

# The Final Round<sup>1</sup>

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## Connecticut Debate Association

Amity High School and Westhill High School

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**Resolved: Developing nations should privatize their water systems.**

## A Note about the Notes

I've reproduced my flow chart for the final round at Amity High School augmented by what I remember from the debate. The notes are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. Others may have slightly different versions. I'm sure the debaters will read them and exclaim, "That's not what I said!" I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight: what a judge hears may not be what they said or wish they had said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was actually presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each contention "flowed" across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It's closer to the way I actually take notes during the debate.

## The Final Round

The final round at Amity High School was between the Amity team of Emily Feng and Arian Jadbabaie on the Affirmative and the combined team of Lisa Vickers of Cromwell High School and Mary Harrison of Nonnewaug High School on the Negative. The debate was won by the Negative team from Amity.

### 1) First Affirmative Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) Definition: "privatize" means awarding concessions to firms, possibly with subsidies for the poor and regulation to govern performance. This is like a public-private partnership ("PPP"<sup>2</sup>) described in the documents.
- d) A1<sup>3</sup>: The resolution provides for economic benefits
  - i) Most poor have no water supply, and pay vendors who bring water to them.

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<sup>2</sup> Introduces "PPP" as an abbreviation for "public-private partnership."

<sup>3</sup> "A1" indicates the Affirmative first contention, "N2" the Negative second contention and so forth.

- (1) The poor now pay 10-12 times as much as those connected to a water supply system.
  - (2) The cost to the poor after the building them a water supply system would be 2-3 times what those now connected pay, cheaper than what they pay now.
  - (3) This is the effect of capitalism
  - ii) Increased access to water will increase economic activity
    - (1) Increased productivity and health
  - e) A2: Privatization will increase coverage of the water supply systems
    - i) Privatization is the best way to expand access
    - ii) Prices will initially rise, but price will still be less than what poor currently pay.
      - (1) Packet: 50 of 70 million served by private systems are better off
      - (2) Packet: 97% of systems now are public
      - (3) Packet: And over 1 billion now have inadequate water supply
    - iii) Private firms have the capital to pay for expansion
      - (1) The poor are the largest share of the market
      - (2) Increased coverage will lead to increased efficiency
  - f) A3: Regulation will ensure accountability
    - i) Private failures have been due to lack of enforcement
      - (1) Poor countries need water systems but lack resources to pay for them
      - (2) Private firms have the capital, but need to be monitored
      - (3) Failure in Tanzania resulted in claims and counterclaims in court
    - ii) Need an international body to enforce the contracts
      - (1) With enforcement, privatization works
- 2) Cross-Ex of First Affirmative**
- a) You talk about accountability and the government in A3. Won't bureaucracy result in major corruption? An international body will enforce the regulations.
  - b) You say that prices will go up and then go back down? Customers won't pay for bad service, so this is a slippery slope to failure. Private companies have the money for a good start. This will lead to good business practices. They will fine tune their business, improve service and lower costs over time.
  - c) Don't international regulations make private firms more like a bureaucracy? It is a fine balance, but it can be worked out. Cooperation is in the best interest of the company and the country.
- 3) First Negative Constructive**
- a) Intro
  - b) N1: Privatization will increase costs.
    - i) In Bolivia, costs rose by 30%
    - ii) In El Salvador, Jamaica and Nicaragua, the poor spend 10% of their income on water (p.5<sup>4</sup>)
  - c) N2: Benefits of privatization do not go to the needy
    - i) Rich businesses are in it for profit
    - ii) Remote, rural poor are ignored.
      - (1) Can't afford to pay much

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<sup>4</sup> Indicates evidence came from page 5 of the packet.

- (2) But this is where the need is (p.6)
- iii) Privatization has led to layoffs
  - (1) Irrigation system workers, water vendors
  - (2) As many as 20% are laid off (p. 10)
- d) N3: Water is a right and should not carry a price tag
  - i) Need for water is the same as the need to breathe
  - ii) LDCs<sup>5</sup> want to develop
    - (1) In the US we only pay for bottled water
    - (2) South Africa included water in their bill of rights
- e) A1: Private water systems do not reach the poor
- f) A2: Gov't wants to reach all the people
  - i) Private companies want to profit
- g) A3: A bureaucracy will lead to corruption
  - i) How will they enforce the rules?
- 4) Cross-Ex of First Negative**
  - a) Just because South Africa has water in its bill of rights, why should we negate the resolution? It is one example of the importance of water
  - b) Is that the only argument? We had more. This was one example.
  - c) How will the gov't pay for water systems? Gov'ts have resources, and will spend them on survival.
  - d) How do you account for the fact that 97% of water systems are public but 1 billion people have no water? Development hasn't occurred yet.
  - e) If there has been no action for 30 years, why will it happen now? Developing countries will follow our lead.
  - f) You believe access to water should be free? Yes.
  - g) Why? It is necessary for life.
  - h) Isn't food necessary for life? Food is more expensive.
  - i) Is anyone forced to use the water system? Can't they use wells? After privatization they will be forced to.
  - j) Aren't they free to get their own clean water? They don't know how to do this themselves.
  - k) Aren't the layoffs you quote due to increased productivity and use of skilled workers? Corporations won't send the locals away for training.
  - l) Gov'ts are often overstaffed, why won't gov'ts layoff workers? They won't overstaff.
- 5) Second Affirmative Constructive**
  - a) Intro
  - b) I will answer the Negative points first then turn to the Affirmative
  - c) The Negative case is very idealistic
    - i) Neg believes gov'ts will act
    - ii) Aff believes this won't happen
  - d) N1 vs A1: PPPs provide the example the Aff is following
    - i) PPPs lead to lower prices (p.10)
      - (1) Connection to a water network lowers prices
      - (2) Vendors charge 10-12 times as much as the rich are charged

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<sup>5</sup> "LDC" is less-developed countries.

- (3) After connection, the price, the network charge is only 2-3 times.
- ii) There is a snowball effect
  - (1) Less water is lost from private systems
  - (2) Private systems are more efficient
  - (3) The result is cheaper water in the long run
- e) N2: Both sides agree the issue here is the effect of self-interest
  - i) Aff wants to harness self-interest to increase supply
    - (1) Private firms always want to increase market share, leading to expansion
    - (2) Bolivia shows the consequences of failure to expand supply, riots and loss of contract.
- f) N3: Water is not free. Even in the US you have to pay for water
  - i) Food and shelter also cost money
  - ii) Wells, rivers and rainwater provide free sources of supply
    - (1) But clean water costs money
    - (2) Air is not a relevant example.
- g) A1: Both sides agree that private companies benefit from privatization
  - i) Subsidies for the poor will cost gov't less than if they have to build a water system and then pay the subsidies
  - ii) Besides, gov'ts have shown themselves to be corrupt
- h) A3: UN inspectors can enforce water system contracts
  - i) This will bypass corrupt gov'ts.
- 6) Cross-Ex of Second Affirmative**
  - a) Who benefits from privatization? The gov't, the people, corporations.
  - b) How? The gov't only has to provide subsidies for the poor. The people get water from a system at lower cost than from a water vendor, and eventually increased efficiency lowers prices. Corporations, it's obvious.
  - c) How is paying for something better than getting it free? I don't see the relevance.
  - d) If prices go up and employment goes down, how do people benefit? Poor pay more than rich on water network now, but less than they are paying to water vendors.
  - e) Isn't the economy of many LDCs fragile? For some.
  - f) You say prices will decline eventually, but won't the short-term rise overwhelm the poor? I don't understand your reasoning.
  - g) You said that prices would be higher initially, right? Yes, but lower than what the poor pay now to water vendors.
  - h) But higher initially? Less than they pay now, and eventually even lower.
  - i) Gov'ts don't make any profits, while companies do. How can a private system cost less? Issues are unconnected. You need to compare the price of water from a main against that of water vendors.
- 7) Second Negative Constructive**
  - a) Intro.
  - b) Resolution
  - c) I will cover the Aff points then the Neg.
  - d) A1: Under privatization the price has to go up
    - i) Gov't earn 0 profit
    - ii) Cost + profit has to be greater than cost alone

- iii) Could lead to issues like drought
    - e) A2: The examples of Tanzania, Indonesia and Bolivia show privatization doesn't work.
      - i) No improvement in supply
      - ii) Riots in Bolivia
      - iii) Evidence says increased distribution doesn't happen
    - f) A3: Regulations imply increased bureaucracy
      - i) Gov'ts and non-gov't organizations ("NGOs") can be corrupt
      - ii) Private companies are a bad influence on gov'ts
        - (1) E.g. oil companies in the Middle East
    - g) N1: In Bolivia, prices increased 35%
      - i) Now 1.1 billion lack access to clean water
      - ii) If prices increase, that number will increase
    - h) N2: Rich executives in London or NY who own water companies would benefit
      - i) Remote poor on the Serengeti or in South America will be ignored.
      - ii) Private companies target the largest and cheapest markets
        - (1) They will concentrate on the haves, not the have nots
      - iii) There will be significant layoffs and job losses
        - (1) Private companies will streamline their systems
        - (2) There will be 20-65% layoffs
        - (3) This is a serious loss in fragile LDC economies
    - i) N3: All have a right to water, just like air
      - i) We don't pay to breathe, shouldn't pay to drink
      - ii) E.g., we have food stamps to provide food to the poor
- 8) Cross-Ex of Second Negative**
- a) Aren't foodstamps just subsidies? Yes
  - b) Does the Negative propose to create more jobs? Negative wouldn't lose jobs, making the situation worse.
  - c) Is the Neg. position essentially the status quo? Essentially, but not entirely.
  - d) Are people in the LDCs poor? Yes
  - e) Weren't they helped in Bolivia? The companies violated consumer rights.
  - f) So the Bolivians rioted? And elected Evo Morales
  - g) But the companies didn't listen. Wouldn't they still be there if they did? But they didn't.
  - h) Didn't we present examples where PPPs worked? 84% of projects? 50 of 70 million served? That isn't our position. Since 93% have public water supplies, they must be better even if not perfect.
  - i) If 97% of systems are public, and 1.1 billion lack water, doesn't that imply a problem? It is a real problem, but the Negative advocates more gov't action.
- 9) First Negative Rebuttal**
- a) Intro
  - b) The Neg agrees that change is needed, the question is who should do it.
  - c) The primary issues are Effectiveness, Money and Human Rights
  - d) Effectiveness—gov'ts are willing to implement better water systems
    - i) Gov'ts will be willing to reach poor people in remote areas
      - (1) Private firms will focus on those closer

- ii) Private firms will cause job losses to locals
  - (1) Aff. hints firms will hire more workers, but these will be trained and experience workers from developed countries
  - (2) They won't train existing workers
- e) Money—LDCs have money
  - i) Regulations would still lead to high cost
  - ii) If pressed to hard, there will be no profit and companies will leave
- f) Human Rights—97% of systems are private, the norm
  - i) Gov'ts lead to keep local jobs and protect human rights

#### **10) First Affirmative Rebuttal**

- a) Intro
- b) Aff believes there are three important points: Prices, coverage and moral obligation
  - i) The Aff side addresses these profitably
- c) Prices—Neg notes poor spend 10% of their income on water in the status quo
  - i) Private firms would increase efficiency
    - (1) After capital spending , the efficiency would improve
  - ii) LDC's can't get over the investment hurdle
  - iii) Now poor pay 10-12 times what those on water systems pay
    - (1) Even after the capital spending they will pay less
  - iv) Bolivia shows that if private firms do not meet needs of poor they will lose
    - (1) Self-interest means they will appease the poor
  - v) Int'l enforcement, not int'l regulations
  - vi) Neg. believes gov't will fix the problem
    - (1) No proof the status quo will improve things
    - (2) LDCs don't have the funds
    - (3) Neg says gov'ts are corrupt, but will care for the people
- d) Moral Obligation—Aff believes people have a right to clean water
  - i) The question is which plan gets water to the people.

#### **11) Second Negative Rebuttal**

- a) Intro
- b) There is a value judgement—companies seek profit; gov'ts look out for citizens
  - i) Private firms want profit, create monopolies, jack up prices
- c) Coverage will be better if provided by a gov't.
  - i) Why would private firms serve remote, poor? Cost exceeds benefit.
- d) Water is a right, it should not have a price tag
  - i) You can't go 3 days without water
  - ii) Gov't will sell water at the lowest rate
  - iii) Private companies want profit.
- e) N1; N2 has not been discussed by the Aff; N3

#### **12) Second Affirmative Rebuttal**

- a) Intro
- b) Aff agrees water is essential. We don't agree PPPs don't work.
- c) In LDC's, poor are remote, gov'ts are corrupt, and most get water from rain, wells and water vendors
  - i) Vendors are the most expensive source

- (1) Poor in slums are in a similar situation, venter charges the most
- ii) PPP installs water mains
  - (1) Mains would be 2 times cost of existing systems, but less than vendors
- d) Neg faces a dichotomy
  - i) 97% of systems are public, yet 1.1 billion lack clean water
  - ii) Why will gov'ts give water to the poor
    - (1) Companies are self-interested
    - (2) What is gov't motive if the gov't is corrupt
  - iii) Cost of private systems less than that of water vendors
    - (1) PPP network lowers prices
    - (2) Poor can be subsidized
    - (3) Regulations by the UN can be useful
- e) Ultimately the Aff plan is the most moral—more water to more people
  - i) Self-interest is more productive.