.**

The Most Cost-Effective Lobbying

seeks to shape the design of supranational/global institutional arrangements (WTO, G20, EU...)

while also aiming to shift governance upward from the national to the supranational/global level;

is done by the very wealthiest banks, corporations, industry associations and individuals

by way of influencing government officials of major powers, esp. the US (softest target).

Evolution of US National Household Income Distribution (Top 10%)

Segment of U.S. Population	Share of U.S. Household Income 1928	Share of U.S. Household Income 1978	Share of U.S. Household Income 2007	Absolute Change in Income Share 1978–2007	Relative Change in Income Share
Richest 0.01 Percent	5.02	0.86	6.04	+5.18	+602%
Next 0.09 Percent	6.52	1.79	6.24	+4.45	+249%
Next 0.9 Percent	12.40	6.30	11.23	+4.93	+78%
Next 4 Percent	14.62	13.09	15.17	+2.08	+16%
Next 5 Percent	10.73	11.45	11.07	-0.38	-3%

Global Household Income Distribution

Segments	1988	2008	Change in %
Poorest Tenth	0.337	0.251	-25.3%
Second Tenth	0.514	0.414	-19.5%
Third Tenth	0.668	0.587	-12.0%
Fourth Tenth	0.850	0.840	-1.2%
Fifth Tenth	1.154	1.244	+7.7%
Sixth Tenth	1.689	1.993	+18.0%
Seventh Tenth	2.902	3.442	+18.6%
Eighth Tenth	6.056	6.340	+4.7%
80-95 th Percentile	42.958	39.137	-8.9%
Richest 5 Per Cent	42.872	45.751	+6.7%

Global Household Income Distribution 1988

top 5%

next 15%

fourth

middle

second quintile

Global Household Income Distribution 2008

top 5%

next 15%



Key Facts

In just 20 years, the richest *five percent* of human beings **have gained** about as much (3%) as the poorer *half had left* at the end of this period.

Had the poorest 30% held steady, its 2008 share of global household income would have been **21% higher** (1.52% instead of 1.25%).

Had it been allowed to gain the 2.9% of global household income that was in fact gained by the richest five percent, **the poorer half would have nearly doubled its share** — sufficient to end severe poverty.

Alternative Global Income Distribution

top 5%

next 15%

fourth

middle

second quintile