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THE TRENDS JOURNAL®

HISTORY BEFORE IT HAPPENS®

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PUBLISHER
GERALD CELENTE

EDITOR
AMY BYRNE

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
GREGORY MANNARINO
BRADLEY J. STEINER
GARY NULL
RICHARD GALE
BEN DAVISS
JOE DORAN

COVER ART
ANTHONY FREDA

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Inside

UNITE FOR PEACE

Welcome to this week's **Trends Journal**: UNITE FOR PEACE OR DIE FOR WAR.

As we had forecast two months ago, the COVID War would wind down by late March, mid-April. Now with the Ukraine War making the news, the COVID War is becoming history. Hardly a peep about COVID in the mainstream media that has headlined it for more than two years.

Despite NATO's encroachments and reported military strikes by Ukraine against the breakaway Donetsk and Luhansk regions, I had mistakenly believed that Russia would protect the republics from being overthrown... and would not wage war against the Ukraine government.

In this **Trends Journal** there are special WAR IN UKRAINE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW and **SPECIAL UKRAINE REPORT** sections.

What will you do if there is a terror strike—false flag or real—and government decides to shut down the banks? Think about it. The little dictator in Canada, Justin Trudeau, declared an Emergencies Act, freezing the assets of those who supported the Freedom Convoy.

Go back to 9/11. The U.S. government shut down Wall Street, and I had certificates of deposit that I could not cash in because Wall Street was closed.

Gold, Bitcoin, oil and an array of commodity prices are spiking. Equity market volatility is accelerating. What does it mean, what's next, what to do?

It's all in your **Trends Journal**... trends, analysis, forecast and strategy opportunities that you won't find anywhere else in the world.

And most importantly, there is only war talk and not a peep about peace. If we do not unite for peace we will die for war. Please do what you can to support **Occupy Peace**.

Also, please remember to **tune in** tomorrow at 6 PM, EST, for my Celente and The Judge podcast with Judge Andrew Napolitano that provides insights and solutions from a judicial authority that you won't find anywhere else.

Pace e Amore,

Gerald Celente and the Trends Journal Team

COMMENTS

FEAR & LOATHING IN WASHINGTON
Terrific article. I sure hope the chickens come home to roost very very soon. The world can't take much more of the NITWit in chief, and the super incompetents around him, f—— things up more than they already were.

atlantis

WAR FEVER DIAGNOSIS
Evidently, average citizens are viewed by the Banksters, Central Banks and Elites as too dumb to recognize that the present pseudo-globalist induced conflict between Russia and Ukraine is a

disinformation campaign to distract average citizens from the behind-the-scenes Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) activities of the US Federal Reserve, US Treasury, World Bank, WEF, European Central Bank, and Chinese Central Bank.

As usual, as Celente has pointed out on numerous occasions, when all else fails, take everyone to war!!! We are at that flashpoint but it is actually a power grab and destruction of currencies!!!

Remember, Klaus Schwab has stated that the World Economic Forum (WEF) has captured a majority of key cabinet level politicians in Canada, Argentina, and Russia. He specifically named Trudeau, Putin, and Fernandez as well as their cabinets as treasured members of the WEF. Wait for the conflict to end and question the real reason for the conflict in the beginning!!! MSM is presstituting the conflict!!!!!!

harlow53

SOMETHING WORTH FIGHTING FOR
If we're dumb enough to get into a war with Russia over the Ukraine and it spreads to Europe and blasts everything in sight are to American tax payors going to have to pay the cost of rebuilding Europe again? How stupid do we have to be to allow our "fearless leaders" to do this to our country again? If we use our military for anything, it should be for seizure of corporate board rooms across America and jailing the crooks at Guantanamo Bay.

a1achiropractic

'THINK FOR YOURSELF'
In Australia they have taken off the RT (Russian Television) channel from pay TV so we can no longer get both sides of the story.

I like to 'think for myself' as Gerald would say and watch news from Russia, China, Japan, US (Fox & CNN – now there's a contrast), UK and the Middle East.
It's the only way to get all viewpoints on a news making issue.

Aussie

KILLING THE BILL OF RIGHTS
Beautiful Article, Dr. Giraldi. I enjoy your writing. Everything Right will be considered Wrong and everything Wrong will be considered Right. Where have I heard this before? Oh Yah, My Father told me.

Thank you all at The Trends Journal. People like you are a blessing to me. I plan ahead with confidence because of your track record for accuracy over time. Trends Journal is a necessity and a luxury to be armed with and to supplement my Primary source of Truth, after all when I got duped throughout my life I decided to seek the Facts and to weigh them from my experience and cause and effect. You are a good communicator. Thank you Dr. Giraldi.

Kenneth Gerry Anderson

CANADA A SYMPTOM OF A LARGER PROBLEM
You know what the problem is though? Klaus Schwab and his WEF [World Economic Forum] brag about how many of the Canadian cabinet he has in his pocket. Also, many other leaders – New Zealand, Australia, Britain, France, Germany, etc., etc.

It is the WEF that needs to be broken and all current governments disbanded. Stopping at Trudeau or any one leader will not do it.

Kellie Auld

FRUSTRATION SHARED
Recent subscriber and can I just say Gerald that you are refreshing . I cannot stomach the crap news and I totally feel your anger and frustration with all the BS going on.

M2M

ENOUGH WITH THE COVID JAB SELLERS
This is just another flu strain that most healthy people will be able to deal with. Life is never without risk so there is no point living with fear of this variant flu bug. Let's not all become vaccination addicts.

Ismael Quinones

At a family diner of twelve in Michigan, everybody sitting around the table were fully vaccinated except me, a 84 years old Chinese bastard man. Now, four of them have had this Wuhan Virus.
I noticed in our conversation that fear was the key factor that drove them to be vaccinated.

Furthermore, I noticed in the past fifty years living in the USA that the American people are brainwashed by social media and big gov. We don't think for ourselves any more, then we lose our freedom. Then, then, we relied on the institution for handouts physically and mentally.
The democrats are happy to oblige and to fulfill our needs.

Goddamn can we do something for ourself!!!

A book I recommend folks to read, the "Rise of American Civilization" by Charles and Mary Beard. Make sure you have an Oxford dictionary next to you. Then, then, then, you know how we fought for and won for our precious freedom.

Sign out with pleasure, the old Chinese Bastard Man.

francissiu

IVERMECTIN & MEDICAL FREEDOM
So many "murdered" because of the lack of a drug the actually works against the virus. I've had 3 dear friends die as a result of the vaccine who feared getting the virus with NO access to a healing drug like Ivermectin. Shame on the medical doctors, nurses, administration, etc. who value dollars over human life!

Lynn Collino

METAVERSE, VIRTUAL PRISON
Metaverse is the WORLD of Transhumanism with more Silicon (A.I.) and less Carbon (AKA Human). It will turn the younger generation into POD people. It already started with Smartphone Zombie day walkers.

Jee Hun Choi

TRENDS ON THE U.S. ECONOMIC FRONT

MARKET OVERVIEW

The Ukraine War has changed the course of history.

Tracking trends is the understanding of where we are, how we got here, and where we are going.

The "how we got here" is clear and simple: Near zero interest rates = cheap money artificially propped up equities and economies as we have greatly detailed in the **Trends Journal**... week after week, month after month, year after year.

In the first three weeks of January, before the Ukraine War ignited, the phony equity markets that had been injected by the Fed Banksters into Wall Street were drying up.

The big fear, after the Fed Banksters lying for nearly a year that inflation was "temporary," then "transitory," was that interest rates would rise and the money junkies could not afford to pay for their heavy doses of monetary methadone.

Where We Are Going

Then, as the Ukraine conflict heated up, equity market turbulence spread across the globe. For the month of February, the Dow cast off 4.3 percent. The NASDAQ bounced through the month inside a roughly 200-point range and ended February essentially flat.

Since the new year began, the NASDAQ was down over 12 percent, the S&P over 8 percent... their worst drop since the COVID War was ramped up back in March two years ago.

Last Week

U.S. equities slid through the early part of last week, with the Dow casting off as much as 2,000 points by Thursday when Russia invaded Ukraine, then rallied at week's end as investors felt more comfortable edging back into riskier assets from stocks to Bitcoin after Russia said it was open to negotiations to settle the conflict.

Investors channeled $3.6 billion into exchange-traded stock funds, helping to resurrect index values.

For the week, the tech-laden NASDAQ jumped 1.6 percent. The Dow Jones Industrial Average added 834 points on Friday, its best one-day gain since November 2020, to close the week virtually flat.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index squeaked out a 0.8-percent rise, although it remains squarely in a correction, having fallen more than 10 percent from its January high mark.

Friday's recovery was aided by The Street's hope that the war in Ukraine will imbue the U.S. Federal Reserve with caution: instead of raising interest rates by a half-point at this month's meeting, chances are now much greater that the Fed will bump its rate by a quarter-point.

Other markets recovered late in the week as well.

Russia's equities market bounced up 19 percent on Friday after plunging Thursday; the ruble added 3 percent after shedding 8 percent against the dollar on the day of the invasion. As this week began, the ruble crashed and trading on Russia's stock market was canceled; see "WAR IN UKRAINE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW" in this issue.

The Europe-wide Stoxx 600 rose 3.3 percent Friday but was 3.3 percent poorer for the week. The Nikkei 225 gained 1.9 percent. China's CSI 300, covering both the Shanghai and Shenzhen markets, climbed back 1 percent after sliding on Thursday. The Hang Seng index in Hong Kong was off 0.6 percent for the week.

After soaring on the day of the invasion, prices for Brent crude and natural gas slackened (see related story in this issue).

Yesterday

This week started off on a down note.

Stocks struggled to find a path on the fifth day of the war in Ukraine, finally closing mixed amid grim news about the conflict, continuing worries about inflation, and lingering uncertainty over the U.S. Federal Reserve's next move.

With the Ukraine war heating up, the word on the Street is that the Fed will be less aggressive in raising interest rates later this month.

However, now, with inflation gaining speed as nations impose more sanctions on Russia, should they not raise interest rates strongly as inflation moves higher, with an abundance of cheap money still flowing, inflation will spike higher. (See "WAR IN UKRAINE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW" in this week's **Trends Journal**.)

Currently, there is fear of escalating war, false flags that will ignite more military incursions, miscalculations that will make bad situations worse and cause a spike in market volatility.

Yields on 10-year treasuries edged up 0.02 to 1.859 percent.

Abroad, the pan-European Stoxx 600 was off 0.1 percent. The Nikkei 225 climbed 1.68 percent, China's CSI 300 bumped up 0.45 percent, and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index gave up 0.7 percent.

Today

On the hopes that the situation in Ukraine was easing, Asia-Pacific markets rose today. But later in the day, as the heating up war reality set in, over in Europe, equity markets closed sharply lower with the Stoxx 600 down 2.2 percent.

In the U.S. it was a deep down day, with the Dow falling nearly 600 points, while the S&P 500 and Nasdaq fell 1.55 percent and 1.59 percent respectively.

GOLD/SILVER: As the fear of an escalating Ukraine war grew darker, it was a shiny day for gold and silver, with gold rising some $46 per ounce to close at $1,947 per ounce and silver jumping nearly 5 percent to close at $25.56 per ounce.

TREND FORECAST: *Precious metals prices will gain strength as the Ukraine war escalates and investors seek safe haven assets... of which gold and silver are paramount. In addition, with fears that the war will heat up and the Federal reserve will hold back on quickly pushing interest rates higher, that too will be positive for gold and silver since the low interest rates will not keep inflation from rising.*

And as we greatly detailed in our "War in Ukraine Economic Overview" in this issue, the Ukraine war will drive various commodities and goods higher which will in turn push inflation higher. And the higher inflation rises, so too will gold prices.

OIL: Oil prices benefited from investors' uncertainty, with Brent crude's nearest futures contract closing at $101; U.S. benchmark West Texas Intermediate ended Monday above $96. But today, with war tensions ratcheting up in the Ukraine and more sanctions being imposed upon Russia, Brent Crude spiked 8.4 percent to close at $106.65 a barrel and West Texas Intermediate rose 10.29 percent to close at $105.69 per barrel... both hitting seven year highs.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have long forecast, when oil breaks past the psychological $100-a-barrel milestone and continues to climb, it will spike inflation, thus forcing central banks to radically raise interest rates to fight it... which will sharply drive down equity markets and economies as money becomes too expensive to borrow and the cost of servicing debt increases.*

However, with the fear of the Ukraine War easing pressure to raise interest rates, inflation will continue to spike yet higher... as will oil prices. The oil spike will not be eased until war tensions ease.

We also noted that should Brent Crude hit $110 a barrel, inflation in the United States would exceed 10 percent on a year-over-year basis, according to RMS, as reported by CNN.

Should oil prices maintain or pass that level, it will push down economies and equity markets as it signals the beginning of Dragflation 2022... declining economies and rising inflation.

For more on the oil and trend forecasts, see "War in Ukraine Economic Overview" in this issue of the ***Trends Journal****.*

BITCOIN: Yesterday, bitcoin posted its best one-day jump since May, gaining 11 percent to break through the $40,000 mark and closing at $41,650 per coin. Today it was up 5.2 percent hitting $43,870 per coin as we go to press.
TREND FORECAST: *While there is some speculation on The Street that bitcoin is moving up because the prices were too low, the major aspect for pushing prices higher, as we see it, are expectations that the Russian government will use cryptos to evade sanctions... and that with the banks in Ukraine and Russia freezing bank accounts and/or limiting withdrawals, people are buying cryptos so they can move their money out of their respective countries.*

In the meantime, we maintain our forecast that bitcoin will find strength to hit new highs when it breaks above $55,500 per coin. We had also forecast, the downward breakout point would be hit should prices fall below $25,000 per coin. If they go that low, bitcoin could well fall back to the $10,000 range.

As we have been noting for over five years, a major factor in forecasting the future price of bitcoin and other crypto currencies is dependent upon government regulations.

TREND FORECAST: *Just as Russia and Ukraine have imposed banking restrictions, so too has Canada with its Prime Minister Justin Trudeau invoking an Emergencies Act on the nation which froze assets of people who supported the trucker's Freedom Convoy.*

We note this to illustrate how quickly and easily governments can steal the public's money at any time for any reason. Thus, you may consider having your money and assets where only you can get them when you want them.

(For more crypto trends and forecasts, please see our TRENDS IN CRYPTOS section.)

STRONG U.S. ECONOMY, UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS FALL TO 52-YEAR LOW. WHAT'S NEXT?

The U.S. economy expanded by 7 percent in 2021's fourth quarter and 5.6 percent for all of 2021, the Commerce Department reported.

The results edged past the department's estimates of 6.9 and 5.5 percent, respectively.

And for the week ending 5 February, a total of 1,476,000 eligible Americans were receiving jobless payments, down by about 112,000 from the week before and the fewest since March 14, 1970, the U.S. labor department reported.

In the week ending 19 February, the number of new claims for unemployment benefits dropped by 17,000 to 232,000, the department said, 3,000 less than the number forecast by economists Bloomberg surveyed.

New claims' four-week average declined by 7,250 to 236,250, the third consecutive week of lower numbers.

TREND FORECAST: *With the economy and the demand for labor growing as the COVID War began winding down, as we had forecast it would, there was belief on the Street that the strong GDP and job growth would continue.*

However, now, with the Ukraine War heating up and as a result of its widespread economic and geopolitical implications, those expectations will be lowered.

Indeed, if there is a 9/11 incident to any degree, the nation will go into lockdown, economic growth will rapidly decelerate and unemployment will escalate.

In turn, these negative implications will be positive for safe-haven assets.

KEY INFLATION MEASURE RISES, WILL INTEREST RATES RISE?

The Core Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index (PCE), the inflation gauge most closely watched by the U.S. Federal Reserve, rose 0.5 percent in January after adding the same amount in December.

The PCE stood at a 5.2-percent annual rate at the end of January, up from 4.9 percent the month before and its fastest gain since April 1983, *The Wall Street Journal* noted.

The PCE excludes food and energy prices, which are volatile. Factoring those into the index, the PCE grew at a 6.1-percent annual clip in the first month of this year, up 0.6 percent from December.

Producer prices leaped 9.7 percent in January, year on year.

Brent crude's price broke through $100 after Russia invaded Ukraine and benchmark Dutch natural gas futures skyrocketed 62 percent last week. Europe imports almost 40 percent of its natural gas from Russia (see related story in this issue).

The U.S. labor department's Consumer Price Index, which measures different sources of spending than the PCE, swelled by 7.5 percent in January.

The Consumer Price Index estimates what an urban household pays for a standard assortment of basic goods and services; the PCE includes estimates for rural households and also expenses by organizations spending on behalf of households, such as employers paying for workers' health insurance.

While prices rose in January, personal incomes were flat but household spending rose 2.1 percent (see related story in this issue).

Relentless inflation is putting more pressure on the U.S. Federal Reserve to raise interest rates faster and more sharply to rein in prices, however, as we note, with the Ukraine war heating up, a trend that was unforeseen just a month ago, rising interest rate pressures may well ease (see related articles in this issue including *"War in Ukraine Economic Overview"*.

The Fed wants "to balance the risk of a stagflationary environment where you have higher inflation and slower growth versus the risk of a situation where they move too early," Gregory Daco, chief economist at E-Y Parthenon, told the *FT*.

The Fed will boost rates six times in 2022, Daco predicted, then pause at the end of this year to "re-evaluate and reassess" the need for additional increases.

TREND FORECAST: *How can anyone with a brain bigger than a pea believe the Bankster Bandits?*

Go back to last year at this time when inflation was spiking. They were either too stupid to see the strength and depth of inflation or they were lying that interest rates were "temporary."

Back then, in our "Fed: Stronger Economy, Steady Rates" (23 Mar 2021), we noted that at the beginning of 2021, the 18 Fed officials on its policy-setting committee saw that the central bank would only start increasing interest rates in 2024.

By March, seven of the 18 were thinking a rate hike might be needed in 2023 and only four were ready to boost rates in 2022.

The Fed's nature is to artificially boost the economy and enrich the Wall Street White Shoe Boys at any cost. Now, under severe inflationary pressure to raise rates and hinting that they would finally take bolder action, the unforeseen

Ukraine War may well have the Fed's raising rates only .25 percent following their mid-March meeting.

TREND FORECAST: *The U.S. economy already was at risk not just for stagflation but for "Dragflation," one of our Top 2022 Trends, a syndrome in which economic productivity shrinks while costs rise.*

The war in Ukraine, even if short, will reverberate through the global economy for a longer time. Oil and gas prices will remain high for the duration and after as strategic reserves are replenished.

Supplies of key materials out of Russia and Ukraine will take time to build back to normal volumes and replace stores depleted during the conflict. Financial relationships will need to be reconfigured.

The world is poised to enter a period of even stronger inflation, leading to global dragflation.

ECONOMY PERKS UP, CONSUMER CONFIDENCE GOES DOWN

IHS Markit's U.S. Composite Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) rose to 56.0 in February from 51.6 in January, signaling a surge in economic activity, the data service said.

Europe's PMI jumped from 52.3 in January to 55.8 in February, the largest gain since September. In the U.K., the index shot up to 60.2 last month from 54.2 in January.

Ratings above 50 indicate growth; the higher the number, the more robust the expansion.

At the same time, the Conference Board's survey of consumer sentiment sagged for the second consecutive month, slipping from 111.1 in January to 110.5 in February.

The number of households planning to spend on major appliances, autos, homes, and vacations all shrank.

Consumers' "confidence and spending will continue to face headwinds from rising prices in the coming months," the group said in a statement announcing the survey results.

U.S. inflation climbed by 7.5 percent in January compared to a year earlier, the fastest pace since February 1982.

For the first time, the number of Americans who say they are "not too happy" outnumber those who claim to be "very happy," a recent University of Chicago poll found.

Part of the weariness is COVID fatigue: a January Monmouth University poll found seven in 10 Americans agreed that "it's time we accept that COVID is here to stay and just get on with our lives."

Although inflation has not reached double digits, as it did in the mid- and late 1970s when it peaked at 14.6 percent, its relatively swift arrival, compared to building over years as it did in the 1970s, has eroded public confidence in U.S. leaders and institutions, even among those who are not suffering economically.

A year ago, Jerome Powell, chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve, predicted inflation would remain no higher than 3 percent in 2021. When it quickly vaulted beyond that mark, Powell and Biden administration officials, including treasury secretary Janet Yellin and Biden himself, chalked higher prices up to "temporary" factors.

In February, confidence in the economy among independent voters slumped to its lowest point since 2009, the University of Michigan's monthly survey of consumer confidence reported, and public confidence in government economic policies is at its gloomiest since 2014.

President Joe Biden's approval rating had sunk to 41.7 percent as of 23 February, compared to 52.7 percent last summer, according to a FiveThirtyEight survey.

Biden is counting on the economic recovery, driven in part by federal stimulus spending and his $1.9-trillion infrastructure plan, to buoy his and other Democrats' hopes at the polls this fall, *The Wall Street Journal* said.

TRENDPOST: *It's the economy, stupid.*

As we have greatly detailed, the rich have gotten richer as the middle class keeps shrinking. Good economic statistics mean little when a loaf of bread costs $6 or your grocery store is chronically out of cat food.

Russia's war deals a major setback to Biden's hopes of halting inflation that will pick voters' pockets between now and November.

The Fed's action to curb inflation will be too little too late.

The war in Ukraine and its aftermath will leave the Fed, already cautious, even more reluctant to raise interest rates dramatically enough to have a near-term effect on rising prices.

CONSUMERS SPENT 2.1 PERCENT MORE IN JANUARY

Consumer spending rose 2.1 percent in January after shrinking 0.8 percent in December, the U.S. commerce department reported.

After factoring out price inflation, consumers bought 1.5 percent more goods and services, while after-tax household incomes declined 0.5 percent.

Personal income for the month remained flat, due in part to the expiration of the expanded child tax credit implemented last July as part of the Biden administration's American Rescue Plan.

January marked the sixth consecutive month of households' decreased purchasing power, falling to the lowest level since December 2013, *The Wall Street Journal* said.

The savings rate slumped to 6.4 percent, also the lowest share of income since December 2013.

Orders manufacturers received for durable goods—those meant to last at least three years – moved up 1.6 percent to $227.5 billion.

Orders for nondefense capital goods other than aircraft, viewed as a proxy for overall business investment, gained 0.9 percent.

Inflation remained unrestrained in January, rising to 7.5 percent, a near-40-year record. Prices, especially for oil and gas, have jumped even higher after Russia invaded Ukraine, with oil briefly breaking through $105 a barrel.

If the war drives oil prices to $115, the U.S. inflation rate will rise to 10 percent, Joseph Brouselas, RSM US's chief economist, told the *WSJ*, and trim 1 percent off this year's U.S. GDP.

"The American middle-income household is the one that's going to bear the burden of adjustment here," he said.

Faster inflation also could prompt the U.S. Federal Reserve to raise interest rates faster and in sharper increments, which "could cool off growth even more," Gus Faucher, chief economist at PNC Financial Services Group, commented to the *WSJ*.

“That’s the biggest concern I have because of this conflict,” he said.

TRENDPOST: *The data cited above shows that U.S. consumers bought a greater volume of goods and services in January while prices were rising and households were saving less.*

Americans’ habit of spending during a global shortage of essential goods and materials is a key cause of inflation.

The U.S. economy is caught in a dilemma: about 70 percent of the U.S. GDP depends on consumer spending. If Americans spend less, the economy may shrink; if Americans keep spending, inflation will rise.

One step that can ease the dilemma is to produce more of our goods domestically and through mutually beneficial treaties with trading partners, a step that would make the U.S. economy less dependent on global geopolitics and more self-sufficient, in line with our Top 2022 trend of “Self-Sufficient Economies.”

FED GOVERNOR: RAISE RATES A HALF-POINT NOW

The U.S. Federal Reserve should raise its key interest rate a half-point when it meets this month, Christopher Waller, a U.S. Federal Reserve Bank governor, said in a 24 February speech at the University of California Santa Barbara.

“We constantly say we have the tools to fight inflation,” he said, referring to the Fed’s policy officials, “and now we must demonstrate the will to use them.”

The Core Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index, the Fed's preferred measure of inflation's pace, gained another 0.5 percent in January after adding the same amount in December (see related story in this issue).

Waller said he would like to see the Fed's rate one full point higher by July.

Most Fed officials support raising rates at this month's meeting but have voiced support for a quarter-point hike, not a half-point. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has heightened speculation that the Fed will be more reserved in any policy shift made in the short term (see related story in this issue).

The Ukraine war and its effect on commodity prices might mean "that a more modest tightening is appropriate," Waller added, "but that remains to be seen. Should the data break against us in the coming weeks, we need to be prepared to hike the policy rate by" a half-point.

Waller's call for a half-point hike echoes that of James Bullard, president of the Federal Bank of St, Louis, who suggested last month that the Fed could consider a half-point raise in March and also could raise rates between its scheduled bimonthly meetings, as we reported in "Interest Rate Hikes Coming, the Worst is Yet to Come" (15 Feb 2022).

TREND FORECAST: *Again, as we have greatly detailed throughout this* ***Trends Journal****, the Ukraine War has derailed the Fed rate raising strategy. The Fed, being cautious to a fault as well as late to act, will most likely raise interest rates by only a quarter-point when it meets mid-month. Should they raise them 50 basis points, it will put strong downward pressure on equities and both residential and commercial real estate.*

However, as Gregory Mannarino notes in his article "The Latest Plague And The Crisis to Crisis Mechanism," the money pumping schemes will continue since "Every manner of other 'crisis' will subsequently be used to keep the flow of debt being borrowed into existence growing, it cannot stop."

And on the war front, the hard fact is; no one anywhere on the planet knows how the Ukraine War will play out. Should it wind down and Russia take control and military operations dramatically decrease, most of the world will go on with life without much care.

Should the war continue to escalate and Russia, a NATO nation or the U.S. be attacked in any significant manner...be it militarily, cyber war, etc., it will be the official beginning of WWIII.

U.S. HOME PRICES RISE RECORD. MIDDLE CLASS DREAM DYING

Home prices rose a record 18.8 percent last year, according to the S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller National Home Price Index, the fastest rate since the index was created in 1987.

The index tracks average home prices in major metro areas across the U.S.

The Federal Housing Finance Authority calculated a 17.6-percent increase in home prices through 2021.

Prices were driven higher by a combination of near record-low mortgage rates, federal stimulus payments that gave more households cash for larger down payments, and the shift to remote work that enabled employees to relocate farther from city centers to areas where homes were cheaper and more spacious.

The soaring demand for houses pushed the average selling price of single-family homes to $350,300 in January, 15.4 percent more than a year earlier, the National Association of Realtors (NAR) reported.

The demand surge created a shortage of available houses, sparking bidding wars that drove selling prices in some areas to $20,000 or more above asking prices, as we reported in articles such as “Fed Policies Continue to Fuel Housing Frenzy” (22 Jun 2021) and “Median U.S. Home Price Sets Another Record” (29 Jun 2021).

Lenders, leery of lending during the COVID-era economy, prioritized borrowers able to make the largest cash down payments.

As a result, young, modest-and-middle-income families have been increasingly shut out of home ownership.

The proportion of homes sold to first-time buyers in January slipped to 27 percent, compared to 33 percent a year before, the NAR said.

Now mortgage rates have begun to rise, reaching an average of 3.92 percent for a 30-year, fixed-rate loan, compared to loans charging as little as 2.65 percent last year.

Higher rates are cooling the housing market, Selma Hepp, CoreLogic’s deputy chief economist, told *The Wall Street Journal*.

“The surge in mortgage rates is likely to take a bite out of the demand for housing, mostly among first-time buyers and those with limited budgets,” she said.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have pointed out repeatedly, potential buyers locked out of the market for homes of their own are being locked into a lifetime of renting: demand for apartments has soared and remains strong, which has brought private equity investors into the landlord business, raising rates and ensuring that their tenants can never save enough cash to make a down payment on a home of their own.*

Thus, investing in multi-family units will be on going OnTrendpreneur® trend for both big and small.

Lifetime renters are deprived of the main way in which Americans build and store wealth: by creating equity through home ownership. We have documented this end to the American Dream in:

- *"Real Estate Investors Choosing Single-Family Rental Homes" (13 Oct 2020)*
- *"Invitation Homes to Buy $1 Billion Worth of Houses This Year" (1 Jun 2021)*
- *"Rents for Single-Family Homes Reach 15-Year High" (1 Jun 2021)*
- *"Blackstone Extends Reach Into Housing Market" (29 Jun 2021)*
- *"Private Equity Partners Target $5 Billion in Rental Houses" (27 Jul 2021)*
- *"Residential Rental Rates Skyrocketing" (10 Aug 2021)*
- *"Rents Soar as Investors Buy Properties and Raise Rates" (14 Sep 2021)*
- *"Investors Now Targeting Off-Campus Student Housing" (14 Sep 2021)*
- *"Rents Soaring. What's Next?" (21 Sep 2021)*
- *"Single-Family Rental Homes: Investments Galore" (16 Nov 2021)*
- *"Home Sales Up as Money Gang Gobbles Up Houses" (23 Nov 2021)*
- *"Rents on the Rise" (11 Jan 2022)*

TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT

WAR IN UKRAINE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

UKRAINE WAR HEATING UP, WEAPONS & MONEY POURING IN

Western countries have so far resisted squaring off against Russia despite Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, but Europe and other countries have shown a willingness to—in some cases—break from tradition and provide Kyiv with financing and weaponry to take on Russia.

GERMANY: Perhaps most notable was German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's decision to send Kyiv 1,000 anti-tank weapons and 500 Stinger missiles. He also announced that Germany would increase its own military spending due to the threat from Russia. Germany will now spend $112.7 billion—or 2 percent of its GDP on its military each year.

Germany, the E.U.'s largest economy, is a major producer of weapons and Saturday's decision also allows the exportation of private weapons to conflict areas. Scholtz called Russia's invasion a "turning point."

"This might be one of the biggest shifts in German foreign policy since WWII," Marcel Dirsus, a German political scientist and fellow at the Institute for Security Policy at Kiel University, told *The Washington Post.* "There has been an awakening, not just by the political class, but also by ordinary voters."

The pivot from Berlin was extraordinary. Germany was mocked for refusing to allow Britain to use its airspace to deliver anti-tank missiles to Kyiv just weeks ago.

Of course, Schultz received praise in the media for taking a more aggressive stance after the invasion. France 24 ran an article, "BORING TO 'HISTORIC': THE AWAKENING OF GERMANY'S OLAF SCHOLZ." The station—like other corporate media outlets—know peacetime is boring—and can't wait to report on these new weapons being used.

U.S.: Washington announced the approval of $350 million in weapons and armor for Kyiv after the Russian invasion—which sits on top of the $1 billion in military aid the U.S. has already provided to the country.

President Joe Biden told the U.S. State Department to release the weapons through the Foreign Assistance Act. Reuters reported that Kyiv wants Javelin anti-tank weapons and Stinger missiles. Defense One said the Raytheon-produced missile could disable a tank and is light enough to be carried by one soldier.

Last month, we reported that weapons manufacturers in the U.S. are bullish on war and told investors that the profits will surely follow. (See "WAR MACHINE MAKING BILLIONS.")

This is the third such authorization and the weapons—which included various munitions and anti-aircraft systems—will be pulled from the U.S.'s stockpile.

“Today, as Ukraine fights with courage and pride against Russia's brutal and unprovoked assault, I have authorized, pursuant to a delegation by the president, an unprecedented third presidential drawdown of up to 350 million for immediate support to Ukraine's defense,” Blinken said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said he ordered his nuclear forces on high alert due to “aggressive statements” by NATO. Biden said Monday that Americans should not be concerned about a nuclear confrontation with Moscow.

“This is really a pattern that we've seen from President Putin through the course of this conflict, which is manufacturing threats that don't exist in order to justify further aggression-- and the global community and the American people should look at it through that prism,” Jen Psaki, the White House press secretary said.

CZECH REPUBLIC: Prague announced Saturday that it will send a shipment of weapons to Ukraine worth over $8.5 million. Petr Fiala announced the shipment in a tweet and said the weapons will include machine guns, submachine guns, sniper rifles, and pistols—along with ammunition.

Fiala said that he would welcome Ukraine becoming a member of the European Union.

Radio Free Europe said the weapons will be delivered to a place that is determined by Ukrainian leadership. The report said Prague has already donated about 4,000 pieces of artillery shells to the country, worth about $1.7 million.

NETHERLANDS: Amsterdam announced that it will send 200 Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to Kyiv in the effort to hold back the Russian invaders. These weapons are capable of countering various warplanes and helicopters.

The Dutch government also said it will send Ukraine 50 Panzerfaust-3 anti-tank weapons and 400 rockets. Reuters reported that Amsterdam and Berlin are considering arming Slovakia with a Patriot air defense system.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte said the country is not at war with “the Russian people” but said more military movements will likely be made in the Netherlands in the coming weeks, The Netherlands Times reported.

BELGIUM: The government in Brussels announced that it will send Ukrainian fighters 2,000 machine guns and 3,800 tons of fuel, Prime Minister Alexander De Croo said, according to Reuters*.*

“I just spoke to President Zelensky about Belgium’s additional efforts to support Ukraine against Russia’s brutal aggression,” De Croo tweeted on Saturday. “We also discussed extra measures to be taken at the European and international level. We stand with you, people of Ukraine.”

FRANCE: The French government announced that it will provide Ukraine with additional military equipment after the Russian invasion, but has been vague on the amount and the weaponry.

“You can imagine that shipping the equipment is complicated at the moment,” a military spokesman from the country said, Reuters reported.

President Emmanuel Macron, who faces an election next month, said France will provide Kyiv with 300 million euros as additional budgetary assistance during the conflict.

BRITAIN: U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced that Britain will be providing additional aid to Ukraine after the Russian attack. The aid will include lethal defensive weapons and “major” loan guarantees for the country. The U.K. Defense Journal reported that the United Kingdom has already sent Ukraine anti-tank weapons.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky reportedly made Johnson a “shopping list” of weapons he needed to fight the Russians. Johnson assured him that these weapons can be flown to Poland and driven to Kyiv, *The Daily Mail* reported. The report pointed out that the U.K. has already sent 2,000 Next Generation Light Anti-tank Weapons to Ukraine.

FINLAND: Sanna Marin, the Finnish prime minister, announced that the country will send 2,500 assault rifles, 150,000 bullets, 1,500 anti-tank weapons and 70,000 food packages to Kyiv, according to Reuters.

The report pointed out that the move was a shift in policy for a country that—since 1956—has “maintained an image” on non-alignment.

"The material package now being presented takes into account Finland's own defense needs and what kind of help Ukraine needs," Finnish Defense Minister Antti Kaikkonen wrote in a tweet. "Help will be delivered as soon as possible."

SWEDEN: Swedish Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson said Sunday that Stockholm will send 135,000 field rations, 5,000 helmets, 5,000 body shields, and 5,000 anti-tank weapons, according to *The Daily Sabah.*

AUSTRALIA: Just a week after Canberra said it would only fund military-technical assistance for Kyiv, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced Tuesday that his government has committed $50 million in lethal defensive weapons for Ukraine.

“We’re talking missiles, we’re talking ammunition, we’re talking supporting them in their defense of their own homeland in Ukraine and we will be doing that in partnership with NATO.”

TREND FORECAST: *The United States will not enter into a one-on-one military conflict with Russia or China. Indeed, they could not even beat the Taliban or win the “Mission Accomplished” Iraq war.*

TRENDPOST: *The White House has refused to acknowledge its own failed diplomacy that Ukrainians are now paying for. Russia told the U.S. and NATO clearly that it wants NATO to stop expanding and does not want Ukraine to join.*

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said no deal on both fronts. Moscow called those two issues its red line and decided to act. The Biden administration *now finds itself having to tell Americans that they don't need to worry about nuclear war.*

Of course, you need to worry about nuclear war. Putin has nothing to lose and will never let Ukraine or its comedian president embarrass him on the world's stage. The U.S. has to figure out how to de-escalate the situation. It was Sun Tzu who wrote, "Build your opponent a golden bridge to retreat across."

Despite all of America's tough talk, Gerald Celente has pointed out that the American military has not won a war since WWII and has been stacking up defeats, including the recent retreat from Afghanistan. (See "DUH! PENTAGON SURPRISED BY CHINA'S TEST OF HYPERSONIC MISSILE," "PENTAGON: TARGET CHINA" and "U.S. 'ALREADY LOST' AI WAR WITH CHINA, PENTAGON'S FORMER SOFTWARE CHIEF SAYS.")

Yet, as they have since the end of World War II, Washington and their Presstitutes will continue their fear and hysteria Cold War rhetoric to frighten its masses while enriching the military manufacturing mob.

Gerald Celente's forecast that America would lose the war when President George W. Bush launched it in October 2001—with 88 percent of Americans' support—was prescient.

The vast majority of the nation believed Bush's bullshit at the time and admonished Celente for his forecast.

Indeed, as noted in the movie What Zizi Gave Honeyboy, after being a major media favorite, Celente was banned from the airwaves for telling the media America would lose the Afghan War.

***TRENDPOST:** Former Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev was promised back in 1989 that NATO would not reach farther east than the German border, but that has proven to be a lie and there are now NATO missiles 100 miles from the Russian border in Poland.*

Chris Hedges, the independent journalist, wrote that there was a brief time of hope that the world could spend money on social projects instead of the massive military complex, but that proved to be wishful thinking.

The war industry acted fast to urge countries like Poland, Hungary, and Latvia to join the alliance to reap the benefits of having to militarize these countries to meet NATO's standards. Hedges wrote that many of these smaller countries took out monster loans in their efforts.

He said NATO's expansion was swift, Russia became the enemy again, and now there is a NATO missile system in a base in Poland 100 miles from the Russian border.

"War, after all, it's a business, a very lucrative one. It is why we spent two decades in Afghanistan although there was universal consensus after a few years of fruitless fighting that we had waded into the quagmire we could never win," he wrote.

He also pointed to the Clinton administration's promise in 1997 to Moscow that no combat troops would be stationed in Eastern Europe, but he wrote that the promise turned out to be a lie.

TRENDPOST: *Long forgotten was the U.S. and NATO'S pledge not to expand into Eastern Europe following the deal made during the 1990 negotiations between the West and the Soviet Union over German unification.*

Therefore, in the view of Russia, it is taking self-defense actions to protect itself from NATO's eastward march.

As detailed in The Los Angeles Times back in May of 2016, while the U.S. and NATO deny that no such agreement was struck, "...hundreds of memos, meeting minutes and transcripts from U.S. archives indicate otherwise." The article states:

> *"According to transcripts of meetings in Moscow on Feb. 9, then-Secretary of State James Baker suggested that in exchange for cooperation with*

Germany, the U.S. could make 'iron-clad guarantees' that NATO would not expand 'one inch eastward.' Less than a week later, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev agreed to begin reunification talks.

No formal deal was struck, but from all the evidence, the quid pro quo was clear: Gorbachev acceded to Germany's western alignment and the U.S. would limit NATO's expansion."

PRESSTITUTES WHO SOLD COVID WAR, WANT TO RAMP UP UKRAINE WAR

Richard Engel, the chief foreign correspondent for NBC News, faced backlash on social media on Monday when he wondered aloud just how long Western countries could just stand around and watch Russia invade Ukraine.

"Perhaps the biggest risk-calculation/moral dilemma of the war so far," he tweeted. "A massive Russian convoy is abot 30 miles from Kyiv. The US/NATO could likely destroy it. But that would be direct involvement against Russia and risk everything. Does the West watch in silence as it rolls?"

Engel was likely referring to the 40-mile-long convoy of Russian tanks and other vehicles taking shape outside of Kyiv for an apparent future assault. Russia has reportedly made a few missteps in the early stages of the war, and some analysts see this convoy as its fatal blow on the capital.

Engel's suggestion that there was a "moral dilemma" over a move that could spark a nuclear war was met with sharp criticism.

"You view starting world war III, involving the use of nuclear weapons and the end of human civilization, as a "moral dilemma"? In fact, you don't. You know that the (U.S.) decision to wage war against Russia is already taken, and it's your job to sell it to the public," Andre Damon, a writer for WSWS.org tweeted.

Tommy Vietor, a former spokesman for President Barack Obama, also responded to Engel's post, "The way you tweet about whether the US and NATO should engage in a full-on war against a nuclear-armed super power is shockingly glib. It's not as simple as "watch in silence as it rolls" or not. The stakes are risking nuclear annihilation."

NATO and its allies have been clear that they will not intervene due to the risk of sparking a third world war.

But media outlets in the U.S. see that the COVID-19 War is winding down (at least for now) and they have months before the midterm elections.

What would get more clicks on a news website for longer: Putin issuing a public apology and leaving his troops in Ukraine—to help clean up the mess, or 24-hour news cycles focused on cellphone video of the latest Russian tank explosion and debate about a new, threatening message from the Kremlin?

Andrea Chalupa, a journalist, told MSNBC on Monday that the world has not seen Russia's true power up to this point in its conflict with Ukraine, and said the West needs to begin the enforcement of a no-fly zone over Ukraine—which means a U.S. war with Russia.

"This is war-mongering idiocy with no sense of the stakes, definitions, and actual significance of these words," Eric Reinhart, a Harvard anthropologist, responded.

TRENDPOST: *Journalism is dead. Little boys and girls working for the mainstream media have degraded into Presstitutes. Rather than reporting facts and data they skew the "news" with their opinions to inflate their egos.*

We've reported in the ***Trends Journal*** *the effort that news outlets make to sell fear, and there is no better example than the COVID-19 outbreak. (See*

“[PRESSTITUTES KEEP SELLING COVID FEAR](),” [“LOCKDOWN LIES IGNORED BY PRESSTITUTES. DISMISSED BY D.C.”]() and [“CORPORATE MEDIA LIES ABOUT TRUCKER PROTEST BY CALLING THEM ‘FAR-RIGHT.”]()

BLACKSTONE ENDS NEW INVESTMENTS IN OIL AND GAS E&P

Blackstone Group, the world’s largest private equity firm with more than $900 billion under management, has told clients that it will no longer invest in, or lend to, ventures exploring for or producing oil and gas, people familiar told Bloomberg.

The decision follows two years in which petroleum prices have ridden a rollercoaster of COVID-era collapse, recovery-driven spikes, and now uncertainties surrounding geopolitical risks.

Although Blackstone has made no new oil or gas investments since 2017, the firm has now set a formal policy based on its view that the world will rely less and less on petroleum for energy, Bloomberg reported.

Since 2017, asset management firms have chopped their annual investments on U.S.-centered oil and gas deals by 60 percent to about $11 billion last year, according to data service Preqin.

Apollo Global Management has said its next buyout fund will not deal in oil or gas. Riverstone Holdings and others also have begun pulling out.

Blackstone has been taking advantage of recent high oil prices to continue selling its petroleum holdings. Quantum Energy Partners, which still sees rewards in the sector, has purchased some of the assets, Bloomberg noted.

Private equity giant KKR also remains active in the industry.

Private equity's shrinking interest in oil and gas comes after many large banks, pension funds, and university endowments have retreated from the sector because of shrinking returns, higher risks, and the global divestment movement that has lopped an estimated $14 trillion from the industry, as we reported in "Shareholders, Court Darken Oil Industry's Future" (1 Jun 2021).

Partly as a result, the industry's cost of borrowing for capital projects has been rising.

In 2011, the cost of capital for long-range exploration and development projects was typically between 8 and 10 percent, but in November 2021 it was averaging 20 percent, according to Bloomberg, as we reported in "Cost of Capital Soars for Oil and Gas Producers" (16 Nov 2021).

In contrast, renewable energy projects' cost of capital late last year was ranging between 3 and 5 percent, Bloomberg said.

Blackstone, an early and heavy player in the U.S. shale oil boom, now sees consumer pressures and government policies favoring renewable power.

"Over the last several years, we have found that the risk and return characteristics on our energy transition investments are more attractive than in the upstream [petroleum] sector," David Foley, Blackstone's chief of energy investments, said in a Bloomberg interview.

The firm also needs to ensure that its future energy funds meet Europe's investment standards for environmental, social, and governance (ESG) probity, Jean Rogers, Blackstone's chief of ESG compliance.

Blackstone's next energy fund is seeking to raise at least $4 billion to put into "energy transition," which could include everything from lithium mines to wind farms.

Investment funds targeting green energy raised a record $75 billion in 2021, while funds focused on fossil fuels managed to attract a record low of $4.6 billion, Preqin reported.

Led by Texas, several states are enacting or considering laws that will ban financial firms from doing business with a state's government if a company "discriminates" against oil and gas companies by not financing their operations.

TRENDPOST: *Brent Crude is now over $100 a barrel and we forecast they will stay high short and near term. However, as we have been warning, oil consumption will slowly move downward as the climate change trend escalates.*

In "The Oil Industry's Risky Future" (10 Jul 2019), we noted that consumers are gradually moving toward electric vehicles, as are fleet operators. Electric utilities are preparing for a grid that relies not on oil and gas but on renewable power and large-scale storage, as well as preparing for decentralized generation, a scenario we outlined in "...and goodbye, electric grid" (22 Oct 2015).

The global "oil divestment" movement to deny funding to oil and gas exploration had withdrawn an estimated $14 trillion from the industry by mid-2021, as we noted in "Shareholders, Court Darken Oil Industry's Future" (1 Jun 2021), and has progressed since then.

Volkswagen, Ford, General Motors, and other vehicle makers have pledged to no longer make petrol-powered cars by 2035 at the latest.

The fact that private equity is abandoning oil and gas exploration and production as a long-term profitable venture is one more clear signal that the petroleum industry as a driving economic force has entered its twilight.

However in the near term, oil and gas prices will remain high as there are no strong alternative replacements, and should the Ukraine War escalate they will become precious commodities.

RISING COMMODITY PRICES EASE SOUTH AFRICA'S DEBT CRISIS

Rocketing prices for iron ore, platinum, and other resources for which South Africa is a key supplier will give the country an unplanned $12 billion that it will use to cut its budget deficit, finance minister Enoch Godongwana said in comments cited by the *Financial Times*.

The windfall also will allow the country to reduce its borrowing this year for the first time since 2015, seeking about $8 billion less from outside sources.

In recent years, Africa's most industrialized economy has been plagued by stagnant growth, falling tax revenues, rising wages for government workers, and costly bailouts of state-backed companies.

This year's boost in revenues "is not a reflection of an improvement in the capacity of our economy," Godongwana said. "We cannot plan permanent expenditure on the basis of short-term increases in commodity prices."

The government will balance its budget by 2024, exclusive of interest payments, and public debt will peak in 2025 at 75 percent of GDP, he predicted.

TREND FORECAST: *While inflation brings a windfall to some poor nations depending on exports of raw materials, it also boosts their costs of imports and of servicing their massive debts.*

Higher commodity prices may delay, but will not avoid, a reckoning between developing nations and their lenders.

SPOTLIGHT: BIGS GET BIGGER

Each week, we report instances where the money junky hedge funds, private equity groups and the already big companies swallow another piece of the global economy. Here are some more of what the BIGS have been gobbling up and how the Bigs keep getting bigger and the rich keep getting richer.

DRUG MAKERS COLLECT HUGE COVID WINDFALLS

Pfizer and Moderna together sold $79 billion in COVID vaccines and treatments in 2021, *The Wall Street Journal* reported, with Abbott Laboratories collecting $7.7 billion in sales of materials for COVID lab tests.

Corporate forecasts and a *WSJ* analysis indicate the drug makers' COVID-related 2022 sales could reach $90 billion.

Moderna sold $17.7 billion worth of its vaccine last year and foresees $19 billion this year.

Its vaccine has lofted Moderna from start-up to a leading pharmaceutical firm in a little more than a year.

Sales have been sliding for less-effective COVID treatments developed by Eli Lilly and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, the *WSJ* found.

Companies that have done well now have huge cash reserves and are deploying them to become an even larger presence in their industry.

Moderna reported $17.6 billion in liquidity, 13 times more than it had before the COVID War.

Pfizer, which had $27.7 billion in cash last October, is on a shopping spree, bagging other companies developing or marketing drugs that align with its own plans, as we noted in "Pfizer Buys Cancer Biotech Firm for $2.26 Billion" (14 Sep 2021) and "Pfizer Buys Arena Pharmaceuticals for $6.7 Billion" (21 Dec 2021).

Public health organizations have accused pharma firms of profiteering from the COVID War and have urged them to make more vaccines available at low or no cost to poor nations.

PRIVATE EQUITY FIRMS PLANNING BIDS FOR STAKE IN FRENCH SOCCER LEAGUE

After a season of financial disasters, France's Ligue 1 soccer league is spinning off a new company that will own the league's broadcast rights.

The new entity is auctioning as much as 15 percent of its ownership and at least 10 private equity groups—including Hellman & Friedman, Silver Lake, and Oaktree Capital—formally expressed interest in December.

That group has been distilled to a few select bidders who will make their final offers by 9 March.

The sale could value the league as highly as €13 billion, about 13 times its 2019 earnings, the *Financial Times* reported.

Silver Lake owns part of City Football Group, which owns England's Manchester City team and a part of Ligue 1's ES Troyes club. Oaktree owns Caen, a team in France's Ligue 2, and also has financed Italy's Inter Milan soccer team.

BARCLAYS FOURTH-QUARTER PROFITS GROW FIVEFOLD

Barclays saw fourth-quarter net income balloon to €1.1 billion from €220 million a year earlier due to roaring business in its investment banking division, the London-based bank announced.

Analysts had expected a more modest €643 million, the *Financial Times* noted.

Revenues rose to €5.2 billion, up 4.4 percent on the strength of consumers' credit card use during the post-COVID recovery.

The profit gains were aided by the bank's release of €31 million in cash it had set aside to cover bad loans but did not need for that purpose.

Last year's boom in mergers and acquisitions brought the bank windfall profits from its advisory services. However, the M&A market's frenzy is now fading, the *FT* said.

HEALTHCARE REAL ESTATE LANDLORDS TO COMBINE IN $10-BILLION DEAL

Healthcare Trust of America and the smaller Healthcare Realty Trust are set to combine into a single company worth about $10 billion, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

Both companies own medical office buildings.

Healthcare Trust of American owns about 25 million square feet of space and had a market value of $6.6 billion on 24 February. Healthcare Realty Trust holds about 18 million square feet and is worth about $4.4 billion.

STANDARD GENERAL LANDS TEGNA FOR $8.6 BILLION

Hedge fund Standard General has ended years of negotiations by inking an $8.6-billion agreement to take over Tegna, a television broadcaster and digital media company.

The fund owned 4.8 percent of Tegna at the end of 2021, according to regulatory filings.

Tegna owns 64 television stations in 51 U.S. markets and also owns the Quest, True Crime, and Twist networks.

Standard General will pay $24 a share for Tegna stock, a 39-percent premium to its 14 September closing price, the day news of the deal broke.

Private equity firm Apollo Global Management took part in the deal and will own an unspecified number of non-voting shares in the new entity, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

In January, Standard General offered $2.07 billion to buy the balance of the Bally's casino chain it does not already own, according to the *WSJ*.

CARVANA BUYS CAR AUCTION BUSINESS FOR $2.2 BILLION

Online used-car dealer Carvana will pay $2.2 billion for ADESA U.S., America's second-largest vehicle auctioneer, giving the young company greater access to the used cars dealers take as trade-ins.

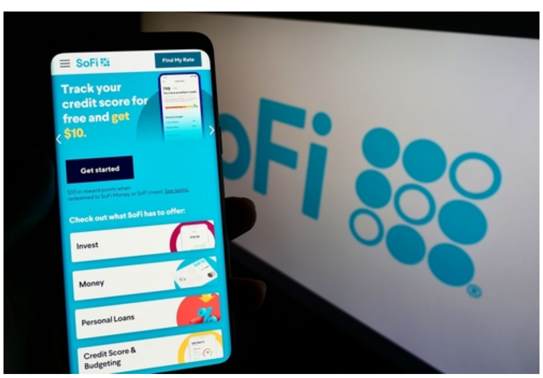
Carvana will spend $1 billion to improve ADESA's 56 locations, the company said.

Carvana also has expanded to 15 the number of centers where it inspects and reconditions cars and plans to add another six centers this year, it announced.

Carvana sold 113,000 cars in 2021's fourth quarter, barely more than the 110,000 it sold in the third. Its sales last year totaled about 425,000 cars.

The company lost $462 million in 2020 but trimmed that figure to $287 million in red ink last year, including $182 million it vaporized in 2021's final quarter.

SOFI BUYS TECHNISYS FOR $1.1 BILLION



Sofi Technologies, an online lender and financial services company, will take over Technisys SA, trading $1.1 billion worth of Sofi stock for the banking software maker.

The deal gives Sofi greater control over its "back room" operations that run online apps and manage customers' accounts.

The purchase also will add as much as $800 million in new revenue to Sofi through 2025 and trim $85 million in costs from the two companies, Sofi said in announcing the purchase.

Sofi will use Technisys technology to expand services to its customers and will allow other financial services firms to use the platform, which now is available largely in only Latin America.

In February, Sofi moved from being a lender to being a bank when it acquired California-based community lender Golden Pacific Bancorp.

In 2020, Sofi spent $1.2 billion to buy Galileo Financial Technologies, a company making software to manage debit cards.

Sofi went public last year through a merger with a special-purpose acquisition company (SPAC). Its share price has slumped 35 percent so far this year.

SPECIAL UKRAINE REPORT

BIDEN'S TROOP SURGE: VOWS TO 'DEFEND EVERY INCH OF NATO TERRITORY'

As they used to say in The Bronx, "bullshit has its own sound."

Imagine? Joseph Biden, the U.S. President who withdrew U.S. troops from the 20 year murderous Afghanistan War last year—leaving behind billions of dollars of U.S. armaments and erroneously claiming the Taliban would not take over the nation or its capital, Kabul—is now fat-mouthing that the U.S. will defend NATO nations.

Hours before Russia began its invasion of Ukraine, U.S. President Joe Biden announced plans to shift U.S. forces already in Europe to Baltic states to "strengthen" them in the face of what he called Russian aggression. Besides the troops, the U.S. will send up to eight F-35s and 20 Apache helicopters, according to the *Military Times.*

“Our commitment to Article 5 is ironclad,” Biden said. “I have ordered the deployment of additional forces to augment our capabilities in Europe to support our NATO allies. We were joined today by our close partners Sweden, Finland, and the European Union. Russia’s President Vladimir Putin has failed in his goal of dividing the West.”

The additional U.S. troops will be sent to Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Reuters reported early Friday that about 20 Apache helicopters arrived in Latvia’s Lielvarde airfield.

“Our forces are not and will not be engaged in a conflict with Russia in Ukraine,” Biden said Thursday at the White House. “Our forces are not going to Europe to fight in Ukraine, but to defend our NATO allies and reassure those allies in the East.”

Filippo Grandi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, said Friday that more than 50,000 Ukrainians have fled from the country as Russian troops tried to advance towards Kyiv. As many as 100,000 have been displaced.

Four countries—including Poland—called for NATO countries to invoke Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

TRENDPOST: The Trends Journal *has reported for months about the strained relations between Washington and Moscow, even before Biden was in the White House. (See* *“PUTIN ACKNOWLEDGES BIDEN’S ANTI-RUSSIAN RHETORIC”* *and* *“BIDEN HITS RUSSIA WITH SANCTIONS.”)*

UKRAINE WAR BUILDUP: COMEDY SHOW ON PARADE

Ottawa announced Thursday that 3,400 troops are prepared to deploy to Europe.

Besides the troops that are on standby, up to 460 troops already in Europe will head to Latvia, where there are 540 Canadian troops.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau—who snuffed out democracy in his own country after imposing the Emergencies Act to end the trucker's Freedom Convoy, lock them up and freeze bank accounts of those supporting them—said, "Canada and our allies will defend democracy."

"We are taking these actions today to stand against authoritarianism. The people of Ukraine, like all people, must be free to determine their own future."

TRENDPOST: *The unfortunate reality is that the democratically elected president of Ukraine was overthrown in a U.S. launched coup in 2014, that we have detailed in great detail in last week's **Trends Journal** and previous ones as it happened. (See "VICTORIA 'FUCK THE EU' NULAND WHO SPREARHEADED OVERTHROW OF DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE IN 2014, STILL IN POWER.")*

TREND FORECAST: *World War III has begun. But rather than defuse tensions and attempt to work for a peace agreement, the war hawks are screaming to escalate the fight.*

As Gerald Celente noted, "When all else fails, they take you to war."

Making the case to redirect the people's mind, as Ron Paul's Liberty Report states regarding the U.S. building up tension in the area, "Biden may be calculating that he needs a nice little war to boost back his numbers and rally Americans to his support."

Like most everything else in this first year of the Biden Administration, it would be a terrible mistake. And, as the cover of our 25 January 2022 ***Trends Journal*** *illustrates: “DOW PLUMMETS!! WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, THEY TAKE YOU TO WAR.”*

Remember, as the hard facts and data prove, America’s stock markets were crashing and the economy was diving deep into recession before the terror strikes of 9/11.

In fact, the dot.com bust which happened in March 2000 had sunk the tech-heavy Nasdaq down 66 percent the day before the terror strike that launched the never ending War on Terror and “Operation Enduring Freedom”... America’s deadly Afghan War that it lost which “endured” for 20 years.

Yet, the facts of an economic and market meltdown prior to the attacks are long forgotten.

Tragic Comedy

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky, one of the country’s most popular comedians who played the role as Ukraine president in the TV show, “Servant of the People,” before he got elected in 2019, said in a speech on Thursday that Kyiv has been essentially left to fend for itself against the much stronger and capable Russian military.

“Today Russia attacked the entire territory of our state and today our defenders have done a lot,” he said. “They defended almost the entire territory of Ukraine, which suffered direct blows."

He realized that the cavalry was not coming and Kyiv was “left alone in defense of our state.”

“Who is ready to fight with us? Honestly, I do not see such,” he said.

“Today, I asked the 27 leaders of Europe whether Ukraine will be in NATO. I asked directly. Everyone is afraid. They do not answer,” he said.

In fact, the cavalry did come to his rescue in terms of weapons, money and munitions.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Saturday he has authorized $350 million in new U.S. military assistance to Ukraine.

Yes, “He”... not We the People authorized taxpayer money to go to Ukraine.

"Today, as Ukraine fights with courage and pride against Russia's brutal and unprovoked assault, I have authorized, pursuant to a delegation by the president, an unprecedented third Presidential Drawdown of up to $350 million for immediate support to Ukraine's defense.”

This latest money pumping now brings the total security assistance the "United States has committed to Ukraine over the past year to more than $1 billion," according to the State Department.

TRENDPOST: *The* ***Trends Journal*** *has reported extensively on the buildup of tensions in eastern Ukraine and the worsening relationship between the White House and the Kremlin. (See: “KREMLIN BLAMES UKRAINE FOR STOKING TENSIONS AT BORDER,” “U.S. VOWS UKRAINE SUPPORT” and “BLINKEN BELLOWS: U.S. COMMITMENT TO UKRAINE’S SOVEREIGNTY IS ‘IRONCLAD”).*

“EMPIRE OF LIES”: PUTIN RESPONDS TO WEST’S SANCTIONS

Yesterday, in response to the wave of new sanctions being imposed upon Russia by the United States and western nations following Russia’s military invasion of Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin, condemned them as an “empire of lies”:

> “All [the US] satellites not only dutifully agree, sing along to its music, but also copy its behavior, and enthusiastically accept the rules they are offered. Therefore, with good reason, we can confidently say that the entire so-called Western bloc, formed by the United States in its own image and likeness, all of it is an ‘empire of lies’.”

Putin claims that his country’s military operation in Ukraine was a proactive measure to prevent Kiev from trying to launch an all-out assault on the breakaway regions of Donetsk and Lugansk, which Moscow formally recognized as the People’s Republics just before he launched the attack.

However, Kiev has said—despite reports of ongoing military action between Ukraine and the breakaway region—that it had no plans to retake the disputed territories and the Russian attack was “unprovoked.”

TRENDPOST: *As we have greatly detailed in last week’s SPECIAL UKRAINE REPORT, following the 2014 U.S. backed coup that ousted the democratically-elected Ukraine president Victor Yanukovych, Donetsk and Lugansk split from Ukraine.*

And while large-scale combat ended with the 2014-15 Minsk agreements—an agreement that Russian President Putin said Ukraine has violated—the fighting between Ukraine and the republics killed an estimated 14,000 soldiers and civilians.

***TREND FORECAST:** As reported in the economic section of this week's **Trends Journal**, the sanctions being imposed on Russia are taking a very heavy toll on the nation's economy, currency and equity markets.*

The stronger the sanctions, the deeper the Russian economy sinks, the greater the escalation of world war. As Gerald Celente notes, "When people lose everything and have nothing left to lose, they lose it."

CHINA CALLS FOR RESTRAINT IN UKRAINE, BLAMES WEST FOR CALAMITY

As the saying goes, "It's the economy, stupid." Not wanting to damage its trade relations and financial security, China is trying not to turn its back on Russia after the invasion of Ukraine, while also maintaining its diplomatic relationship with the West, which is a tough balancing act.

One thing is certain: Beijing believes the world arrived at this point due to Washington's interference in Kyiv.

Hua Chunying, the Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman, said the invasion of Ukraine was not what Beijing hoped to see.

"China has taken a responsible attitude and persuaded all parties not to escalate tensions or incite war," she said on Thursday. "Those who follow the U.S.'s lead in fanning up flame and then shifting the blame onto others are truly irresponsible."

China abstained from voting on a UN Security Council resolution that intended to end the conflict.

Hua called for "restraint to prevent the situation from getting out of control." Reuters reported that she criticized journalists for pressing her on the matter, saying, "This is perhaps a difference between China and you Westerners. We won't go rushing to a conclusion." (See "CHINA SIDES WITH RUSSIA IN CLASH WITH WEST. WILL THE BOTTOM LINE LIMIT SUPPORT?")

"Regarding the definition of an invasion, I think we should go back to how to view the current situation in Ukraine. The Ukrainian issue has other very complicated historical background that has continued to today. it may not be what everyone wants to see," she said.

The American media has essentially grabbed on to the narrative that Russia's Vladimir Putin is the sole aggressor, is suicidal, and wants to bring the world down with him. He and he alone deserves all the blame, according to Western reports.

Michael Tracey, an independent journalist in the U.S., tweeted, "Anyone who dares question any aspect of this ever-escalating militarization is immediately attacked as a Putin lover. There's virtually no skepticism, much less opposition, anywhere. Anti-war movement non-existent. Total unanimity in favor of escalation, with no end point. Great."

Indeed, the cover of last week's **Trends Journal** noted that "TALK OF PEACE IS FORBIDDEN."

Tracy retweeted an Associated Press update that said the U.S.—for the first time—agreed to deliver Stinger missiles to Ukraine as part of a package approved by the White House last week. (See "WAR MACHINE MAKING BILLIONS.")

Last month, the **Trends Journal** ran an article titled, "CHINA JOINS RUSSIA: URGES U.S. TO JETTISON COLD-WAR MENTALITY," that referred to China's foreign minister warning the U.S. against adopting a confrontational posture, and said "regional security cannot be guaranteed by strengthening or even expanding military blocs."

President Biden has tried to describe Putin as persona non grata with the international community and—without mentioning China by name—said any nation that "countenances Russia's naked aggression against Ukraine will be stained by association."

Biden was asked flatly if he was urging Beijing to isolate Moscow, and he said he would not comment further, Reuters reported.

Jen Psaki, the White House press secretary, called the Russian attack "a moment for China, for any country, about what side of history they want to stand on here."

The Economist reported that—considering the new sanctions announced by Western countries—Moscow may have to turn further toward China, which would "condemn Russia to being the junior partner of an unsentimental regime which sees it as a diplomatic sidekick and a backward source of cheap commodities. That is a yoke Mr. Putin would chafe under."

At least two Chinese public banks will reportedly limit financing to purchase raw materials from Russia due to the concern over Western sanctions, according to Bloomberg. The banks, ICBC and the Bank of China, will restrict the purchase of Russian commodities.

The news organization cited unnamed sources in its report, and said the concern at these banks is that allowing the funding could be seen as supporting last week's invasion.

There is a chance that the invasion of Ukraine can result in a new alliance between Russia and China that molds the next century. The invasion put Beijing—like Israel—into a nearly impossible balancing act, according to Kevin Rudd, the former Australian prime minister, according to *The New York Times.*

“I don’t think this is good for anybody,” Wang Huiyao, the president of the Center for China and Globalization, told the paper. “Conflict is not a solution, and China doesn’t want to see things deteriorate.”

It is unclear how much Beijing knew about the invasion before it took place. Reports said China’s Embassy in Ukraine’s capital looked like it was caught flat-footed because it did not evacuate its staff until after the attacks started. The country’s official stance is neutral, according to *The Global Times*, and reiterated that Beijing supports “all diplomatic efforts” to bring a “peaceful settlement” to the crisis.

Tong Zhao, a senior fellow in the Nuclear Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which is in Beijing, said China is “clearly sympathetic to Russian perspectives.”

“China thinks that it's the NATO expansion and other threats from the U.S. and NATO” that prompted Putin to act and defend the country’s legitimate interests.

“In other words, I think China feels Russia feels it is forced to do what it is doing,” he said.

TRENDPOST: *There’s an old saying in politics: Never let a good crisis go to waste. There are emerging reports that say Washington is trying to use the Russian invasion as a way to damage the relationship between Moscow and Beijing. (See “TOP TRENDS 2021: THE RISE OF CHINA.”)*

A U.S. official told The Wall Street Journal that the invasion will eventually force China to pick a side: Russia or the West. There is even a chance that China itself can face sanctions for keeping its financial market open with Russia.

It remains to be seen how well that takes hold. Wang Wenbin, the Chinese foreign minister, said, “The truly discredited countries are those that want only to interfere in other countries’ internal affairs and wage wars in the name of democracy and human rights.”

TRENDPOST: *The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on Washington's war of words with Beijing over several issues ranging from control of the South China Sea, Uyghur detention camps, and Taiwan. (See "CHINA WON'T STOP AT TAIWAN, SO WHERE SHOULD AMERICA DRAW THE LINE?" "CHINA/TAIWAN TENSIONS RISING: WAR ON THE HORIZON?" and "CHINA PUTS CHINA FIRST.")*

TREND FORECAST: *America, with the largest military in the world, has not won a war since World War II, and just lost the 20 year Afghan War. Despite spending an estimated $2.3 trillion, it could not defeat some 80,000 Taliban fighters. Therefore, any war talk about the U.S. waging against Russia or China is nothing more than "talk."*

However, absent a universal peace movement, the current Ukraine War, we forecast, will escalate into WWIII... the war that will end life on earth.

LUKASHENKO BLAMES THE WEST FOR PUSHING RUSSIA INTO A 'THIRD WORLD WAR'

Alexander Lukashenko, the Belarusian president, blamed the West over its unified response against Russia's military actions in Ukraine and said the crippling sanctions are backing Moscow into a corner that could spark WWIII.

"Now there is a lot of talk against the banking sector," he said. "Gas, oil, SWIFT. It's worse than war. This is pushing Russia into a third world war."

He called for restraint because "nuclear war is the end of everything."

NATO has been clear that it is not willing to fight Russia over Ukraine, but most of the E.U. has announced sanctions against Russia and are enforcing a no-fly-zone for Russian commercial jets.

The expulsion of selected Russian banks from SWIFT, or the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication, is seen as the financial “nuclear option.” The messaging system, which was founded in 1973, enables international financial institutions to send money to each other.

Western countries have announced plans to block some Russian banks from the system and has “no precedent in the globalized age,” Reuters reported. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky urged world leaders to disconnect Russia from the banking system.

Russia is a major commodities producer and provides the world with 10 percent of its oil and 40 percent of the natural gas to Europe, the report said. The removal of Russia from Swift could have a serious drag on the global economy.

Sen. Mitch McConnell, the minority leader, urged Biden to “ratchet the sanctions all the way up.”

“Don’t hold any back,” he said.

Western countries on Saturday said they would block Russia from dipping into its $630 billion international reserve to counter the impact of sanctions being imposed over its attack in Ukraine. *The Wall Street Journal* said the move could be a “hammer-blow” to Russia’s economy.

“Symbolically speaking, it’s a nuclear bomb in the world of global finance,” Sony Kapoor, a finance professor and CEO of the Nordic Institute for Finance, Technology and Sustainability, told the paper.

“There's going to be a huge Russia discount and risk premium for any type of financial transaction whatsoever. It’s going to be macro significant and very painful,” he said.

Airlines in Russia have been forced to cancel flights into Europe and the ruble has hit an all-time low of 89.60 against the U.S. dollar on Sunday. And while Moscow can print more rubles, inflation would spike and Russia's currency would further depreciate.

Lukashenko is seen as a leader whose own survival depends on Russian President Vladimir Putin. Lukashenko is no stranger to Western sanctions over a disputed presidential election on 9 August 2020.

Zelensky lashed out on Sunday for allowing Russia troops to stage part of their offensive from Belarus.

"The Russian military is launching missiles at Ukraine from your territory. From your territory they are killing our children, they are destroying our homes and trying to blow up everything that has been built for decades," he said. He continued, "We are your neighbors. Be Belarus, not Russia!"

U.S. President Joe Biden on Thursday said Putin "chose this war" when he slapped Russia with new sanctions that target banks, oligarchs, and the technology sector.

"Putin is the aggressor," he said. "Putin chose this war, and now he and his country will bear the consequences."

TREND FORECAST: *As the saying goes, "Generals are always fighting the last war." And America's post-WWII war track record is an unblemished failure.*

From their weaponry to tactics, the U.S. military has exemplified a common misconception and/or misunderstanding of technology and development in warfare... regardless of who they are fighting.

And the U.S. $778 billion 2022 military budget of more tanks, planes, ships and antiquated artillery for the 21st century further exemplifies their backwardness. We are planning to fight an enemy that does not exist.

In addition, as we have forecast, wars with China and Russia will be the War that ends all wars.

And if America stays on the trend lines drawn since the War on Terror launched by U.S. President George W. Bush following 9/11, it will be the last world war. As we have quoted Albert Einstein, "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones."

HEY STUPID! PROPAGANDA NETWORKS WILL TELL YOU "WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT UKRAINE"

Global Presstitutes, media whores who put out for their corporate pimps and government whore masters have told the general public not to think for themselves and only swallow the crap that they are selling when it comes to the Ukraine War.

We have detailed the outright propaganda how with their words, they demean the public's intelligence by taking away the burden from their readers from having to do any learning on their own to form an opinion about the crisis unfolding in Ukraine.

Indeed, as detailed, numerous news sites have distilled the information and wrapped it up nicely in a "Here's What You Need To Know" story.

It's worth noting that in some of these cases—the reporters writing the summary likely could not point to Ukraine on a map a week ago. The reason these outlets used the phrase is likely due to an algorithm for Search Engine Optimization so these stories attract more views from people Googling the conflict... or they are in bed, screwing for their government whore masters.

The **Trends Journal** compiled a list of some news outlets that ran the headline:

- *Reuters*:“Ukraine and Russia: **What You Need to Know”**
- *Inquirer.net:* “Ukraine and Russia: **What You Need to Know Right Now”**
- *Time:* **“What You Need to Know** About the Escalating Ukraine-Russia Crisis”
- *Vox:* “**Everything You Need To Know** About the 2014 Ukraine Crisis”
- *DW:* “Russia Invades Ukraine: **What You Need to Know”**
- *India TODAY:* “Russia Declares War on Ukraine: **All You Need To Know”**
- *CNN:* “The Sun is Rising in Kyiv. **Here’s What You Need to Know”**
- *CNBC:* “Why is There Conflict in Ukraine and What is Putin’s Endgame? **Here’s What You Need to Know”**
- *CBS News:* **“What You Need to Know** About the Russia-Ukraine Conflict as Invasion Beings”
- *WAVY.com:* **“What Virginians Should Know** About Russia’s Invasion”
- *BBC:* “Ukraine Conflict: **What We Know** About the Invasion”
- *Annenberg Media:* **“What You Need To Know** About the Russia-Ukraine Conflict”
- *New York Times:* “The Ukraine Crisis**: What to Know** About Why Russia Attacked”
- *The Today Show:* “Russia has Invaded Ukraine; **What to Know** the Attack”
- *The Heritage Foundation:* “Here’s **What Americans Need to Know** About Ukraine”
- *ABC (Australia):* “Russia Has Invaded Ukraine**. Here’s What You Need to Know”**
- *The Hill:* **5 Things to Know** as Russia Presses into Ukraine
- *Seeking Alpha:* “Ukraine War Market Impact: **Everything You Need to Know”**
- *AP:* “Russia-Ukraine**: What to Know** as Russia Attacks Ukraine”

- *NDTV:* **"Here's What You Need to Know** About the Ukraine Crisis Right Now"
- *The Boston Globe:* **"Here's What You need to Know** About the Russia-Ukraine Situation"
- *ABC News: "*Russia-Ukraine**: What to Know** as Explosions Boom Over Ukraine"
- *LA Times:* **"What You Need to Know** About Russia's Invasion of Ukraine"
- *Katie Couric Media:* **"What You Need to Know** About Ukraine's Refugee Crisis"
- *Global News:* "Ukraine-Russia Crisis**: Here's Everything You Need to Know** and Who's Involved"

TRENDPOST: *Here it is, in fact and in detail: "Everything You Need to Know," is only what they tell you to know as they sell fear, lies and hysteria... similar to the "Most trusted name in news" bullshit spewed out by CNN, the Cartoon News Network. (See, in this* ***Trends Journal****, "PRESSTITUTES AND POLITICIANS PLAY FOR THE SAME TEAM. WAKE UP KIDDIES.")*

E.U. BANS RUSSIAN MEDIA OUTLETS TO SILENCE VOICES NOT SINGING THEIR TUNE

We saw it play out during the COVID-19 outbreak: Those who questioned vaccines, social-distancing rules, and the effectiveness of masks to prevent infection were blackballed by the media and ridiculed as right-wing nut jobs and conspiracy theorists.

We're now seeing the same knee-jerk reaction when it comes to the conflict in Ukraine after the European Union moved to ban Russia's Sputnik and RT.com media outlets that have been accused by Ursula von der Leyen, the European Commission president, of spreading lies in order to “justify [President Vladimir] Putin’s war.”

“We are developing tools to ban their toxic and harmful disinformation in Europe,” she said, according to Politico Europe.

One of the recent articles published on Sputnik’s website questioned how many times NATO acted militarily without the appropriate approval.

The report reminded readers of how the world ended up in this mess in the first place: the expansion of NATO and the possibility that Ukraine could join.

Russia has said that these two issues are security concerns and must be dealt with. The U.S. refused to make any concessions. (See “WASHINGTON AND NATO: NO CONCESSIONS TO RUSSIA,” “BLINKEN MEETS WITH LAVROV: WAR HAWKS SCREAMING” and “RUSSIA: U.S. SPREADING ‘LARGE-SCALE DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN’ TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THEIR ‘OWN AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS.’”)

The Sputnik report said NATO, with the leadership of the U.S., became a global “police force” and stuck its nose in major world affairs without any invitation or agreement. The report pointed to Yugoslavia in 1999 during the Kosovo conflict. NATO air raids were blamed for up to 2,000 civilian deaths.

Sputnik also pointed to Iraq in 2003 and Afghanistan 2001. The report said several NATO armies “famously” invaded Iraq on a “bogus mission to locate weapons of mass destruction. The report pointed out that the U.S. alone sent in 177,000 troops into Iraq—which is fewer than the number Russia deployed in Ukraine.

Condoleezza Rice, former U.S. National Security Adviser under George W. Bush, appeared on Fox News on Sunday and was told by the host: “When you invade a sovereign nation, that is a war crime.”

The guest just nodded her head in agreement... ignoring the list of sovereign nations the U.S. has invaded since World War II, such as Korea, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria... to name a few.

"Just incredible," one Twitter commenter posted. "Establishment factions are going all-out leveraging this to whitewash their own past actions."

Indeed, in the buildup to the Iraq War in 2002, warmonger Condoleezza Rice spewed out the line on the Cartoon News Network that while there was no proof Saddam Hussein was building weapons of mass destruction, "The problem here is that there will always be some uncertainty about how quickly he can acquire nuclear weapons. But we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud."

TRENDPOST: *The* ***Trends Journal*** *published an article last week, titled, "WASHINGTON: ONLY BELIEVE U.S. WARMONGERING. SAYS ZERO HEDGE PEDDLES RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA.")*

Name the war, and see how America's Presstitutes—media whores who get paid to put out by their government whore masters and corporate pimps—love the warmongers and ban the peacemakers, "the children of God."

Indeed, numerous studies prove the pervasive media support for that war.

A Columbia Journalism Review study, as well as work by the Poynter Institute for Media Studies, concluded that the number of pro-war editorials and Op-Ed columns among the country's major metro newspapers outnumbered anti-war perspectives by a nearly 10-to-1 margin.

RT.com's website could not be accessed in the U.S. on Monday morning and Sputnik also said countries like Poland and Kazakhstan have shut down Russian TV channels.

TRENDPOST: *As we have reported, the Biden administration and NATO refused to offer any concessions to Moscow, which expressed its security concerns with the Alliance's expansion east.*

"There is no change, there will be no change," Antony Blinken, the U.S. Secretary of State, said.

One of the main points of contention for Russian President Vladimir Putin is what he sees as NATO's reach into his backyard.

Putin started moving tens of thousands of troops to the Ukrainian border late last year and said they will not leave until there are "concrete agreements prohibiting any further eastward expansion of NATO."

France, Germany, and the U.K. do not want to get into a war with Russia over Kyiv, which is tarnished by corruption and a dysfunctional government. *(See "POROSHENKO'S RETURN TO UKRAINE: FIRST CLASS FREAK SHOW.")*

Now that Russia invaded, the E.U. is acting like the countries all came together and are now responding in concert to Moscow's aggression. But the unity is unremarkable. The real test would come if Russia begins showing signs of aggression with a NATO ally.

FEATURED ARTICLES BY GUEST WRITERS

THE NEW YORK TIMES’ ONGOING SMEAR CAMPAIGN AGAINST ROBERT KENNEDY JR.

By Richard Gale and Gary Null PhD, [Progressive Radio Network]

Adam Nagourney’s recent effort to cancel and condemn Robert Kennedy Jr. has registered another low in *The New York Times*’ registry of crank tabloid journalism. Americans’ trust in our media is already at an all time low, down to 21 percent last year, and the lowest in the world. The *Times*’ propensity for fake reporting undoubtedly has contributed to American journalism’s steady decline.

So if a journalist is clueless about the individual he is writing about, what better weapon to employ than Robert’s own family members and friends? Fortunately Nagourney’s article is just a rambling, incoherent diatribe recycling earlier *Times* hit pieces by Roni Rabin and Robert’s niece Dr. Kerry Kennedy Meltzer. Its message is that Robert has turned his life away from being a conscientious advocate for the environment and jumped on the conspiratorial bandwagon.

However, there are glaring flaws in Nagourney's reasoning that his apparent ignorance about the subject matter would account for. Nowhere does Nagourney mention Robert's international bestselling book *The Real Anthony Fauci*, which has caused such a stir worldwide. Did the author bother to read the book? Highly doubtful.

Nagourney's writing seemingly focuses on Hollywood and LBGT issues. Evidently he is not the ideal journalist for the *Times'* editorial management to assign an article that otherwise requires many years of research into our nation's federal health system and reams of legal documents and peer-reviewed studies about vaccine efficacy and safety.

Robert is publicly on record inviting anyone who wishes to debate and challenge his book's content and the over 2,100 references supporting its claims. Would any of the *Times'* journalists, who hide behind their quills, have the courage to accept his invitation? To our knowledge nobody from the mainstream media has taken up Robert's offer.

We might challenge the *Times*' editorial management to unearth a single instant where Robert has stated he was not pro-vaccine. If the *Times* is so worried about Kennedy being on the wrong side of history and science, then why not review *The Real Anthony Fauci* with reliable, independent fact checkers to debunk any misstatements and untruths?

The fact that the *Times* and the mainstream media have in unison ignored the book entirely, hoping it will fade away into obscurity, is itself gross negligence. Even Fauci and Bill Gates have failed to satisfactorily make a concerted effort to exonerate themselves from the book's damning evidence.

If the *Times*' fraudulent charge is guilt by association, then yes indeed Robert has a fan base among tens of thousands of anti-vaccination parents across the nation with vaccine-damaged children. But this follows the kind of illogic that Bill

Clinton, Bill Gates and Alan Dershowitz should be behind bars for their fellowship with Jeffrey Epstein.

Repeatedly, Robert is very succinct about being pro-vaccine and he has reason to be very worried about the credibility of vaccine makers' clinical trial data and the deep conflicts of interest between the drug industry and federal regulators who are too willing and eager to give their Big Pharm masters a green light to licensure.

That Nagnourney would resurrect the old vaccine-autism chestnut is to be expected of any hit person assigned to target an anti-vaxxer. Yet there is very sound evidence to support Robert's stance on the vaccine-autism debate.

We may recall that it was Robert who filed the Freedom of Information request to uncover the smoking gun behind a CDC study showing that there was indeed a relationship between earlier thimerosal (mercury)-laced vaccines and neurological disorders, including autism. The evidence is clearly outlined in the transcript of a 2000 secret meeting held at the Simpsonwood retreat facility outside CDC headquarters in Atlanta.

During the meeting, the study's chief scientist, Dr. Thomas Verstraeten, stated, "This analysis suggests that in our study population, the risks of tics, ADD, language and speech delays, and developmental delays in general may be increased by exposures to mercury from thimerosal-containing vaccines during the first six months of life."

The clandestine Simpsonwood gathering decided to withhold its findings from the public and, instead, proceed with a recalculation of the same data by employing confounders, or biased criteria selection in order to confirm the CDC's desired results. Later a House Committee on Government Reform's three-year review of the CDC's and FDA's handling of the exponential rise in autism concluded that "It appears that many who participated in the thimerosal debates allowed their standards to be dictated by their desire to disprove an unpleasant theory."

Dr. Roger Bernier confirmed a deep concern Robert has been sounding for years to the mainstream media's plugged ears. During the Committee hearings, Dr. Bernier, who was then the CDC's associate director of science, stated,

> "It [removing thimerosal from vaccines] could entail financial losses of inventory if current vaccine inventory is wasted. It could harm one or more manufacturers and may then decrease the number of suppliers… The evidence justifying this kind of abrupt policy change [immediate removal of mercury from all vaccines] does not appear to exist, and it could entail financial losses for all existing stocks of vaccines that contain thimerosal."

In other words, for the CDC, then as now, protecting pharmaceutical interests and money trump public health and well-being. *The Real Anthony Fauci* is riddled with similar examples of financial incentives driving health policies directly under Fauci's control.

Finally, the Commission recommended that "studies be conducted that pool the results of independent research that has been done thus far, and a comprehensive approach should be developed to rid humans, animals and the environment from this dangerous toxin."

Yet unsurprisingly a subsequent CDC study, after several attempts to massage the original data, was published to deny any relationship between vaccination and autism. To this day this remains the position of the CDC, FDA and HHS despite a large body of independent research, with no conflict of interests with governmental and private industry interests, that continues to mount against our policy makers' reliance on questionable science.

Separate from Robert, cases have been adjudicated through the Justice Department to award monetary compensation to victims of vaccine-related autism and encephalitis. However, most dramatic is the whistleblower case of Dr. William Thompson, a senior CDC epidemiologist.

Dr. Thompson released thousands of documents to Prof. Brian Hooker, a biologist at Simpson University, providing evidence that the CDC under Julie

Gerberding's watch, withheld and later destroyed research data proving the MMR vaccine contributed to higher autism rates in African American boys.

The documents also proved the CDC has known for years that the influenza vaccines, which still contain mercury, contributed to neurological tics and disorders. If we can easily find these references, certainly it is within the *Times*' capability to do so also.

We should lend an attentive ear to Robert's Covid vaccine warnings because on many occasions in the past he has been on the correct side of history. Perhaps Nagourney's conflating the safety profiles between the experimental mRNA and adenovirus vector Covid injections from traditional pre-Covid vaccines.

For example, Robert was a lead attorney in the historic ruling against Monsanto and its carcinogenic glyphosate herbicide or Roundup. The latest legal update is that Monsanto has settled nearly 100,000 lawsuits and paid out $11 billion. Another 26,000 cases remain pending.

Throughout his law career Robert has been involved in hundreds of legal cases to protect the environment such as New York City's watershed; enforcement of the Clean Water Act; protecting poor minority, indigenous communities, and military personnel from corporate and federal toxic pollution; and legal victories against the oil, hydrofracking, pipeline and nuclear power industries.

Last year, Robert's Children's Health Defense (CHD) won a U.S. Court of Appeals case against the Federal Communications Commission for the agency's failure to review the health and safety guidelines on 5G and other wireless technology. In 2019, 26,000 scientists submitted a petition to the UN, World Health Organization, European Union and world governments demanding a halt to a 5G rollout.

There are over 10,000 peer-reviewed studies now warranting global caution about radio frequency radiation's adverse effects to the environment and human DNA, the endocrine system and various organs. Undoubtedly the CHD case unsettled *The New York Times*; it may be a reason among others for the newspaper to print vindictive articles against Robert.

Following the *Times*' partnership with the telecom giant Verizon to launch a 5G Journalism Lab, the paper's 5G coverage has consistently parroted the telecom industry's talking points. The Verizon collaboration will provide the newspaper with a jump start ahead of other mainstream media to gain "early access [to] the 5G network." Nor should we forget that the *Times*' top shareholder is Mexican billionaire and mobile phone magnate Carlos Slim, who is positioned to rake in billions from 5G's rollout south of the border.

We might ask why Robert would risk tarnishing the Kennedy legacy, which his siblings seem determined to keep pristine? Quite simply, like his father and uncle, Bobby is a rebel at heart who seeks the truth rather than to preserve a family legacy or bureaucratic ideology.

As for *The New York Times*, on matters of critical domestic and international importance, it has repeatedly proven to be unreliable. This is the same Times, despite its enormous resources and government contacts that has gotten its stories wrong at the cost of countless lives.

It got the story of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction reprehensibly wrong, which led to one of the greatest debacles in foreign policy in this century. It got Libya, Venezuela, and Syria wrong. It was wrong about the Obama-Clinton backed coup spearheaded by Hillary sidekick Victoria Nuland. And to this day the *Times* has failed to hold the U.S.'s co-responsibility for prolonging the Saudis' genocide in Yemen.

And the Gray Lady refuses to cover other nations' success stories in handling the pandemic, including prescribing repurposed inexpensive drugs such as ivermectin which has reduced SARS-2 infections and deaths dramatically.

Had Nagourney, Rabin and Robert's siblings and friends spent thousands of hours doing meticulous research to uncover the truth, it would be less likely they would have proceeded in advancing their shared conspiratorial delusions.

In the absence of any observable scientific background, to denigrate Robert with personal biases and dogmatic assumptions is disingenuous. Certainly he has spent more time investigating the corruption endemic in our federal health system than anyone in the history of *The New York Times*.

So at what point do the Fed's junk science, misdemeanors, and perjury before Congress pile up to a tipping point whereby nothing coming from our health agencies can be taken at their word?

Robert evidently passed that threshold long before the rest of us. As we witness our federal health officials back pedaling or abandoning their own health advice, rewrite scientific analyses, rapidly fund compromised research institutes in order to debunk the next damning study about the inefficacy of masks, social distancing and the Covid vaccines' adverse effects and mandates, we are observing a health system in dismal disarray.

Improvising on a meditation by the Trappist monk Thomas Merton, who had carried on a correspondence with Robert's mother Ethel, *Times*' journalists such as Nagourney and Rabin are like people who wander the countryside painting billboards that say "The CDC Saves" or "Prepare to Meet God (Anthony Fauci)."

Oddly, these biased opinion essays should not make us think about the CDC nor Fauci. Rather we should wonder what goes on in these writers' minds. Absent any journalistic integrity, we should wonder what their motives are to force THEIR CDC and Fauci upon us by way of condemning the critics of the government's failed Covid pandemic policies. Or rather should we pity these journalists' scorn and vitriol as simply pathetic projections of themselves?

CREATING NEW ENEMIES

By Philip Giraldi

It should come as no surprise that many observers, from various political perspectives, are beginning to note that there is something seriously disconnected in the fumbling foreign policy of the United States. The evacuation failure in Afghanistan shattered the already waning self-confidence of the American political elite and the continuing on-again off-again negotiations that were by design intended to go nowhere with Iran and Russia provide no evidence that anyone in the White House is really focused on protecting American interests.

Now we have an actual shooting war in Ukraine as a result, a conflict that might easily escalate if Washington continues to send the wrong signals to Moscow.

To cite only one example of how outside influences distort policy, in a phone call on February 9th, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett advised President Joe Biden not to enter into any non-proliferation agreement with Iran. Biden was non-committal even though it is an actual American interest to come to an agreement, but instead he indicated that as far as the U.S. is concerned, Israel could exercise “freedom of action” when dealing with the Iranians.

With that concession has ended in all probability the only possible diplomatic success that the Administration might have been able to point to.

The Biden Administration's by default global security policy is currently reduced to what some critics [have described as](#) "encirclement and containment." That is why an overstretched U.S. military is being tasked with creating ever more bases worldwide in an effort to counter perceived "enemies" who often are only exercising their own national sovereignty and right to security within their own zones of influence.

Ironically, when nations balk at submitting to Washington's control, they are frequently described as "aggressors" and "anti-democratic," the language that has most particularly been used relating to Russia.

The Biden policy, such as it actually exists, appears to be a throwback to the playing field in 1991-92 when the Soviet empire collapsed. It is all about maintaining the old American dream of complete global dominance coupled with liberal interventionism, but this time around the U.S. lacks both the resources and the national will to continue in the effort. Hopefully the White House will understand that to do nothing is better than to make empty threats.

Meanwhile, as the situation continues to erode, it is becoming more and more obvious that the twin crises that have been developing over Ukraine and Taiwan are "Made in Washington" and are somewhat inexplicable as the U.S. does not have a compelling national interest that would justify threats to "leave on the table" military options as a possible response.

The Administration has yet again responded to Russian moves by initiating devastating sanctions. But Russia also has unconventional weapons in its arsenal. It can, for starters, shift focus away from Ukraine by intervening much more actively in support of Syria and Iran in the Middle East, disrupting feeble American attempts to manage that region to benefit Israel.

According to economists, Russia has also been effectively sanction-proofing its economy and is capable of selective reverse-sanctioning of countries that support an American initiative with any enthusiasm. Such a response would likely hurt the Europeans much more than it would damage the leadership in the Kremlin.

Barring Russian gas from Europe by shutting down Nord Stream 2 would, for example, permit increased sales to China and elsewhere in Asia and would inflict more pain on the Europeans than on Moscow. Shipping U.S. supplied liquid gas to Europe would, for example, cost more than twice the going rate being offered by the Kremlin and would also be less reliable.

The European NATO members are clearly nervous and not fully behind the U.S. agenda on Ukraine, largely because there is the legitimate concern that any and possibly all options being considered by Washington could easily produce missteps that would escalate into a nuclear exchange that would be catastrophic for all parties involved.

Apart from the real immediate danger to be derived from the fighting currently taking place in Ukraine, the real long-term damage is strategic. The Joe Biden Administration has adroitly maneuvered itself into a corner while America's two principal adversaries Russia and China have drawn closer together to form something like a defensive as well as economic relationship that will be dedicated to reducing and eventually eliminating Washington's assumed role as the global hegemon and rules enforcer.

In a recent article in *The New Yorker* foreign affairs commentator Robin Wright, who might reasonably be described as a "hawk," declares the new development to be "Russia and China Unveil[ing] a Pact Against America and the West." And she is not alone in ringing the alarm bell, with former Donald Trump National Security Council (NSC) Russia watcher Anita Hill warning that the Kremlin's intention is to force the United States out of Europe while former NSC Ukrainian expert Alexander Vindman is advising that military force be used to deter Russia now before it is too late.

Wright provides the most serious analysis of the new developments. She argues that “Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping, the two most powerful autocrats, challenge the current political and military order.” She describes how, in a meeting between the two leaders before the Beijing Olympics, they cited an “agreement that also challenges the United States as a global power, NATO as a cornerstone of international security, and liberal democracy as a model for the world.”

They pledged that there would be “No ‘forbidden’ areas of cooperation” and a written statement that was subsequently produced declared that “Russia and China stand against attempts by external forces to undermine security and stability in their common adjacent regions, intend to counter interference by outside forces in the internal affairs of sovereign countries under any pretext, oppose color revolutions, and will increase cooperation.”

Wright notes that there is considerable strength behind the agreement, “As two nuclear-armed countries that span Europe and Asia, the more muscular alignment between Russia and China could be a game changer militarily and diplomatically.” One might add that China now has the world’s largest economy and Russia has a highly developed military deploying new hypersonic missiles that would give it the advantage in any conflict with NATO and the U.S.. Both Russia and China, if attacked, would also benefit because they would be fighting close to their bases on interior lines.

And, of course, not everyone agrees that nudging the United States out of its self-proclaimed hegemonic role would be a bad thing. Former British diplomat Alastair Crooke argues that there will be a perpetual state of crisis in the international order until a new system emerges from the status quo that ended the Cold War, and it would be minus the United States as the semi-official transnational rules maker and arbiter.

He observes that “The crux of Russia’s complaints about its eroding security have little to do with Ukraine per se but are rooted in the Washington hawks’ obsession with Russia, and their desire to cut Putin (and Russia) down to size—an aim which has been the hallmark of U.S. policy since the Yeltsin years.

The Victoria Nuland clique could never accept Russia rising to become a significant power in Europe—possibly eclipsing the U.S. control over Europe."

What is happening in Europe and Asia should all come down to a very simple realization about the limits of power: America has no business in risking a nuclear war with Russia over Ukraine or with China over Taiwan.

The United States has been fighting much of the world for over two decades, impoverishing itself and killing millions in avoidable wars starting with Iraq and Afghanistan. The U.S. government is cynically exploiting memories of old Cold War enemy Russia to create a false narrative that goes something like this: "If we don't stop them over there, they will be in New Jersey next week."

It is all nonsense. And besides, who made the U.S. the sole arbiter of international relations? It is past time Americans started asking what kind of international order is it that lets the United States determine what other nations can and cannot do.

Worst of all, the bloodshed in Ukraine has all been unnecessary. A little real diplomacy with honest negotiators weighing up real interests could easily have come to acceptable solutions for all parties involved. It is indeed ironic that the burning desire to go to war with Russia demonstrated in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* as well as on Capitol Hill has in fact created a real formidable enemy, tying Russia and China together in an alliance due to their frustration at dealing with a Biden Administration that never seems to know what it is doing or where it wants to go.

Philip M. Giraldi, Ph.D., is Executive Director of the Council for the National Interest, a 501(c)3 tax deductible educational foundation (Federal ID Number #52-1739023) that seeks a more interests-based U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. Website is councilforthenationalinterest.org, address is P.O. Box 2157, Purcellville VA 20134 and its email is inform@cnionline.org.

TRENDS IN THE MARKETS

THE LATEST PLAGUE, AND THE CRISIS TO CRISIS MECHANISM

By Gregory Mannarino TradersChoice.net

Right now The World is clenched deep in a full on debt crisis. This "debt crisis" DEMANDS that more debt be created exponentially every single day, just to keep the global economy functioning at its current level. Every manner of other "crisis" will subsequently be used to keep the flow of debt being borrowed into existence growing, it cannot stop. Wars, the threat of more wars, nuclear or otherwise, seems to be the current plague being thrust upon the peoples of the world today simply to disguise the FACT, that all this is just simply a mechanism to keep the global CENTRAL BANK RUN debt-based system going.

But you are not supposed to know that…

Crisis, to crisis, to crisis.

It’s really very simple.

Have you ever taken notice of how it seems that the global economy/geopolitical stage appears to be in a constant state of crisis?

Well, make no mistake about it—that is EXACTLY what is going on, but why?

A state of “crisis” demands that exorbitant amounts of cash MUST be created and then disbursed without question—THE PUBLIC MUST GET BEHIND IT. Moreover, a crisis allows policymakers to make executive decisions, totally circumventing any kind of vote, or conjecture. A crisis is a perfect setup, allowing for unlimited spending—which is of course the sole reason why the “crisis” was engineered to begin with.

A Crisis must be prolonged.

For any “crisis” to succeed, that is to have its true intended consequences work, they must be prolonged—the longer a crisis can be prolonged, the more cash can be created.

Let’s look at the current “crisis.” At the time I am writing this article we are more than several days into the Russian invasion into Ukraine. For this crisis to play out correctly, it too must be prolonged—it cannot simply be allowed to end in days, it must be allowed to go on from weeks to possibly even months. Along the way, regarding the Russia/Ukraine crisis, the public will be told of “talks,” and a slowing of troop movements, but in truth these are just ways to prolong the conflict.

If we reflect on the last crisis, Covid, it was the same thing—it was prolonged by every mechanism possible.

Do you find it at all suspicious how just as the last Covid “crisis” is beginning to wane, we are again thrust into yet another crisis?

Oh, and this current “crisis” will not be the last… count on it.

TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM

THE BEST REASON ON EARTH TO AVOID VIOLENCE

By Bradley J. Steiner, [American Combato]

Every one of our students knows (because we emphasize it at every class) that "Self-Defense Technique #1" is avoidance. Whenever possible avoid all potentially "hot" situations, and never, ever, ever agree to fight with anyone. Fighting in a sporting competition is fine; that is a sport. Fighting for real—i.e., engaging in what the law defines as "mutual combat"—is never justified. Ever.

A percentage of individuals persist in refusing to understand this, and we pity these morons. One day their willingness to settle things with their fists in a fight will lead to the hospital, the graveyard, prison, or impoverishment through lawsuit—or some combination of these nightmarish outcomes.

You cannot claim self-defense if you agree to fight with someone.

Obviously, reacting to another's clear and present threat to do you grave bodily harm, and defending yourself, is fine. Not that you can never get into trouble acting in legitimate self-defense (disgracefully, you occasionally can) but if you are attacked and threatened with serious bodily injury or death or find that you must defend a loved one against such disaster, the option to do battle is really the only rational one to take.

So, knowing that you acted righteously and necessarily, you can accept whatever happens with equanimity, should you suffer for taking necessary action. Whatever the consequences, you (or yours) remain in one piece, alive!

The current advocacy of what we would define as unnecessarily risky brawling as “martial art” (really, more martial reckless game) which goes under the heading of MMA (or, UFC) is, technically a recognized and regulated sport. We personally do not like it or recommend it—or believe in it as preparation for self-defense—but that is just our opinion. If that is your cup of tea, enjoy it.

But do not allow yourself to get carried away with the rock-‘em-sock-‘em violence at -the-least-provocation attitude that seems to us to have left its mark indelibly upon some MMA participants; some of whom are now in prison (where they belong) for using their MMA attitude and actions on girlfriends, people who annoy them, etc. Not cool.

There is only one legitimate reason for using physical force against another human being: self-defense (to include defense of loved ones). This is the philosophy of the true warrior. Real men and decent women do not ply combative skills they have acquired for any reason less than the necessary one of stopping an attacker.

Question: “Brad, are you nuts or something? Don’t you realize how offensive some people are today? Disrespect in every way, no manners, outright insulting, offensive rudeness. Come on! You teach and write as though you hate these things yourself. How can you deny that it’s fitting and proper to give a well-deserved beating to, for instance, some punk who passes some obscene comment to your wife or girlfriend? Certainly, you do not believe in letting outright offenses like this simply slide?”

Answer: “Oh, but I do. And you are 100% correct; such obnoxious and despicable conduct and speech is something we hate. But we do not advocate, and we never would ourselves, undertake physical action in response to this evidence of subhuman lack of civility on the part of individuals whom we would not dignify by regarding as measuring up to the standard met by the sewer rat."

So, what are we railing about? YOUR safety and your well-being, that is what!

And, of course, our own, also. If we lived in Bradland there would be no problem whatever in cutting the tongues out of the heads of scum-punks who pass obscene remarks and gestures to female passersby, whether these females are accompanied by males or not. You could chop off the hands of those who deface private property with graffiti, and you could kick in the testicles with every ounce of your strength anyone who sought to humiliate and insult you verbally for no good reason.

Violent offenders would have ZERO legal recourse, and so would their families, so that neither criminal nor civil action could be taken against anyone who defended him or herself against them.

You could shoot down predatory, violent troublemakers, and write off the cost of the ammo on your taxes. You would personally be allowed to put to death anyone who murdered a loved one of yours, and death sentences would be carried out within ten days—not ten years. Shooting home invaders would garner you cash prizes (so much per head), and school bullies would be declared persona non grata with absolute license to do whatever they wished to the bullies, by their would-be victims—with absolute immunity from prosecution or civil suit.

But we do not live in Bradland. We live in the real world. And today, that world is deteriorating rapidly into a second dark age global cesspool.

Common sense is less common than saber toothed tigers in Nebraska.

People who by any rational standard simply do not deserve to live in human, civilized society are a protected species (like praying mantis), while heroic law enforcement professionals routinely catch hell on steroids whenever they rightfully take down some ten-for-a-penny piece of street s—t.

And millions of good people in cities like New York, Honolulu, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago, and New Jersey are unlawfully* banned from owning, carrying, and using handguns in self-defense, while subhuman scum prey upon these decent citizens with whatever guns they wish to use.

And . . . when and where some lucky private citizen who did have a gun with which to defend himself shoots down some sewer creature, he (the private citizen!) faces the possibility of criminal prosecution for his act!

Wild animals who approximate the appearance of humans gather in packs and gangs and attack individuals and couples for nothing more than the sick pleasure of doing so. The monsters "wild," they "flash mob," they "destroy fast food establishments", they prey endlessly upon the helpless and weak.

That is our society today . . . and that is why I urge you never to use violence unless you absolutely must in a clear and present situation of grave physical danger: DECENT HUMAN BEINGS LIKE YOU ARE THE SACRIFICIAL PAWNS OF A TWISTED, DECAYING, COLLAPSING, ONCE-HUMAN CULTURE CALLED "WESTERN CIVILIZATION".

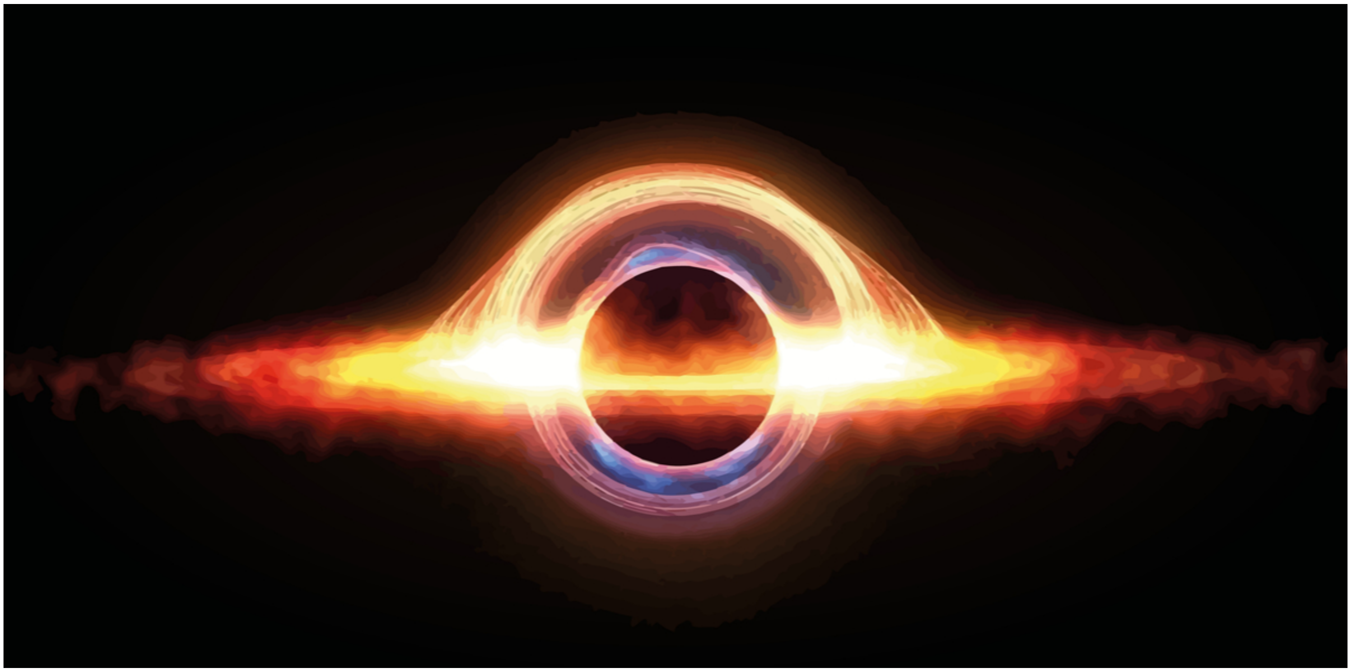
Stay away from violence if possible, for YOUR sake and for YOUR protection, not for any consideration of living filth-root that ought to be stamped out like the polio virus! Every decent human being has the perfect right to self-defense, and God knows we advocate and urge that you exercise that right with everything at your disposal, when and if necessary.

But please . . . for your sake and the sake of those dear to you . . . avoid violence whenever possible, to avoid trouble for YOU and YOURS. It could easily mean trouble for you, over and above the challenge of defeating your adversary.

That is the best reason on earth.

* The law of the land of the United States of America is the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. This law was written, among other things, to protect every private citizen's right to keep and to bear arms. Where this right is abridged, the citizens' right is being violated, and such laws passed and enforced that violate the citizens' right are ILLEGAL.

TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY



By Joe Doran

MICROSOFT ANNOUNCES GLOBAL AI "SINGULARITY"

Microsoft evidently believes they've achieved the "Singularity"—or at least the infrastructure model on which it will operate.

The tech corporation announced this past week the realization of a globally distributed deep learning entity that can seamlessly route workloads to account for different hardware, idle states of processors, and across different Deep Neural Network (DNN) architectures.

What does Microsoft intend to do with the sprawling, powerful deep learning AI intelligence?

According to "Singularity: Planet-Scale, Preemptive and Elastic Scheduling of AI Workloads," the whitepaper they released about the project, access to

Singularity will be available to companies and developers who want to cost-effectively integrate the AI into a wide range of cloud-based applications:

> *"Singularity is designed from the ground up to scale across a global fleet of hundreds of thousands of GPUs and other AI accelerators. Singularity is built with one key goal: driving down the cost of AI by maximizing the aggregate useful throughput on a given fixed pool of capacity of accelerators at planet scale, while providing stringent SLAs for multiple pricing tiers."*

Why the Name Singularity?

In the world of science and technology, the term "Singularity" has been used to designate systems which are in some sense self-sustained and evolving.

Wikipedia describes "technological singularity" as:

> *"[A] hypothetical point in time at which technological growth becomes uncontrollable and irreversible, resulting in unforeseeable changes to human civilization."*

If that sounds somewhat vaguely foreboding, the entry goes on to describe a more specific meaning of the term. The Singularity refers to an "inevitable" process whereby Artificial Intelligence, operating on its own, is able to advance itself beyond the capabilities of human minds in every respect.

As the Wikipedia entry notes, the Singularity posits an intelligence explosion, where:

> *"[An] intelligent agent will eventually enter a 'runaway reaction' of self-improvement cycles, each new and more intelligent generation appearing more and more rapidly, causing an "explosion" in intelligence and resulting in a powerful superintelligence that qualitatively far surpasses all human intelligence."*

While much of Microsoft's Singularity project, as evidenced by its whitepaper, is couched in necessarily very technical explanations of its concepts, methods and infrastructure, the capability and ambition of the project is unmistakable.

With Singularity, the tech company has developed a sprawling, always-on infrastructure, capable of handling deep-learning AI workloads in a highly efficient way.

In one sense, the pursuit of AI technology by companies like Microsoft, Google and Facebook, often working hand in hand with a wide network of universities and government agencies, is hardly startling.

But what's harder to understand, is the seeming embrace of the notion that such technology will not ultimately assist or advance humankind, but supersede and replace it.

It's a perversion of traditional notions of progress that have existed, perhaps most uniquely in America in the whole of the modern age.

But make no mistake: along with astounding advances in practical pursuit and uses of AI technology, an ideology of transhumanism has also emerged and evolved.

Google engineer and futurist author Ray Kurzweil has been a leading advocate of the idea that AI technology should be pursued to the point where it surpasses humans as a superior "conscious" intelligence.

In 2009, following a TED Talk, Kurzweil co-founded Singularity University, a program to further technological initiatives, leadership training and an ideological framework revolving around the pursuit of AI ascendancy.

One of Kurzweil's core beliefs is that humans can and should merge with machine intelligence. In fact, he says the future existence of humans may depend on it.

It’s an ideology of transhumanism, centered on the idea that natural humanity is destined to be surpassed physically, intellectually and morally by robotics and AI.

At an SXSW Conference in 2017, Kurzweil predicted that the Singularity would happen roughly within the next decade:

> *“2029 is the consistent date I have predicted for when an AI will pass a valid Turing test and therefore achieve human levels of intelligence. I have set the date 2045 for the ‘Singularity’ which is when we will multiply our effective intelligence a billion fold by merging with the intelligence we have created.”*

Kurzweil’s predictions aside, Singularity University has had its share of problems evolving.

It garnered much early enthusiasm, and reportedly received 1,200 applications for its inaugural class of 40 students. It leased it’s initial conference space from NASA in Mountain View, CA.

But SU experienced various controversies, including allegations of sexual assault by a teacher and embezzlement.

Following a withdrawal of Google funding in 2017, a Global Solutions program was suspended and more than a dozen employees were terminated in an effort to clean house, according to Bloomberg.

Controversy over SU’s agenda has also been a problem. In recent years, the initiative has taken pains to portray itself as primarily concerned with helping humanity, and not in speeding the ascendancy of AI.

But beyond the rosy language and technological initiatives advertised by the current SU website, it’s clear that Kurzweil and other transhumanists don’t believe the coming superior AI will be content to serve natural humans as subordinate assistants.

Being superior, why should it?

From Sci-Fi to Deep-Learning Autonomy: How AI Arrived

Machines and robots with human-like intelligence have long been fodder for science fiction, dating back to the late 19th century. Largely treated as novel fantasy, audiences enjoyed depictions like Robby the Robot in the 1950's sci-fi classic *Forbidden Planet* (Robby even has his own IMDB entry, with 30 credits as an "actor").

In 1968, *2001: A Space Odyssey* startled movie-goers on a whole new level with HAL 9000, an advanced—and murderously out-of-control—Artificial Intelligence aboard a space mission.

Though nothing remotely like HAL existed in the 1960's, digital computers had been around since the 1940's.

In 1950, Alan Turing postulated his famous "Turing Test" for what constituted an artificial intelligence.

The Turing Test proposed that if a machine could operate in a way that was indistinguishable from a human being, then it could be said, for all intents and purposes, to be "thinking."

Around the same time that Turing outlined what has been called the first serious philosophy of artificial intelligence, the world's first "neural net machine," called SNARC, was being co-developed by Marvin Minsky, who would innovate in the field of AI for the next 50 years.

By the 1960's, British mathematician I. J. Good was describing a theoretical path to an ascendant AI "singularity," though he didn't use that term.

Good theorized an “intelligence explosion,” whereby a self-directed, rapidly improving artificial general intelligence would inevitably advance to a state where it outstripped human abilities.

Though interest from government and universities saw AI initiatives undertaken over the next 20 years, limited progress led to limited funding, though the 1980’s did see advances in algorithmic reasoning that could mimic human experts.

Decision support tools that learned the “rules” of a specific knowledge domain, in the medical field, for example, could help determine a diagnosis.

But though such systems were capable of complex reasoning, they couldn’t learn new rules on their own to evolve and expand their decision-making.

Pursuit of AI technology gained new momentum in the 1990’s. Computers were quickly becoming more powerful. The internet, with its connectivity protocols and synergies of communication and information sharing, provided both a means of development, and a fertile ecosystem for possibly profitable AI use cases.

By the early 2000’s, Google was engineering early AI algorithms for sifting and returning “relevant” search engine results.

Via neural networks, advances in deep learning technologies, access to “big data” (data sets of enormous size), and relatively cheap, powerful graphical processing units (GPUs), AI has rapidly reached new milestones.

According to a U.S. government assessment:

> *“Affordable graphical processing units from the gaming industry have enabled neural networks to be trained using big data.[8] Layering these networks mimics how humans learn to recognize and categorize simple patterns into complex patterns. This software is being applied in automated facial and object detection and recognition as well as medical image diagnostics, financial patterns, and governance regulations.[9] Projects*

such as Life Long Learning Machines, from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, seek to further advance AI algorithms toward learning continuously in ways similar to those of humans.[10]"

(Source: "A Brief History of Artificial Intelligence" from the National Institute of Justice / Dept of Justice)

With its Singularity technology, Microsoft has obviously taken a significant step toward creating the infrastructure of a self-directed AI evolution that comes closer to realizing the "intelligence explosion" hypothesis of I. J. Good.

Human Centered…Or Human Transcending?

Stanford University has been a center of AI research since its earliest days. Indeed, the term "Artificial Intelligence was coined in 1955 by Stanford professor John McCarthy.

In 2019, Stanford instituted instituted a program (with associated website) focused on "Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence," with a designated acronym of HAI, and an interesting techno-logo:

(source: Stanford University)

Of course, the acronym might as easily have been HCAI, avoiding a visual similarity to Hal, that AI psychopath from *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Not to worry. According to the program's literature, the goals of HAI are benign and meant to focus on AI innovation which assists humans:

> "Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence is AI that seeks to augment the abilities of, address the societal needs of, and draw inspiration from human beings. It researches and builds effective partners and tools for people, such as a robot helper and companion for the elderly."

Part of the purpose of the Stanford program is to advance AI research and initiatives. But the program also has a focus on addressing and influencing, social and philosophical and political questions surrounding AI:

> *"Through the education work of the institute, students and leaders at all stages gain a range of AI fundamentals and perspectives. At the same time, the policy work of HAI fosters regional and national discussions that lead to direct legislative impact.*
>
> *"What's unique about HAI is that it balances diverse expertise and integration of AI across human-centered systems and applications in a setting that could only be offered by Stanford University. Stanford's seven leading schools on the same campus, including a world-renown computer science department, offer HAI access to multidisciplinary research from top scholars."*

But can superior AI intelligence remain humbly dedicated to serving humanity?

Intellectual heavyweights and technological trailblazers including Stephen Hawking, Elon Musk and even Bill Gates have expressed doubts.

Others like Ray Kurzweil, and the braintrust behind Microsoft's "Singularity" deep-learning system, evidently aren't as concerned.

Kurzweil envisions a sort of supercharged internet of intelligence literally merged with human brains, where humans and helpful, increasingly intelligent AI are all nodes in a bright, "meta intelligence":

> *"What's actually happening is [machines] are powering all of us. They're making us smarter. They may not yet be inside our bodies, but, by the 2030s, we will connect our neocortex, the part of our brain where we do our thinking, to the cloud…"*
>
> *"We're going to get more neocortex, we're going to be funnier, we're going to be better at music. We're going to be sexier. We're really going to exemplify all the things that we value in humans to a greater degree."*

The **Trends Journal** has been extensively covering the transhuman agenda. Touchstone articles include:

- "SINGULARITY UNIVERSITY: FUELING AI ASCENDANCE" (3 Aug 2021)
- "THE 'PROGRESS' OF LEAVING HUMANS BEHIND" (1 Jun 2021)
- "'BIO-PHARMA' PROFITING OFF A TRANSHUMAN FUTURE" (27 Jul 2021)
- "RESET, REMAKE AND BUILD BACK BETTER: SCIENTIFIC MARXISM" (7 Dec 2021)
- "GENETIC MODIFICATIONS BEING PREPPED TO "SOLVE" EVERYTHING" (18 Jan 2022)

ZUCKERBERG: AI WILL PLAY GOD IN YOUR METAWORLD

Under the guise of "human rights," Artificial Intelligence (AI) will decide what can take place in the metaverse-or at least Meta's (formerly Facebook) version of it.

Zuckerberg gave a new demonstration this past week of metaverse technology his company is building.

Together with a tech engineer, he showed how an “empty” virtual space could be filled and created into an island paradise, via voice commands to an AI intelligence.

Saying things like, “Actually, let’s go to the beach,” “let’s add some clouds,” and having landscape and ocean appear, along with a sky and cumulous accents, the corporate billionaire commented admiringly, “that’s all AI generated.”

True, the graphics involved looked like something from a first generation Wii game system.

But Meta is clearly focused on the AI and interfacing technologies that will connect and allow communication and “world-building.” More realistic graphics will come later. So will sensors and wearables that give users tactile sensations, providing a more “immersive” experience.

The presentation made it seem like anything one desired and could imagine would be available by merely speaking it to an AI genie that Zuckerberg referred to as “Builder Bot.”

If that sounds like something out of a children’s TV show, it may not be a mistake. Meta’s infantilizing version of the metaverse will come with a huge caveat: just like in the classic 1960’s sitcom *I Dream Of Jeannie*, the wish giver will be the one really in charge.

To put it bluntly, there are things Meta’s metaverse won’t allow. Think of those vague “community guidelines” that instill corporate-government narratives and mete out punishments and, if necessary, outright bans to dissident viewpoints and thoughts.

During the demonstration, Zuckerberg couched the implementation of all his ideological biases by a “Builder Bot” as ensuring “human rights.”

But the fast evolving Meta spin up of a virtual world is already inherently unequal, with all the power weighted to a central authority: a corporation, a mega billionaire, and a Federal government which has fully partnered in the monopolistic ascendency of a handful of tech corporations in America.

Zuckerberg himself has said that he believes the Metaverse is destined to be the "the next version of the Internet."

In the same way that the relatively open internet of the 1900's gradually gave way to the dominance of a handful of powerful tech social and commerce platforms, Meta's mega billionaire wants to position Meta as the mediator of that new internet.

No one should be surprised. And a recent ZDNet article underscores that no one should want a part of it:

> "In a Metaverse, as conceived by Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, you cannot even scratch your virtual nose without the permission of a program controlled completely by the company."

Part of the promise of so-called "Web3" or decentralized internet technologies is that users will control their own digital destiny.

Whether it's how one chooses to store and use the value of one's entrepreneurial efforts, investments and labor, or one's digital property, or even one's digital identity, there are decentralized blockchain initiatives envisioning and building new paradigms and new solutions.

It's not an exaggeration to say that many of these initiatives, while still very in their infancy, are already disrupting the current status quo of the corporate and government control that has exerted a progressive lock and key on such things in the modern and current digital age.

Whatever else the metaverse will be, it is already shaping up to be a battleground of control and freedom that everyone should be paying attention to, since literally future reality is literally at stake.

For more on issues surrounding the metaverse, check out:

- “METAVERSE: THE NEW COLLECTIVE” (14 Dec 2021)
- “METAWORLD” 2022 Top Trend (30 Nov 2022)
- “CANCELED IN THE METAVERSE” (16 Nov 2021)
- “METAVERSE AND NFTS ONLY GETTING HOTTER” (2 Nov 2021)

TRENDS IN CRYPTOS

MORE POSSIBILITIES FOR STAKING CRYPTO IN 2022

The ability to stake Crypto, or essentially lend it to a network ecosystem, while earning more tokens in reward, is set to become a more widely available option for many crypto holders in 2022.

With Ethereum (ETH) set to switch to a proof-of-stake (PoS) consensus mechanism later this year, native staking on that platform will be accessible to potentially millions of new users.

Ethereum's move to a staking method of validating transactions (ie. "proof of stake") is viewed as a major upgrade event. Ethereum holders can actually already participate in Ethereum staking, by reserving their current Ethereum for the so-called "Eth2" upgrade, which hasn't been migrated to yet.

Users who hold Ethereum in wallets may have noticed Eth2 "staking" features associated with their Ethereum wallet holdings.

Other major networks either already have staking features, or soon will.

Algorand is noted for having one of the most user-friendly staking options out there. On Coinbase, for example, ALGO can be staked with no set period to lock tokens, preserving quick liquidity if necessary.

Other popular tokens and stable coins that offer staking include Tezos (XTZ), Cosmos (ATOM) and USD Coin (USDC).

Hedera, a DLT (Decentralized Ledger Technology) based on unique hashgraph technology, is set to implement staking for HBAR, its network token. That's significant, since Hedera is currently the most utilized DLT for enterprise class companies.

Industry insiders also anticipate to see more institutional interest in staking, as well as the expansion of liquid staking, staking through layer-2 protocols, and staking via GameFi (decentralized apps with economic incentives) and NFT platforms. That's according to sources that spoke to Cryptonews.com.

What is Staking and How Does it Work?

If a crypto network allows staking, that means holders of that network's tokens can place the tokens into a staking pool. The tokens are usually "locked" for a period of time, which means they can't be retrieved by the owner.

The tokens are used by the networks to help power tasks like validating transactions via a staking process, where certain amounts of tokens are required to be held to "vote" on validating transactions.

By staking tokens, holders can earn a percentage of added tokens over time. This is commonly done via a "staking pool," which is comparable to an interest-bearing savings account.

Currently about 8 percent of total crypto holdings are staked.

A 2021Q4 report by industry analyst Staked determined that proof-of-stake crypto assets now make up over 30 percent of the sector's overall market cap.

That's an increase of almost 130 percent from 2020.

With upgrades of crypto networks adding staking capabilities, which represent a win-win for networks and token holders, it's likely that staking will become much more common this year, adding to crypto momentum.

BLOCKCHAIN BATTLES

BRAIN DRAIN TO CRYPTO? Dominant tech giants like Amazon, Google and Microsoft are hardly in danger of lacking talent for their sprawling projects (for example, see our TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY section in this issue).

But there are continuing signs that the crypto sector is drawing more than in the past on innovators from mainline tech.

"We are unquestionably seeing some of the best and brightest of Silicon Valley, or tech, move over to crypto," Scott Fletcher of Intersection Growth Partners, told CNBC this past week.

It represents a cross interest, as those tech companies have made significant moves to open their own lines of connection to blockchain fueled technologies.

The former general manager of Amazon's AWS Edge Services is now chief technical officer of the crypto exchange Gemini, CNBC reported, while Uber's ex-director of corporate development has joined OpenSea, the largest NFT marketplace.

Many observers and players, including entrepreneur Ryan Wyatt, who founded YouTube Gaming in 2014, say blockchain technology is still at a very early stage, with huge potential as it matures and changes the web, and the world.

In January Wyatt became CEO of Polygon, a layer 2 blockchain that makes transactions on Ethereum, the dominant smart contract capable blockchain, faster and less costly.

Wyatt says so-called “Web3” decentralized technologies, built around distributed databases and programs, with integrated ecosystems of crypto tokens that track, quantify and allow the exchange of value of the networks, will be the basis of an evolving internet.

Alex Bouaziz of Deel, a payroll software company, said the fast-innovating blockchain sector is attractive “in the same way that Facebook and Amazon were attractive in the past.”

Traditional Tech Venturing Into the Blockchain. Tech titans like Mark Zuckerberg and Jack Dorsey are among those who have obviously been looking to evolve their own companies to tap into the wave.

Zuckerberg has geared his social-platform based company Facebook (now Meta) toward building metaverse technologies.

The metaverse has been envisioned as an immersive mix of digital and real world experience, where people will interact socially and in work settings.

It combines aspects of the created visual worlds of gaming, together with the functionalities of the internet, and ecosystems of participation and commerce that blockchain technologies are fast pioneering and revolutionizing.

Dorsey, meanwhile, realigned and rebranded his payments processing company Square in 2021 to “Block,” signaling a new focus on crypto capabilities. Since its inception in 2009, Square has carved out a place as a leading provider of payment processing services for small entrepreneurs.

CRYPTO PAYMENTS AT RETAILERS MAY EXPLODE IN 2022. Ebay CEO Jamie Iannone made news this past week for positive comments about crypto and NFTs.

Iannone commented to TheStreet:

> *“Even without announcing anything or doing anything, people started trading NFT on a platform. It reminded me of many years ago when people just started selling cars when we didn’t even have a vehicle business at that point. So we’re seeing the same type of thing [with NFTs].*
>
> *“…eBay will be the place where people trade goods, whether they be physical or digital. So over time, you know, we want this to be the marketplace for sustainability.”*

Though eBay currently doesn’t accommodate crypto payments directly, Iannone hinted that it could be a feature offered relatively soon.

> *“We opened up Google Pay and Apple Pay. We have a partnership with Afterpay in Australia, which is a platform that appeals to Gen Z, and that is a buy now pay later platform on the marketplace…”*
>
> *“And so we continue to evaluate other forms of payments that we should take on the platform. We don’t currently accept cryptocurrency on the platform.”*

Cryptosrus.com noted that retailers and commerce platforms including Shopping.io and Shopify offer at least some degree of crypto payment functionality.

The titans of online commerce, Walmart and Amazon, meanwhile, have made news for advertising for crypto talent to further their own apparent future moves into crypto payments.

The **Trends Journal** has been keeping readers informed about traditional retailers and growth signs for crypto in articles such as “WALMART FOLLOWS AMAZON IN SEARCH FOR CRYPTO TALENT,” “WALMART SIGNS UP FOR CRYPTO” and others.

LATE BREAKING: EU REJECTS BAN ON PROOF OF WORK IN BOOST FOR BITCOIN. The European Union's ban on bitcoin has just been repealed.
The European Union's proposed legislation. It would have imposed a blanket ban on proof-of-work coins and spelled doom for sensible bitcoin adoption in Europe.

"The paragraph is no longer in the text," European MP Stefan Berger verified on Twitter.

"A Bitcoin ban in Europe is off the table," according to BTC-ECHO, a German crypto website. The deletion of the contentious paragraph from the #MiCA draft has been canceled by the competent committee.

The now-scrapped paragraph in the legislation "would have meant a de facto ban on services for Proof-of-Work-based cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin," according to European press coverage. The repercussions would be widespread and retrograde.

It would have prohibited "crypto service providers" from aiding the "buying or trade of such crypto-assets" and would have prohibited "such crypto-assets" from being held in custody. The Left, Greens, and Social Democrats all lobbied for the draft, and this item in particular.

TRENDS IN THE COVID WAR

COVID BLUES DAMPENS ECONOMIC BOOM

Emotionally and financially, the spirit of America is down in the dumps.

A recent Gallup poll found that U.S. consumers feel about as bad as they did during the financial crisis of 2009 despite coming off a year with record-breaking job growth, wage gains, and a soaring stock market.

CNN reported that “any sense of optimism that was apparent” after the COVID-19 vaccines were developed “has abated,” and about 7 percent fewer Americans say they are satisfied today than before the virus outbreak.

Other polls also suggest a relative feeling of malaise among Americans. A Monmouth University poll taken in January found that 7 in 10 Americans agree with the statement: “It’s time we accept COVID is here to stay and we just need to get on with our lives.”

COVID fatigue is seen to be playing a big role in people's lives. *The Wall Street Journal* pointed out that salaries may be up, but so is inflation, which is at 7.5 percent despite assurances from the Federal Reserve last year that inflation would stay between 2 and 3 percent.

A survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago said more Americans considered themselves "not too happy" than those who said they're "very happy" for the first time on record, according to the *Journal.*
A Marist College poll from December also found that only 49 percent of Americans were more optimistic than pessimistic for the world in 2022—months before Russia's decision to invade Ukraine.

TREND FORECAST: *The destruction of the human spirit as a result of the COVID War has been both forecast and analyzed by the* ***Trends Journal*** *since it broke out. (See "MENTALLY ILL POLITICIANS CREATING MENTAL ILLNESS," "LOCKDOWN LUNACY CREATING 'MENTAL HEALTH PANDEMIC" and "LOCKDOWN RESUTS: A 'MENTAL HEALTH TSUNAMI.")*

And now, with the COVID War ending, as we had forecast it would, now with the Ukraine War and the fear of WWIII heating up, the human spirit will further decline.

On the opposite of the fear and hysteria spectrum, there are financial and spiritual OnTrendpreneur® rewards for new uplifting sounds, styles and movements that accentuate the positive desires of life on earth and eliminate the negative ones that dominate.

COVID WAR ENDING AS FORECAST: CDC EASES MASK-PHOBIA

With the mid-term political elections heating up and the general public worn down after two years of fighting the COVID War, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced Friday a change in its mask guidance and said face coverings are no longer needed in communities where hospitals are not at risk of overcrowding due to new COVID-19 cases.

The report said about 70 percent of Americans—under the current guidelines—are no longer required to wear these face coverings in public spaces—including indoors and at schools.

Spewing out pure bullshit, since, as *The New York Times* reported that "experts now calculate the herd immunity threshold to be at least 80 percent"—and the U.S. double vax rate is just 64 percent—CDC head Dr. Rochelle Walensky credited "widespread population immunity," as the reason for allowing more people to go mask-less.

"This updated approach focuses on directing our prevention efforts towards protecting people at high risk for severe illness and preventing hospitals and healthcare systems from being overwhelmed," she said.

TRENDPOST: *Again, CDC pure hypocrisy and incompetence is front and center, but completely ignored by the mainstream media that was their partner in selling COVID fear and hysteria.*

As we have repeatedly detailed with hard facts and scientific data when the COVID War broke out, those dying from the virus were mostly elderly and 94 percent of the victims had 2.6 preexisting comorbidities.

And rather than locking down nations and robbing citizens of their freedoms, we had long recommended taking measures to protect those at the most high risk... measures that the CDC is now repeating, two years later.

TRENDPOST: *The CDC has been inconsistent with its messaging on face coverings, and that has led to public confusion about the pros and cons. (See* *"NEW CDC CLAIM: 'TWO MASKS BETTER THAN ONE,"* *"FACING THE TRUTH, PART II: MORE EVIDENCE MASKS ARE INEFFECTIVE"* *and* *"WEAR MASKS, BREATHE TOXIC PARTICLES.")*

Mask & Die

A new study released in February claimed that titanium oxide particles—which are frequently present in face masks—should have regulatory control because the particles could cause cancer.

"Oops," Michael Levitt, a biophysics professor at Stanford tweeted, with a link to the study in Nature.com. "Science just realized that masks could be bad for you."

StudyFinds.org also reported that it could take up to 450 years for the ubiquitous single-use face mask to degrade, which could be devastating for the environment, given that China alone produces up to 450 million per day.

Researchers from Swansea University in the U.K. found that there are significant amounts of toxins found in these masks after exposure to water, including lead, copper, and antimony.

"All of us need to keep wearing masks as they are essential in ending the pandemic. But we also urgently need more research and regulation on mask production, so we can reduce any risks to the environment and human health," Dr. Sarper Sarp of Swansea's College of Engineering said in a statement in December.

TREND FORECAST: *In the 30 March 2021* ***Trends Journal****, we featured an article titled, “SPERM DOWN FOR THE COUNT, PENISES FALLING SHORT.”*

In the article, we reported that Dr. Shanna Swan, a professor of Environmental Medicine & Public Health at Mount Sinai Health System, has warned that phthalates, a chemical commonly used in the manufacturing of plastics, can shrink penises and decrease male fertility.

And now, with more people wearing masks, the “penis-shrinking” trend is speeding up. The National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health found that the microplastics used in the manufacturing of COVID face masks contain a number of toxic chemicals, including penis-shrinking phthalates.

TRENDPOST: *Over the past three months, the* ***Trends Journal*** *has kept subscribers up-to-date on the scientific data showing the fallacy of mandatory mask-wearing and lack of hard evidence that wearing cloth face masks offers any real protection from COVID. Here are links to some of our articles on the subject:*

- *“DANISH STUDY: MASKS OFFER VERY LIMITED PROTECTION”*
- *“FACING THE TRUTH, PART I: THE GREAT MASK-QUERADE”*
- *“FACING THE TRUTH, PART II: MORE EVIDENCE MASKS ARE INEFFECTIVE”*
- *“MASKS ARE A POLITICAL AGENDA”*
- *“DOCTORS: WEAR MASKS, GET SICK”*
- *“MORE EVIDENCE: MASKS OFFER “LITTLE, IF ANY, PROTECTION”*

Masked Out

The CDC said it still recommends masks in areas where the risk of infection is considered elevated, which is about 37 percent of U.S. counties, The Associated Press reported.

According to an AP and University of Chicago’s NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll, some 50 percent of Americans still want forced face coverings in public... down from about 75 when compulsory mask-wearing was first enforced.

And the mask wearing “for and against” are politically divided with 77 percent of Democrats still pro-mask mandate, compared with 53 percent of Republicans.

Vaxxed Up

Further illustrating the COVID War anxiety anomalies, 28 percent of the fully vaxxed are extremely or very worried that they can still get COVID while only 13 percent of unvaccinated Americans are worried about contracting the virus.

WE TOLD YOU SO! DRUG DEALERS SAY COVID-19 PANDEMIC WILL END THIS YEAR

No surprise to **Trends Journal** subscribers, who know that some two months ago we had forecast the COVID WAR would end late March, mid-April, now the Drug Lords are making it “official.”

Stéphane Bancel, the vaccine-billionaire CEO of Moderna, said in an interview Thursday that he believes the COVID-19 pandemic will burn itself out in 2022 and become endemic, raising the risk in the future for those over 50 and high-risk groups.

Bancel, who is worth about $5 billion, said the pandemic phase will likely end but the public will continue to need annual boosters to prevent “breakthrough” infections, according to the *Financial Times.*

He spoke about Moderna’s life after the COVID-19 pandemic since the company is a one-trick pony. The vaccine is the only product that Moderna ever distributed. He spoke about a new vaccine that can respond to the Omicron variant and a vaccine that combines the flu and COVID-19 as future revenue streams.

Bancel recently appeared on Fox Business and was asked by anchor Maria Bartiromo about reports that said COVID-19 had a “tiny chunk” of DNA that matched sequences that were patented by Moderna three years before the pandemic began during the company’s cancer research.

Mr. Bancel said his scientists are looking into the data to see their accuracy.

“As I have said before, the hypothesis of an escape from a lab by an accident, it’s possible, humans make mistakes,” he said. “So it is possible that the Wuhan lab in China was looking at virus enhancement or gene modification and then there was an accident, somebody was infected…it is possible.” (See “AMERICA’S PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM IS UTTERLY CORRUPT” and “BERKSHIRE BILLIONAIRE WHO MADE A FORTUNE INVESTING IN COMPANIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO U.S. OBESITY EPIDEMIC ‘APPALLED’ BY THOSE WHO REFUSE COVID JAB.”).

Yearly Flu Vax/COVID Vax

Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla said in an interview in January that he envisions a world where COVID-19 becomes manageable like the flu, and only requires one jab each year.

Bourla said that the virus will never be eradicated from society and will always kill some percentage of the public each year. (See: “PFIZER DRUG LORD PUSHING YEARLY COVID JABS. CALLS THOSE WHO WON’T SWALLOW BULLSHIT, ‘CRIMINALS.’”)

Bancel said he is confident that Moderna’s mRNA platform will allow the company to bring new drugs to the public for a variety of diseases. He estimated that there is an 80 percent chance that COVID-19 will become endemic in 2022, the *FT* reported.

"We should be in a world where, between vaccination, boosting a natural infection—and, potentially, a less virulent virus—we might move to an endemic setting where it circulates in the community forever," he said.

TRENDPOST: *Remember when President Donald Trump declared a state of COVID emergency on Friday the 13th in March 2020, and when he compared his "Operation Warp Speed" jab to the U.S.'s race for the atomic bomb? Trump said he would employ "every plane, truck and soldier" to distribute doses.*

Then go back to November/December 2020 when the Drug Lords were selling their line that two jabs from the Operation Warp Speed COVID Jab would provide a 96 percent efficacy rate.

However, as we wrote, what they promised did not happen: See "ISRAEL: COVID DRUG MUCH LESS EFFECTIVE THAN WHAT WE'VE BEEN SOLD," (27 Jul 2021) and our 12 October 2021 **Trends Journal** *article, "NEW STUDIES PROVE: 96 VAX EFFICACY RATE WAS PURE BULLSHIT."*

TRENDPOST: *Despite claims by the drug cartels of taking great risks and investing billions in research and development (and often in building new facilities), before ever seeing a dime in profit, the facts prove differently.*

Not all of those investments are private funds. BioNTech, for example, received the equivalent of $397 million from the German government to put toward the development of a vaccine.

In return, the company is supplying it to low-income countries at cost. Nevertheless, BioNTech reported a net profit of $1.3 billion for the first three months of 2021.

Moderna was similarly subsidized by the U.S. government, receiving billions in funding. Goldman Sachs predicts that Moderna will take in $13.2 billion from its vaccine in 2021.

CHILDREN'S INNATE IMMUNE SYSTEM BEATS COVID. WHY VAX THEM?

The innate immune systems in children have been identified as a key factor in why so few develop serious symptoms—and why so many parents are hesitant to sign them up for the experimental vaccine.

MedlinePlus.gov defines the innate immune system as the defense system a human has when born. They are seen as highly adaptable to outside bacteria and viruses.

"It protects you against all antigens. Innate immunity involves barriers that keep harmful materials from entering your body. These barriers form the first line of defense in the immune response," the government website read.

It has been widely documented that COVID-19 in most children has mild symptoms if any at all. STAT News reported Monday that new data suggest that the Pfizer jab works "substantially less well" in preventing infections and hospitalizations in children aged 5 to 11.

The research was carried out by the New York State Department of Health. It has not been peer-reviewed.

John Moore, a virologist at Weill Cornell Medical College, said the issue is likely the lower dosage the children received.

VOA News reported on Saturday that medical experts have expressed concerns that the mask-wearing and social distancing that children faced during the first two years of the outbreak could have a negative effect on their immune systems as they get older.

Sara Sawyer, a professor of molecular, cellular and developmental biology at the University of Colorado Boulder told the outlet that there are a lot of "reasons to believe that kids need to be exposed to things to keep their immunity complex, so that should they encounter something very dangerous, they have aspects of their immunity that might cross over and help protect them against those things."

A recent study by the Kaiser Family Foundation found that half of 420 parents surveyed were not too worried about their children getting sick from the virus, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

The report pointed out that about 75 percent of eligible adults are vaccinated compared to 40 percent of eligible children. Children younger than 5 are not eligible for the jab.

As of 23 February, 307 children between 0-4 died from the virus and 663 between 5-18. There are about 98 million children in that age group in the U.S., according to data from 2019.

TRENDPOST: *The **Trends Journal** has reported on parent's resistance to getting their children jabbed and despite the facts that they are not dying of COVID, a series of government and agency mandates are forcing them on school children of all ages. (See "PARENTS RESISTANT TO JABBING THEIR CHILDREN." "DRUG DEALERS: GET KIDS VACCINATED," "NO GOOD REASON FOR VAXXING KIDS," "JAB KIDS WHO WON'T DIE OF THE VIRUS: THERE'S NO BUSINESS LIKE VAX BUSINESS," "VAX KIDS? MORE DROWNED IN THE U.S. THEN DIED OF COVID" and "VAX KIDS? THE COVID RISK IS 'TINY'.")*

TAMARA LICH, TRUCKER PROTEST ORGANIZER, DENIED BAIL, BECOMES TRUDEAU’S POLITICAL PRISONER

The organizer of the Freedom Convoy protest that spanned 22 days in Ottawa has been denied bail and faces a “lengthy” stay in prison if convicted, according to an Ontario judge.

Justice Julie Bourgeois decided to deny bail to Tamara Lich—who started the now-defunct GoFundme fundraising drive that raised over $10 million—because she said it is likely that she would re-offend again if released.

Bourgeois told Lich that she had “plenty of opportunities” to abandon the protesters and the "criminal activity” but she “chose not to” and persistently counseled others to stay.

"In Canada, every citizen can certainly disagree with and protest against government decisions but it needs to be done in a democratic fashion in abidance with the laws that have been established democratically," she said.

Lich was arrested and charged with counseling to commit mischief ... yes, jailed with no bail for committing “mischief.”

Maxime Bernier, the leader of the federal People’s Party of Canada, criticized Bourgeois’ decision. He also took to Twitter to point out that Bourgeois was a political hack who ran as a Liberal politician a few years ago.

“Meanwhile, the terrorist who drove into a crowd at the freedom rally in Winnipeg three weeks ago and injured four people was released on bail after his arrest,” Bernier tweeted. “That’s Canada’s ‘justice’ system under Trudeau.”

Bernier was referring to the arrest of David Alexander Zegarac, the 42-year-old accused of intentionally hitting four people with a Jeep Patriot earlier last month. One of the anti-lockdown protesters was hospitalized and released.

Constable Rob Carver, a spokesman for the Winnipeg Police Service, told *The Winnipeg Free Press* that Zegarac "blurted out" comments about the incident a short time later.

The report said he was charged with four counts of assault with a weapon, four counts of fleeing from a collision, and other charges. The 42-year-old was released after agreeing to pay $10,000, according to CTV News.

Bourgeois, the judge, is a former Liberal MP candidate in 2011. Western Standard Online reported that Trudeau backed her run at the time.

"It's an extraordinary pleasure for me to tell you that I have great admiration for Julie Bourgeois—her vision, her authenticity, her strength—is going to be an amazing asset," Trudeau said.

Dean Skoreyko, an influential Conservative Twitter user, tweeted, "It's now obvious Julie Bourgeois was chosen directly by Trudeau to preside over the Lich court case. Tell me how not one in the Ottawa media was aware she's a partisan Liberal of this magnitude."

TREND FORECAST: *As evidenced by draconian COVID War lockdown, shelter-in-place, "flatten the curve" mandates imposed on the general public by politicians and sanctioned by judges—many of which are nothing more than political hacks—the unalienable Rights of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness have been prohibited.*

And now that politicians have seized that power and the courts sanctioned them to do so, they will continue to usurp more Rights from We the People and exert more power and control in their march to mental madness.

Also, just as the masses obediently marched off to orders given to them by politicians to fight the COVID War, so too will they march off to support... and die, in military confrontations started by their governments.

TRUDEAU REVOKES EMERGENCY POWERS AFTER TRUCKER PROTEST ENDS

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced last Wednesday that the country is no longer in an "emergency situation" and he would revoke the extraordinary emergency powers that he imposed to deal with the Freedom Convoy protest in Ottawa.

"Order has been restored and the blockades and occupation are over," Trudeau announced. Parliament declined to revoke the powers.

The **Trends Journal** reported extensively on the protests and the effort that Trudeau made to smear the truckers to delegitimize the protest (which the media was more than happy to promote). (See "CANADIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES ASSOCIATION SUES TRUDEAU GOV'T," "TRUDEAU, STILL IN HIDING, INVOKES RARELY USED EMERGENCY ACT" and "CANADIAN TRUCKERS FREEDOM CONVOY: MEGATREND DEFAMED BY MAINSTREAM MEDIA LIES.")

Trudeau's decision to enforce the Emergencies Act gave his government the ability to cut off funding for these demonstrators and freeze their bank accounts.

Trudeau faced backlash over his crackdown against the truckers. We reported last week that the Canadian Civil Liberties Association sued Trudeau and his government after calling the emergency orders "an extreme law that has never been used."

“Through all the peaceful and disruptive protests in Canada's history—some involving unlawful acts and protracted standoffs with police—never before has a government declared a national emergency under the Emergencies Act, and with that given itself the enormous powers to bypass the ordinary, accountable democratic process,” a statement read.

Daddy’s boy Trudeau followed in his father’s footsteps by declaring the emergency. Pierre Trudeau, the former prime minister, invoked the same emergency order during a terrorism crisis in Quebec. (His father’s order—which was known at the time as the War Measures Act—came after the Quebec Liberation Front set off 200 bombs and killed the deputy prime minister of Quebec. Daddy Trudeau was accused of exaggerating the threat in order to pass the orders.)

Justin Trudeau said police in the city managed to shut down the protest and “order has been restored and the blockades and occupation are over.”

Video of law enforcement emerged on social media and showed a wave of cops moving in on the protesters 22 days after the protest started. *The New York Times* described “rows of police officers” sweeping through the crowd who were tailed by “at least two armored vehicles and tactical officers armed with rifles and wearing helmets.

David Paisley, a HVAC technician who would broadcast updates from the protest, told the paper that one of the police officers pointed a “big military rifle” at his chest and ordered him down on the ground.

“It was like a movie scene,” he said.

Trudeau, citing intelligence from law enforcement, said there is a risk that another trucker convoy could enter Ottawa so his government would enact the same measures in response.

“The state of emergency is not over,” he said.

Hypocrite Trudeau

It is worth noting that Justin Trudeau, in 2020, called out New Delhi over its response to the farmers' protest, saying that Canada "will always be there to defend the right of peaceful protest." (See "MODI LOSES, FARMERS WIN. A MEGA-TREND BEYOND INDIA.")

Under the new powers, tens of thousands of Canadians as "designated persons" who could have their bank accounts and other assets frozen, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

"We took measures that had been applied to terrorism and applied them to other illegal activity," Justice Minister David Lametti said.

The paper's editorial board pointed out that police in the country already had the ability to clear the protesters who had been blocking traffic with tow trucks. The move to freeze their assets served "not to end an emergency but to incapacitate and intimidate protesters after the fact."

TREND FORECAST: *Justin Trudeau's actions against the Freedom Convoy should send chills through every Western country. He showed that the only protests that are permissible are the ones that are approved by the state.*

We see Trudeau's actions being embraced by Washington and the reach will not be isolated to drivers in big rigs who honk their horns. What is to prevent the government from seizing bank accounts of anyone who posts an opinion online that is not approved by the government?

The government is supposed to represent the people, but Trudeau refused to even listen to the protesters' grievances before releasing the thugs from the Ottawa Police Department to violently remove the few that remained.

Trudeau—who was in hiding during most of the protest due to his COVID-19 infection—despite being three-time-vaxxed... managed to recover from the virus, but his political career has suffered a tremendous blow.

TRENDS IN GEOPOLITICS

ISRAELI AIRSTRIKES KILL 3 SOLDIERS IN SYRIA

Israel kept up its war footing against Syria last week after conducting its fourth airstrike against its neighbor in February alone, which resulted in the deaths of three Syrian troops, a report said.

SANA, the Syrian news outlet, reported, "The Israeli enemy carried out an air assault with several missiles" at about 1:10 a.m. on Thursday. Syria claimed that its air defense systems intercepted most of the missiles used in the attack.

The **Trends Journal** has reported on the recent strikes against Syria. (See "ISRAEL KEEPS LAUNCHING MISSILES INTO SYRIA. WILL WAR ESCALATE?" and "AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL: ISRAEL'S TREATMENT OF PALESTINIANS AMOUNTS TO APARTHEID.")

Israel sees proxy forces in Syria as an existential threat because it is supported by Iran, its major military threat. Despite the illegality of attacking the nation, Israel has admitted to launching hundreds of airstrikes into Syria that target Iranian troops, military targets and allied groups such as Hezbollah.

Russia supports President Bashar Assad's government and put Tel Aviv in an awkward position last week when it invaded Ukraine.

Israel, which has a good relationship with Moscow, but whose main ally is the U.S., called the invasion a "serious violation of international order."

Middle East Eye pointed out that Israel has been reluctant to say more.

Dmitry Polyanskiy, Moscow's envoy to the UN, told a Security Council briefing on Wednesday that he was "concerned" over Tel Aviv's plans "for expanding settlement activity in the occupied Golan Heights," which he said "directly contradicts the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Convention."

The report said Poyanskiy told the council that Russia does not recognize "Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights that are an inalienable part of Syria."

Israel has insisted that the targets of these strikes are Iran-backed forces in Damascus and it has no interest in forcing a regime change. Russia has not spoken out against these strikes from Israel. There is some concern that the fight in Ukraine could impact Israel's relationship with Moscow.

"We're telegraphing 'business as usual' to the Russians," a defense official told Israel's Army Radio. "It's important not to broadcast a misleading message."

Moscow said its coordination with Tel Aviv in Syria will continue despite these comments.

"Our military officials discuss the practical issues of this substantively on a daily basis. This mechanism has proven to be useful and will continue to work," the Russian embassy in Israel said in a statement, according to Reuters.

The conflict in Syria began in 2011 and resulted in about 500,000 deaths, The Associated Press reported. About half of the country's population prior to the war has been displaced and there is a currency crisis. The report said today one

U.S. dollar is worth about 3,600 Syrian pounds. Prior to the war, one dollar was worth 47 pounds.

TREND FORECAST: *While the United States and NATO condemn Russia's attack on Ukraine and its occupying a foreign nation, there is no U.S. NATO condemnation of Israel's ongoing occupation and stealing of Palestine land which is in violation of international law and its occupation of the Golan Heights, which Israel seized from Syria in 1967's Six-Day War.*

And while the mainstream media has attacked Russia for its invasion of Ukraine, Israel is not, and will not, be criticized by the establishment political parties and the mainstream media. Indeed, anyone that does so is chastised as an "anti-Semite".

TREND FORECAST: *The* ***Trends Journal*** *has reported on the relationship between Israel and Syria. (See "ISRAEL CONDUCTS SERIES OF DEADLY AIRSTRIKES IN SYRIA," "TERROR STRIKES SYRIA: ALL OUT WAR COMING?" and "ISRAEL KEEPS BOMBING SYRIA.")*

As we have forecast, with Prime Minister Naftali Bennett taking over from former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, considering who he is and what he stands for, we forecast it will be a continued escalation against Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Iran.

And should war escalate in the Middle East, so too will oil prices, which will in turn dramatically increase inflation and damage economic growth.

13 MILLION YEMENIS ARE HEADED FOR STARVATION AND NOBODY CARES

The United Nations food agency said Thursday that it is running out of money which could result in 13 million in the country of 30 million starving to death.

David Beasley, the head of the agency, pinned blame on the continuing conflict and fundraising efforts that did not meet the demand. The agency has faced an increase in demand due to the COVID-19 outbreak, which the **Trends Journal** has forecast. (See "COVID WAR AND CIVIL WARS: KILLING MORE THAN THE VIRUS," "POLITICIANS CAUSE WORLDWIDE HUNGER CRISIS" and "GLOBAL HUNGER FROM COVID WAR WILL KILL MILLIONS MORE THAN THE VIRUS.")

Beasley was prophetic in April 2020 when he warned that the economic shutdown "could soon double hunger, causing famines of biblical proportions around the world." He now says 285 million people in the world face the threat of starving to death, The Associated Press reported. He said his agency needs an additional $9 billion to meet the need.

"We've got twice the number of people struggling around the world now," Beasley said. "So, what am I gonna do for the children in Yemen? Steal it from the children in Ethiopia, or Afghanistan, or Nigeria or in Syria? That's not right," he added.

He told the outlet that he cut the rations in half for eight million Yemenis and "we may be cutting those down to zero."

"What do you think will happen? People will die. It will be catastrophic," he said.

The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the war in Yemen. (See "U.S. FIGHTING YEMEN WAR," "U.S. RAMPING UP MIDDLE EAST WARS," “SAUDI-LED YEMEN SLAUGHTER ESCALATES” and “MURDEROUS YEMEN WAR: MILLIONS IN PERIL. WHO CARES?”)

In 2014, the Houthis, who were ruling large sections of the country for over 1,000 years, overthrew the unelected president put into place by the Saudis and Americans to replace Ali Abdullah Saleh.

In 2015, Saudi Arabia initiated warfare against the Houthis. Announced by the Saudi Ambassador to the United States in a telecast from Washington D.C., the Yemen war—supported by the Obama administration, Trump administration, and Biden administration (“OBAMA 2.0”), which together sold Saudi Arabia billions of dollars of munitions—has destroyed Yemen’s economy and infrastructure.

Brett McGurk, the White House coordinator for the Middle East, said in January that the U.S. has done all it can for peace in Yemen and blamed the Houthis for continuing the crisis, according to Foreign Policy—namely their decision to launch ballistic missiles that hit the United Arab Emirates. (See “U.S. FIGHTING YEMEN WAR.”) January was one of the bloodiest months in the conflict.

Last month, President Biden vowed continued support to Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud during a phone conversation.

“The president underscored the U.S. commitment to support Saudi Arabia in the defense of its people and territory from these attacks and full support for UN-led efforts to end the war in Yemen,” the White House said in a statement at the time.

TREND FORECAST: *The* ***Trends Journal*** *has reported extensively on the humanitarian crisis in Yemen that is playing out due to Saudi Arabia’s attack on the nation which was launched from Washington, D.C. in March of 2015 with the support of Nobel Peace Prize winner, Barack Obama.*

We maintain our forecast that the Saudi/U.S. alliance will not defeat the Houthis, and the war will rage on, killing tens of thousands of innocent people while inflicting devastating and deadly hardship across the nation.

The war will continue to be ignored by the mainstream media and the vast majority of the world will be ignorant to the human suffering the United States and Saudi Arabia have inflicted upon the nation.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have forecast when the COVID War was launched in 2020, the move to shut down the global economy in order to deal with the virus would create a global famine on a scale never seen before.*

Nothing points to the incompetent and immoral actions of political leaders and their health "experts" more than this issue of mass starvation, a direct result of the unprecedented global shutdown.

While billions of dollars are easily raised to finance the rush to a vaccine—which dramatically falls short of the 96 percent efficacy rate it was sold as having—and while drones flew around in nations searching for citizens not social distancing and police threaten fines and jail time for those not wearing masks... the UN World Food Program has to beg for money to keep hundreds of millions of people from starving.

And, again, virtually nothing about this global tragedy is mentioned in the mainstream news.

TREND FORECAST: *One of our 2020 Top Trends was "NEW WORLD DISORDER." We had forecast that the riots, demonstrations, and uprisings spreading across the globe (India, Hong Kong, Lebanon, South Africa, France, Chile, Bolivia, Algeria, etc.) in protest of lack of basic living standards, government corruption, crime, and violence would escalate in 2020.*

Governments used the COVID War, however, to prohibit protestors from gathering en masse and taking to the streets. (See "CANADIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES ASSOCIATION SUES TRUDEAU GOV'T.")

We have warned that after long lockdowns and going deeper in debt, they would again rebel.

Now, in addition to the current crisis in food shortages, the WFP acknowledges what we had forecast: the unprecedented global shutdown will have ancillary effects such as escalating social tensions, increased migration, and political conflicts, making the situation even more dire.

U.S. CONDUCTS DEADLY AIRSTRIKE IN SOMALIA TARGETING AL-SHABAAB FIGHTERS

While the United States government and the mainstream media condemn Russia's attack on Ukraine, U.S. Africa Command, or AFRICOM, conducted airstrikes in the Somali area that killed 60 "enemy" fighters, according to a report.

The U.S. said there were no civilian casualties, according to an "initial assessment." AntiWar.com reported that the U.S. is "notorious for undercounting civilian casualties and there are usually civilian deaths discovered when journalists arrive at the scene.

The U.S. said the strikes were carried out in coordination with Somali forces near Duduble—which is about 40 miles northwest of Mogadishu.

The military said in a statement that the strikes were authorized under the 2001 Authorization of Use for Military Force and the militaries made an effort not to injure civilians, which contrasts "with the indiscriminate attacks that al-Shabaab regularly conducts against the civilian population."

AntiWar.com reported that the authorization was passed after the Sept. 11 attacks and has remained in place. (See "SENATE COMMITTEE: AMERICA'S MASS MURDER OF CIVILIANS WITH DRONES.")

The U.S. conducted the strikes with MQ-9 Reaper drones and it was the first military action against the Al Qaeda affiliate since August, *The New York Times* reported. The strike followed an attack by Shabaab fighters on government forces in the town.

The report said the political instability in Mogadishu has given Shabaab the opportunity to expand. The U.S. government on Saturday announced sanctions for Somali officials after there was another delay in the country's parliamentary elections, Al Jazeera reported.

Officials in Mogadishu moved the elections from 25 February to 15 March due—in part—to a political clash between the country's president, Mohamed Abdullahi, and prime minister, Mohamed Hussein Roble.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said about 4.3 million Somalis—out of a population of about 16 million—have been impacted by drought, including 271,000 who have been displaced, Reuters reported.

The report of the drone strike occurred shortly before Russia invaded Ukraine. Moscow was internationally condemned, but nobody batted an eye after the U.S. aggression.

"The fact that the U.S. bombed Somalia this morning but all the empathy is directed to Ukraine only," Judicaelle Irakoze, an African feminist, tweeted. "Yemen, Syria, Somalia for years have been existing under bombings, invasions and whatnot!"

Jason Bassler, the co-founder of the Free Thought Project, also posted: "The U.S. bombed Somalia this week but I bet you didn't hear about it from the U.S. media, just like you haven't heard about the U.S. facilitated genocide in Yemen the past 6 years."

"But don't worry, they will tell you the truth about Ukraine just like they did with COVID," he posted.

TRENDPOST: *While the U.S. media blasts allegations of China committing genocide against Uyghurs and that Russian President Vladimir Putin is committing war crimes with his action in Ukraine, the Presstitutes have essentially been silent when it comes to America's long history of slaughtering innocent civilians with drone strikes—justified under a decades-old act that has outlived its usefulness.*

TREND FORECAST: *The U.S. will continue to use killer drone despite concerns being raised in Congress. The Navy just announced last week that it will launch a fleet of unmanned drones in the Middle East with other "allied nations" to counter Iran. Vice Admiral Brad Cooper said the fleet will consist of 100 unmanned drones that will be both sailing and submersible.*

"It's been well established that Iran is number one in the primary regional threat we are addressing," Cooper said. "There's the ballistic missile, cruise missile and UAV [drone] component, both in their capability and their mass proliferation, as well as the proxy forces."

We saw what happened after the 29 August 2021 drone strike in Kabul that resulted in the deaths of 10 innocent people—including seven children. The New York Times called the strike "a tragic blunder that punctuated the end of the 20-year war in Afghanistan."

The Pentagon announced in December that there will be no charges and the heads of U.S. Central Command and U.S. Special Operations Command did not recommend any "accountability actions" for anyone who was involved in the strike.

"Process improvements absolutely will occur, but in this particular case, there was not a strong enough case to be made for personal accountability," according to Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby.

TRENDS-EYE VIEW

PRESSTITUTES AND POLITICIANS PLAY FOR THE SAME TEAM. WAKE UP KIDDIES.

How about this for a line of a bucket of bullshit: “CNN, The Most Trusted Name in News.”

They are trusted Presstitutes. Media whores who get paid to put out by their corporate pimps and government whore masters.

Need more proof?

Chris Cuomo, another Daddy’s Boy, born on third base and thought he hit a home run—a nothing of a nobody who got the CNN job as “on air crap spewer” because Daddy was NY Gov. Mario Cuomo—may turn out to be a historic journalist after all. Chrissy inadvertently helped expose the incestuous relationship between the corporate media outlets and the people they cover.

CNN hired an outside law firm to look into communications between the news anchor and his brother, Andrew Cuomo, the former governor of New York that was forced to resign as multiple sex-harassment allegations swirled. (See "CNN CLOWN SHOW EXPOSES MEDIA'S POLITICAL TIES.")

The investigators said they discovered that Allison Gollust, CNN's marketing and communications chief violated company policy after reviewing text messages she had with Chris Cuomo, according to a report.

The Wall Street Journal reported that Gollust, who once worked for the former governor as his communications director, sent the anchor a text message about how she would adjust a statement from the governor after an accuser stepped forward.

Gollust also reportedly inquired with Chris Cuomo if a separate accuser ever came forward earlier to say the former governor never touched her—and if she did, that should be reported. (Gollust's spokeswoman has denied the allegation and said her client "never offered advice or counsel to Andrew Cuomo. Period. If she wanted to advise the governor, she could have called or texted him directly (she didn't).")

A spokesman for Chris Cuomo, who was fired from the network, told Fox News that he had no interest in "finger-pointing between Ms. Gollust and WarnerMedia."

"Chris's lawyer has been requesting to see the results of WarnerMedia's investigation for weeks, and the right thing to do is for WarnerMedia to honor that request and also make the results public," the spokesman said.

Gollust, the former CNN executive who came undone after it emerged that she had a secret affair with Zucker, once worked for Gov. Cuomo's communications team as the director.

The *Journal* reported that Gollust was asked by investigators for her work Blackberry, and she provided them with her newest Blackberry. She eventually handed them a third device after these investigators raised the issue, the report said.

TRENDPOST: *So enamored with Gov. Cuomo's arrogance and draconian mandates, the Hollywood Clown Club awarded Cuomo the International Emmy Founders Award.*

Why? Because the low-life accused woman molester rose to new heights because his "... 111 daily briefings worked so well because he effectively created television shows, with characters, plot lines, and stories of success and failure." Yes, a TV reality show of clown-like characters.

(Also see "CUOMO COVID COVER-UP CONTINUES," "CUOMO'S BOOK A BUST, BUT GOT PAID MILLIONS" and "KILLER CUOMO: MISREPRESENTED COVID NURSING HOME DEATHS.")

TRENDPOST: *Journalism is dead in America and much of the world. We have been reporting that for years. See: "The Fourth Estate: RIP," (1 Dec 2016) and "POLITICO'S NOT JOURNALISM, IT'S A PRESSTITUTE PUBLICATION" (19 Oct 2021).*

Major news companies need their loyal followers, so they tailor every single story to engage their base. These companies know that their followers are fickle—we've seen that recently when Fox News seemed to turn its back on Donald Trump and viewers abandoned the network for outlets like OAN and Newsmax.

As we reported in our Trends in the News broadcast, on 10 February 2021, the Financial Times headline read: "Fox News plans to maintain centre-right slant."

The article went on to quote Fox Corporation CEO Lachlan Murdoch, who made it 100 percent clear it is not true journalism that drives Fox News, it is the bottom line.

FT quoted Murdoch, who stated last year that "We will stick where we are and we think that is exactly right and is the best thing for business. We believe where we are targeted, to the centre-right, is exactly where we should be targeted."

There it is: "the best thing for business" is their being "targeted, to the centre-right."

Unlike the ***Trends Journal****, where our motto is "Think for Yourself," for Fox Corporation, it is not about journalism, not about reporting news, but playing to an audience.*

STARBUCKS UNIONIZATION: 2022 TOP TREND ON THE RISE

Workers in a Starbucks location in Mesa, Ariz., on Friday voted 25-to-3 in support of becoming a union—becoming the third location out of 9,000 in the U.S. to unionize.

The Arizona store followed the lead by the two Starbucks locations in Buffalo that unionized.

The New York Times reported that more than 100 Starbucks stores in 25 states have filed petitions to vote for unionization.

Michelle Hejduk, a shift supervisor at the Mesa store, issued a statement after the vote, calling it a "historic moment" for all service workers.

"This movement started in Buffalo, and we've now brought it across the country," she said.

About 68 percent of Americans polled say they support unions, and there has not been a time in recent history where unions have been more powerful.

More workers are even willing to tell their companies to take the job and shove it. About 4.3 million Americans quit their jobs in December, which completed a year when about 47.4 million people left their jobs.

CNBC reported that in 2019, a year considered to be the tightest labor market on record, saw 42.1 million people quit their jobs. Workers at the Mesa store cheered and hugged when the results came in, according to The Associated Press.

"The way that we smoked them with how many we got—yeses—that really shows that this is really a movement for people and we just want what is kind of an inalienable right for people," Liz Alanna, a shift supervisor at the store, told the AP. "It feels good what we were fighting for, everybody wanted."

Reggie Borges, a representative from Starbucks, said the company respects the process "and will bargain in good faith." He said, "We hope that the union does the same."

The company filed a request with the National Labor Relations Board and postponed the vote because its position was that a single location should not be granted permission to hold a vote.

The employees called the Seattle-based company's effort a "union-busting" tactic. The AP reported that the company fired seven employees in Memphis who were accused of opening a store after business hours and conducting interviews from the location.

Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., took to Twitter to congratulate the workers at the Mesa shop.

"The movement to unionize Starbucks is spreading like wildfire. when workers stand up and fight for their dignity, there is no stopping them," he said.

TREND FORECAST: *The* ***Trends Journal*** *has reported on the shift to unionization during the COVID-19 outbreak, when major companies saw record* *profits and stock prices, while the vast majority of their employees toiled in low-paying jobs with little hope of career advancement. (See "UNIONIZATION: TOP TREND FOR 2022, ON-TREND," "ACTIVISION STUDIO GROUP WILL FORM A UNION, SOLIDIFYING TRENDS JOURNAL FORECAST" and "SPOTLIGHT: WORKERS ON DEMAND.")*

TREND FORECAST: *Among the reasons there is a shortage of workers is that they no longer want to work for poverty level wages, and after being locked down and having the time to reflect on their lives, many assessed the worthlessness of their jobs in their personal development.*

As Gerald Celente has long said, "When people lose everything and have nothing left to lose, they lose it."

Therefore, as socioeconomic conditions continue to deteriorate, "NEW WORLD DISORDER," one of our 2020 Top Trends, will escalate as billions take to the streets, demonstrating against the lack of basic living standards, crime, violence, and government corruption.

TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE

By Ben Daviss

NEXT-GENERATION EV BATTERIES CUT WEIGHT, EXPAND RANGE

Would-be electric vehicle (EV) owners waiting for battery-powered cars and trucks that run longer on a single charge won't have to wait much longer.

California-based Amprius has sold and shipped its first batch of lithium-ion batteries that, it says, stores 73 percent more energy per unit of weight than the batteries in Tesla's Model 3 EV and take up 37 percent less space.

The secret: Amprius has embedded silicon nanowires into the substrate of the batteries' lattice-like graphite anode, or negative terminal.

Silicon stores ten times more lithium than graphite, the conventional anode material in lithium-ion cells. However, silicon tends to swell and crack.

Amprius found that silicon in the form of interspersed long and short nanowires solves that problem, giving its batteries a useful life about as long as conventional lithium-ion cells—while weighing less and storing more energy, both factors that improve vehicles' range.

Amprius isn't the only one claiming bragging rights on battery breakthroughs extending EV range.

Mercedes says its Vision EQXX all-electric concept car uses a battery pack half the size and 30 percent lighter than in its EQS production car. As a result, the car will travel more than 600 miles, or about 1,000 km, on a charge.

A battery two-pack created by Michigan-based Our Next Energy drove a Tesla S 752 miles on one charge, Reuters reported. The test ran continuously for 14 hours in mid-December at an average speed of 55 miles an hour.

In addition to a conventional lithium-iron-phosphate battery, ONE adds a back-up "range extender" cell that can be called on when a vehicle needs extra power. That leaves more energy in the regular battery that runs the car under normal conditions.

TREND FORECAST: *Battery technologies are improving to the extent that, before this decade is over, EVs will be able to travel almost twice as far on a charge as the typical gasoline car can go on a full tank.*

Automakers, electric utilities, and independent companies already are at work building out a growing national network of charging stations, also ensuring that by the end of this decade no driver paying attention to a fuel gauge needs to fear being stranded between chargers.

It is not range anxiety or a lack of demand that will hamper the widespread adoption of EVs. The key drawback in the near to medium term will remain a lack of key minerals at affordable prices needed to make batteries and electric motors.

RECYCLED PLASTIC BECOMES SUPERGLUE

By tweaking the structure of a common polystyrene plastic, scientists at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory have managed to turn it into a reusable adhesive so strong that a dab of a square centimeter—less than half an inch—holds 300 pounds, or about 136 kg, suspended in air.

The plastic is called polystyrene-b-poly(ethylene-co-butylene)-b-polystyrene, or SEBS, and is a common component in toothbrushes, disposable diapers, and a range of everyday items.

The researchers used a technique called dynamic crosslinking, using a form of boron to combine the plastic with silica nanoparticles. The boron allows the cross linked bonds to be formed and broken over and over, making the new adhesive reusable.

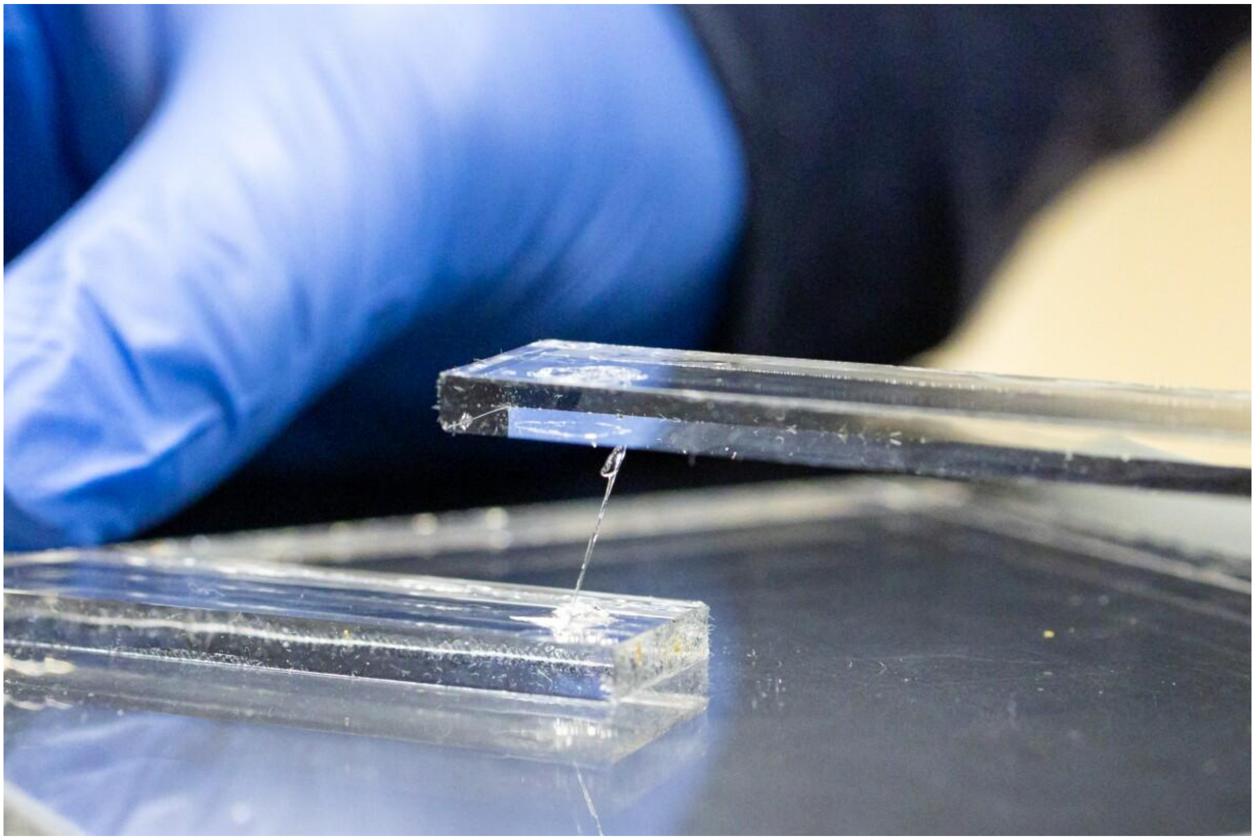
When the team tried to mechanically pry and pound apart two surfaces joined by the adhesive, they found its strength surpassed that of any commercially available adhesives they tested.

The new adhesive is one of the toughest materials ever reported, the researchers concluded.

The lab is beginning the process of commercializing the new adhesive.

TRENDPOST: *Aside from the obvious industrial benefits, the process also provides another way in which used plastics can be kept out of landfills and the oceans.*

As new processes and uses for recycled plastic continue to appear, the next challenge will be to design and implement ways to collect used plastics before they wind up buried in dumps—and educate people to do so.



Oak Ridge National Laboratory's new reusable adhesive.

Credit: Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Top 2022 Trend: Simplicity and Low Tech

NEW VEHICLES SUCCUMB TO TECH OVERLOAD

Auto makers are dealing with an increasing number of lawsuits growing out of malfunctioning technology: dashboard screens that flicker or go black, faulty backup cameras, sound systems that die or suddenly blast at high volumes.

In 2019, Ford paid $17 million to settle a suit brought by owners who complained about flaws in the vehicles' My Touch systems, which allows drivers to issue commands by tapping a dashboard screen.

In 2020, Subaru paid $8 million to settle a class action suit over broken-down technology; in December, Honda and its Acura subsidiary shelled out $30 million for defective electronics and extended the warranties on affected components.

Mazda and Volvo are thought to be targets of one or more lawsuits now being developed, according to *The New York Times*.

Many of the problems seem to stem from vehicles' confusion over how to interact with Apple AutoPlay and Google's Android Auto programs.

It seems that passenger cars and trucks have larded on more technology than they can handle.

"The game has completely changed" for conventional auto makers, Axel Schmidt, a managing partner overseeing the automotive practice at tech consulting firm Accenture, said to the NYT.

Auto companies aren't used to having to bolt on technology created by outsiders "that are much stronger and bigger than themselves," he noted.

Both sides are finding out that just because a technology works on a tablet or smartphone, it's not going to be smoothly inserted into something as complex and multifaceted as a computerized car.

Part of the problem is that major changes to vehicle designs take three years or more, an eternity in the digital world.

However, consumers have come to expect that their vehicles will have GPS, respond to voice commands, and manage information about the vehicle, the current trip it's making, the driver's emails and phone messages, and play a movie for the kids on the rear-seat video screen.

"Carmakers face the nearly impossible task of designing entertainment systems that work flawlessly with software and devices that haven't been invented yet," the *NYT* noted.

Just as carmakers struggle to integrate new versions of software into vehicle designs already in progress, software companies such as Apple have failed to work closely enough with auto companies to make sure their software works in the vehicles as intended, the *NYT* said.

Tesla has avoided problems with Apple and Google: its cars don't use the companies' software. Instead, Tesla has developed its own as an integrated component of its electric cars.

However, even Tesla hasn't escaped troubles.

In 2018, it recalled 100,000 cars for touchscreen troubles, which are the subject of a lawsuit now working its way through the courts.

TRENDPOST: *The flaws in vehicles' software point to an underlying issue: cars have become too complex not only for engineers to manage, but also for drivers.*

Recent studies have found that as dashboard screens have become more common and more complex, accidents resulting from distracted driving have increased.

The finding reflects a U.S. Air Force investigation in the 1990s into why its new state-of-the-art fighter jets were logging more pilot errors and why the crash rate increased. The probe found that cockpit screens were giving pilots so much competing information at a time they didn't know what to pay attention to at any given moment.

As newspaper columnist David Kittredge wrote recently, "Perhaps auto manufacturers should negate some of their overly wrought designs to instead create no-frills models."

A market analysis likely would show there is a universe of car owners who would welcome a vehicle that had no voice, no digital screen, no automatic parking assistant, and few or none of the other bells and whistles now adorning cars and sending their prices over $40,000, not including future repair bills.

A bold auto company might partner with Indian automaker Tata to tweak some of its no-frills runabouts for Western markets or even test those markets with a model of its own making.