## 1NC the Kant essay

In engaging in any activity, we can always ask why we engage in it. For example, if you’re playing chess I can ask why you moved the pawn forward one. If you give any answer other than “because I’m playing chess,” there’s regress because I can question your answer with another “why” to infinity – only constitutivism solves by providing the binding norms of an activity. And, the constitutive feature of being an agent is rational reflection. To even question whether we want to be agents concedes the authority of agency because we’re reflecting on our desires. Thus, practical reflection is an inescapable aspect of agency. Next, rational reflection requires that the maxims we act upon be universalizable. Any reasoner would know that two plus two equals four because there is no a priori distinction between agents so norms must be universally valid. And- willing coercion is a contradiction in conception because you extend your own freedom while simultaneously undermining your ability to act in the first place.

Thus, the standard is respecting freedom. Prefer the standard: all frameworks presuppose liberty. Agents can only be held responsible for unethical actions if they chose to do them, but absence of liberty means if they do an unethical action, they aren’t culpable because they couldn’t have done otherwise.

Prefer:

1. Controls the internal link—ethics is a guide to action but only an agent’s reasoning from means to end unifies an action. The alternative is for action to become a meaningless lump of infinitely small steps which would destroy morality’s action guiding ability.
2. Probability—ethical theories grounded in desires or states of affairs fail to generate binding principles because they rest on principles that can change or be deemed rationally incoherent. Only principles derived from rational will are necessary which binds agents to follow moral norms. They presume a will with ends attached rather the structure of willing itself.
3. Consequences impossible to calculate – they span infinitely far into the future so we never know if an action is net good or bad
4. Saving lives is only good because we respect human dignity, which demands respecting freedom – that’s the difference between a human being and a lump of flesh
5. Maximizing states of affairs creates infinite obligations for each person because we can always be doing something better so its impossible to do the moral thing

And, governments are rational agents – individual conflicting wills are coalesced into a representative general will – citizens of a state implicitly will and approve the actions of their state.

This means you negate: Nuclear weapons aren’t inherently bad, even though they can be used to bad ends. To require their elimination violates the freedom of the state to use its property for its own ends. The aff would be like requiring a ban on pencils because they can be used to stab people.

[And, hostage holding doesn’t apply—perception of coercion isn’t real coercion, otherwise being scared of spider would count as a spider coercing me into running away.]

[And, the constitutive purpose of nuclear weapons is not destruction – prevalence of deterrence theory and the asteroids CPs prove nukes provide a variety of non-destructive-purposed benefits.]