

The Final Round¹

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THP (This House prefers) a world in which Artificial Intelligence generally surpasses humans in intellectual activities.

A Note about the Notes

These are my notes from the final round at Warde. They are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was 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 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 take notes during the debate.

The Final Round

The final round at Warde was between the Westhill team of Milind Sharma and Jake Davidson on Government and the Farmington team of Akshaj Ganta and Shivesh Mishra on Opposition. The debate was won by the Opposition team from Farmington.

1) Prime Minister Constructive

- a) Imagine a healthier and happier world
- b) Statement of the motion
- c) Framework: a properly functioning society
- d) Definitions: TH is human kind;
 - i) “generally surpass“ means better than humans;
 - ii) “intellectual activities” are logic and reasoning;
 - iii) “AI” a tool that provides leverage
- e) Observation: government and laws still exist
- f) G1²: Increase in innovation
 - i) AI can solve problems and save time
 - (1) Humans and AI work together, AI is another tool
 - ii) Impacts: reduce the number of house worked, improved decisions
 - (1) E.g., better farming techniques
 - iii) AI solves problems humans can’t solve
- g) G2: Reduce the impact of human flaws
 - i) AI will have the intellect of billions of humans but operate much faster

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² “G1” indicates the Government first contention, “O2” the Opposition second contention and so forth.

- (1) No brain fog or fatigue
- (2) Work with humans, not take over
- ii) E.g., health care, more cures for diseases
- POI: If AI is smarter, how can it be controlled?***
 - (1) It will simply run simulations and scenarios faster
 - (2) No emotions, run and learn by itself
 - (3) It's still just computer code
- iii) E.g., cure a patient faster than a doctor
- iv) E.g., Roomba
- h) G3: Save lives
 - i) E.g., but driving trains and cars, no distractions, fewer accidents
 - ii) E.g., Solve China/Taiwan issues by running scenarios
 - iii) E.g., new medical procedures and cures, faster vaccines
 - iv) AI is a tool, not a takeover
- i) Opp will tell you we need to fear the potential harms
 - i) This is what has happened with all new technologies
 - ii) The benefits of AI will outweigh the negatives
- 2) Leader of the Opposition Constructive**
 - a) AI is a very real threat and we need to proceed with caution
 - b) Intro
 - c) G1: economic growth is possible without AI
 - i) AI will displace workers
 - ii) No certainty of faster development
 - (1) Have machine learning and neural nets today
 - d) G2: what happens to humans?
 - i) No brain fog but also no job
 - ii) No job, unemployed become a burden
 - e) G3: we already see errors and crashes with automatic braking
 - i) AI's have crashed cars due to sensor malfunction
 - ii) Global solutions no good if they aren't implemented
 - (1) Famines generally due to misallocating food, not shortages
 - f) O1: Inability to control AI
 - i) AI has no morals, can't quantify human life
 - ii) Standards will be set either by corporations or governments
 - (1) Corporations want profit, use information to gain influence
 - (2) Governments can be captured by corporate lobbyists
 - (3) Totalitarian states will limit use to approved activities, control
 - POI: Don't totalitarian states already exist?***
 - (4) They will be stronger with this AI
 - iii) How will AI be trained?
 - (1) Who decides what is ideal?
 - g) O2: Inability to self-sustain
 - i) Unemployment, even temporary, is harmful
 - (1) Mom in grocery store replaced by auto-checkout
 - (2) Dad a factory manager replaced by a program
 - (3) 12-year old no money for college, unskilled, gangs and crime

- ii) Difference between AI parallel to and surpassing humans
POI: *won't AI create new jobs?*
 - iii) They will all be skilled jobs which uneducated can't get
- 3) Member of Government Constructive**
- a) Intro
 - b) Statement of motion
 - c) Motion would change the world in a positive way if used correctly
 - i) Hunger, poverty, global warming
 - ii) Opp says don't use a technology that could save lives.
 - d) O2: AI only takes over low-skilled jobs
 - i) Create more jobs for those displaced
 - ii) POI: If they are unskilled aren't they unqualified for the new jobs?
 - iii) New jobs are all skilled
POI: *How will they pay for training?*
 - iv) My partner dealt with that, they won't need to pay
 - e) G2: Humans and AI will work hand-in-hand
 - i) Lots of data for analysis
 - ii) Use human logic without human flaws
 - iii) Opp fears the future; Gov improves the world
 - (1) Promotes efficiency
 - (2) Technology combines power of many brains
 - (3) Look at solving problems
 - POI: *How can AI be a doctor?***
 - iv) It will be a tool a doctor can use.
 - (1) Doctor makes judgement calls
 - POI: *Can't it be used for harm?***
 - v) In theory, but it will be regulated
 - (1) Same as now, e.g., nuclear weapons
 - vi) The intellect surpasses humans
 - (1) Eliminate bias
 - (2) Combine information from millions of sources
- 4) Member of the Opposition Constructive**
- a) Problem isn't just the technology but also the people behind it
 - i) E.g., why doesn't the US intervene against Russian in Ukraine?
 - (1) Nuclear weapons
 - ii) AI presents the same problem
 - (1) Good only in the best case
 - (2) If AI surpasses us, we lose control
 - iii) O1 tells you AI has no morals
 - (1) People are corrupt
 - (2) Gov never tells you who sets the rules
 - (3) E.g., climate change, we know the solution
 - iv) Can't outsmart an AI that is smarter than humans
 - b) Results propagate, e.g., nuclear weapons
 - i) Other regimes would ignore any regulations
 - (1) "good" technology becomes a threat

- (2) E.g., Russia, terrorists
- (3) AI is unlikely to solve the Israel/Palestine problem
- ii) Regulations set by governments overcome by corporate lobbying
 - (1) Profits will drive the results
- iii) Doctors' assistants replaces unskilled
- POI: Aren't lives more important than jobs***
- iv) Lives will be lost if AI is bad
 - (1) Jobs needed for many who live paycheck to paycheck
 - (2) They become marginalized
- c) Unemployment
 - i) Low level jobs eliminated
 - (1) Uber drivers replaced
 - ii) Need to fix AI, AI can do it
 - iii) Re-skilling workers, educating children, all cost money
 - iv) Replace doctors' helpers
 - (1) Increases the class divide.
- d) Climate change
 - i) What if AI decides to cap a country's emissions
 - ii) This ignores rich countries who caused problem in the past
- e) Gov promises are not plausible
- 5) Leader of Opposition Rebuttal**
 - a) An optimist sees utopia where others see dystopia
 - b) Will AI solve problems?
 - i) A slim "maybe"
 - ii) It will definitely displace workers, increase crime
 - c) Control?
 - i) How do you control something smarter than you are
 - ii) We will live in the shadow of AI
 - d) Flaw?
 - i) AI may see humans as the flaws to be eliminated
 - e) Lives?
 - i) People will struggle to find work
 - f) Innovation?
 - i) Yes, we created nuclear weapons without AI
 - ii) But AI smarter than humans greatly increases the risk
 - iii) No need for an AI with those capabilities
 - g) Is Opp afraid?
 - i) We are afraid for the young, the unskilled
- 6) Prime Minister Rebuttal**
 - a) Opp case is based on a misconception
 - i) Need AI to save lives and advance technology
 - ii) Need to surpass humans to be useful
 - iii) Governments will do what they do with or without AI
 - b) AI capabilities
 - i) Massive benefits for health and elsewhere
 - c) Control

- i) Our definitions exclude risks Opp cites
 - (1) “exceed humans in logic and problem solving”
 - ii) Corporations only profit if working conditions are safe
 - iii) Governments will run simulations, act to prevent violence
- d) Opp harms are not mutually exclusive with AI
 - i) These harms all exist today
 - ii) AI is just another tool to solve them
- e) Economy and Jobs
 - i) AI will create new jobs
 - ii) History supports this for new technologies
 - iii) Small tradeoff for benefits
 - iv) 17-year-olds will do just fine.
- f) Quality of human life
 - i) We will have more free time to imagine
- g) Weighing
 - i) Magnitude: lives saved, jobs created
 - (1) Opp is living in a shell
 - ii) Timeframe: AI helps us reach these sooner
 - iii) Opp lives in fear, wants to lock the door
 - iv) Gov wants to open the door to progress