

THE TRENDS JOURNAL®

HISTORY BEFORE IT HAPPENS®

NEGOTIATE FOR PEACE OR

REST IN PEACE





8 March 2022

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

[How to read the Trends Journal
on Kindle devices](#)

Suggested "Text Aloud" pdf readers:
– for android phones search "Voice Aloud
Reader" or "ezPDF" on Google Play
– for Apple phones search "PDF Voice
Reader Aloud" on the App store

Inside

TRENDS ON THE U.S. ECONOMIC FRONT	5
TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT	43
SPECIAL UKRAINE REPORT	61
FEATURED ARTICLES BY GUEST WRITERS	96
TRENDS IN THE MARKETS	109
TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM	111
TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY	114
TRENDS IN CRYPTOS	120
TRENDS IN THE COVID WAR	135
TRENDS-EYE VIEW	144
TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE	151



NEGOTIATE FOR PEACE

Welcome to this
week's [Trends
Journal](#):
NEGOTIATE FOR
PEACE OR REST IN

PEACE

Since the Ukraine War began nearly two weeks ago, the word from the United States and NATO—and repeated by the mainstream media—was that the Ukrainian military was holding the Russians at bay and putting up a strong resistance.

Today, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was praised for invoking a wartime defiance compared to Britain's WWII Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

"We will not give up and we will not lose. We will fight to the end, at sea, in the air. We will continue fighting for our land, whatever the cost," Zelensky proclaimed. "We will fight in the forests, in the fields, on the shores, in the streets."

We agree with retired colonel Douglas Macgregor who says Russia will crush Ukraine, which we note in this week's [Trends Journal](#).

While we are doing all that we can to promote [Occupy Peace](#), the only talk making any news is war talk... and the results will be deadly and costly.

Inflation is skyrocketing, prices are surging, markets are diving...the solution

that could help reverse these negative trends: Negotiate for Peace or Die in War.

Also, please remember to [tune in](#) tomorrow at 6 PM, EST, for my "Celente & 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

THE LATEST PLAGUE & AN OLD PLAYBOOK

Just like in 1984, there is a war between Oceania and either Eurasia or Eastasia at all times. A crisis used to unite the sheeple, to control them. The Ministry of Truth is alive and well—doing what they do best. Create crises.

John Bracken

END OF U.S. STATUS QUO COMING QUICK

The American "Dream" or our post WWII cushy suburban lifestyle and standard of living is becoming a setting sun. We probably won't preserve much of it after the financial changes coming in the next 10-12 years. The U.S. Dollar probably won't retain its status as the global reserve currency for long either.

Our lifestyles or standard of living will immediately decline -33% right off-the-bat, according to real estate investor and expert, Sam Zell. Once we are "demoted" there will be no economic recovery to our former glory for

generations, certainly not among the living.

Exactly what will replace the U.S. Dollar as the global reserve currency is yet to be determined but it won't be fiat money for sure. Historically such changes were settled by a War between the rising economic power(s) (Asia) and the decadent, former global power or empire (U.S.). Moreover, it's all about cycles, as we will soon be finding out. There is no political fix or solution to such dramatic changes.

Craig Bradley

RUSSIA UKRAINE

It's not a Russian invasion of Ukraine. It's a liberation of a cabal, deep state Ukraine by strategically targeting

U.S.-NATO-Neo-Nazis bioweapons labs, Khazarian Mafia child sex trafficking, guns, gold and drugs tunnels, and to protect the space arc in the Olensky sands near Kherson. This is a guardian earth alliance coordinated effort. This war has been going on since 2014 upon the Ukrainian people by their own corrupt, evil fake government.

Tanya McGowan

RED DOVES

What happened to the passionate antiwar and disarmament protests in Europe back in the days of the Soviet Union? Why are the "hippies" of yesterday the warmongers of today?

The only consistent thread I see is communism.

It wasn't peace the protesters wanted; it was communism. So, any war with the U.S.S.R. was unacceptable to them.

But communism in the Soviet Union ended in 1991. Russia underwent a Christian revival. It became conservative and traditional (it always was, but that had been suppressed). Now it is the enemy.

The U.S. has gone in the opposite direction. It was conservative, Christian and traditional. Now it has embraced Cultural Marxism and class warfare—with nonwhites, feminists and sexual minorities serving as the new "proletariat" or "revolutionary subject."

What else has changed? Nobody under age 50 in the West has any conception of what a nuclear war would mean: mutual assured destruction. And many older people appear to have forgotten as well.

Andrew Towne

READING CHINA DOESN'T TAKE A FORTUNE COOKIE

Through manufacturing, Governments gave high technology to China, then act surprised when China becomes strong enough to use that technology against them. Go figure?!

Were they protecting their populations or lining their pockets so they can play the blame game in front of a TV made in China that tells them what they want to hear like Nero playing the fiddle while Rome burns.

Meanwhile these mindful party members teach their children how to be greedy and entitled, who never consider their days are numbered, because they have ear pods in listening to fiddle music.

simongranville

RFK JR. FIGHTING HEROIC BATTLE

Thanks for writing this piece. Robert Kennedy Jr. is a hero in my eyes. His information, unlike that of mainstream media who just throw out ignorant insults, is well-researched and documented.

I've noticed that the same rhetoric is used by all legacy media and politicians when they come up against the truth—they start calling out insulting names—I live in Canada, and have to listen to the disgustingly patronizing voice of Trudeau, Tam, and Freeland. Same words used for ANYTHING they disagree with.

Rightwing, anti-vaxx, misogynistic, racists, etc., etc., Same words every single time and the papers pick up on the same language. I guess that's a taste of Build Back Better....

Kellie Auld

WHY PHFIZER TRIED TO BURY THAT REPORT

The Pfizer Report was just released that has some damning information relative to the adverse reactions and death statistics relevant to the forced inoculation of humans worldwide with experimental gene therapy bio-weapons called COVID-19 and subsequent booster shots!!! This is a pdf paper report!!!!

Subject: Pfizer report just released.

Page 30 and beyond for side effects.

harlow53

SELF-DEFENSE: AVOID VIOLENCE IF POSSIBLE

Pure Gold Advice. Thank you American Combato. People are getting more brazen as time goes by. If you don't like what's in the parking lot, leave. Head on a swivel. Thank you Excellent Article.

Kenneth Gerry Anderson

MICROSOFT AI AND HUMAN "UPGRADES"

Wow!! and... Gulp!! I will never get an AI device put in my body. I can easily see a divided society (seems like we recently experienced this). I will die before I get some trans-human upgrade.

Melissa Servello

DEBT CITIZENS CAN CONTROL

How can you have \$1000 more money a month without getting a pay raise? The answer is to get rid of your debt and then stay out of it. There is a huge debt trap out there that has been pushed on people and on poorer countries and it is the quick and easily obtained credit that is the bait. Getting out of debt is one of if not the safest way to weather economic devastating down turns of the economy.

a1achiropractic

Click [here](#) to support the TJ by using our links for products and services

TRENDS ON THE U.S. ECONOMIC FRONT



WAR IN UKRAINE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

WEST PARALYZES RUSSIAN ECONOMY, AND WEST'S ECONOMY IS PAYING THE PRICE

In response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Western nations united to effectively cut off Russia's economy from the rest of the world.

And while the West's measures have hit Russia hard, what is absent from media coverage is the economic toll it will also take on the West and much of the world.

The ruble was trading at a value equivalent to a tenth of a penny over the weekend, a loss of a hundredfold since the invasion, making it worthless outside of Russia. Visa and Mastercard are suspending services there this week.

Western companies from Volvo to Microsoft are shutting down services and operations in the country (see related story in this issue).

Russia's central bank doubled interest rates to 20 percent to try to attract investment, a rate that will paralyze economic growth. The country's stock market has been closed for a week to prevent a market crash.

TREND FORECAST: *How will Russia fight against the sanctions being imposed upon it and the scores of businesses and financial institutions leaving the nation? Russia has bolstered itself over a long period of time—even prior to the Ukraine War—in preparation for the assault by creating as much of a self-sufficient economy as possible, in line with our [Top 2022 Trend](#) of self-sufficiency.*

Going Gold

Russia has amassed at least an estimated \$630 billion in gold, foreign currencies, and other forms of liquidity. It created “Mir,” its own internal payments network, in case it was cut off from the world's banking system. It transferred significant portions of its foreign holdings to China, which has refused to condemn Russia for its military actions against Ukraine.

However, at least 40 percent of those assets in reserve were held in countries that have joined in the sanctions, denying Russia access to them.

Russia stored the rest in China, meaning that Russia can spend those funds only in China. To use them elsewhere, Russia would have to convert the assets into dollars, euros, or other currencies of nations that are part of the western alliance—something many countries will not do at this time.

Meanwhile, China is unlikely to have large amounts of industrial supplies to spare for Russia; China is intent on shoring up its own manufacturing industry and continuing to strengthen its export industry to grow its economy.

The question on The Street is whether or not Russia will be able to withstand economic isolation for a long period of time, and what will the impact of these

sanctions and mandates have on the rest of the world... as evidenced by skyrocketing commodity prices.

Taking to the Streets

Since the invasion began, anti-war protests have erupted in some 65 cities across Russia and nearly 5,000 people who participated in the anti-war rallies have been arrested, according to OVD-Info, a human-rights organization. Videos emerged on social media that claimed to show Russian police beating up some protesters.

TREND FORECAST: *Should economic conditions dramatically deteriorate and Russia become involved in military actions beyond Ukraine, not only will the anti-war protests continue, but they will encompass even more people as food becomes unaffordable and the money worthless, tapping into the [“New World Disorder”](#) trend that we have been highlighting for more than two years.*

Up until today, Western bans have not included Russia's oil and gas sales, which earned about \$235 billion last year. President Joe Biden announced that Washington will ban imports of Russian oil, gas, and energy, which is a major escalation in the U.S. response to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

“That means Russian oil will no longer be acceptable at U.S. ports and the American people will deal another powerful blow to Putin's war machine,” the president said.

TREND FORECAST: *While President Biden bragged that the sanctions mean “Russian oil will no longer be acceptable at U.S. ports and the American people will deal another powerful blow to Putin's war machine,” he did not mention that it is also dealing a powerful blow to the American people. The price for premium gas at a Los Angeles gas station hit \$7.29 a gallon while regular-grade gas across the U.S. hit \$4.17 per gallon.*

Again, as we continue to note, the general public is only getting a one-sided view of the sanctions and mandates imposed against Russia, which we forecast

will do nothing to alter Moscow's military posture, but will cause great hardship for the people of the world.

Bottom Line

The oil industry has backed away from buying and shipping Russian petroleum products in a war zone, and last week, Russian oil was being offered at discounts of as much as \$18 a barrel below world prices.

While some analysts claimed the market for Russian oil is essentially dead, and they won't buy Russian oil, regardless of the price, that may be more talk than action should a shortage of petroleum persist.

TREND FORECAST: *The relationship between Russia and China will grow stronger as the West ramps up its economic war against Russia and intensifies it militarily by sending more troops and munitions to NATO nations next to and near Russia's borders.*

China, with an economy 10 times the size of Russia, and Russia being the 11th largest economy in the world, will be a significant and growing trading partner during Russia's isolation, selling it more of its goods and services that the West has abandoned.

However, China will not short-change its own industrial complex to provide Russia with computer chips and other crucial supplies. China needs those items to feed its dominant export economy as well as to spark domestic consumption.

As we have long said, the business of China is business, while the business of the U.S.—and now of Russia—has been geopolitical conflict and gamesmanship.

COMMODITY PRICES SHOW BIGGEST WEEKLY RISE SINCE 1974



The fallout from Russia's war in Ukraine has spiked global commodity prices at the fastest pace since 1974, during OPEC's first oil embargo.

Sanctions against Russia and combat in Ukraine have closed off key sources of foods, metals, and other raw materials of which the region is a major supplier.

The S&P GSCI index of raw materials prices rocketed up 16 percent last week, its biggest weekly leap since 1970, according to data service Refinitiv, lofting it to its highest value since 2008.

Bloomberg's commodity index has gained about 30 percent so far this year.

Russia and Ukraine together ship about a third of the world's wheat exports. Futures prices for the grain leaped the daily limit on Chicago's commodities exchange for the fifth day in a row on Friday, closing the week at \$13.40 a bushel, a price not seen since 2008, and edging past that to \$13.48 on 7 March.

Wheat's price has risen more than 50 percent since the war in Ukraine began. Indeed, as we have continued to note, the sanctions being imposed upon Russia are being felt around the world as evidenced by the skyrocketing prices across the global grain market.

Copper approached its all-time high price last week and closed on 7 March at \$9,420 a ton as stockpiles shrank to their lowest levels since 2005; aluminum, which needs large amount of energy to produce, set a record price of \$3,850 a ton on the London Metal Exchange on 4 March and held it on 7 March.

Zinc futures prices topped \$4,050 a ton on 7 March and ; on 3 March, nickel closed at \$27,390, its highest in 11 years, and jumped to \$29,775 four days later.

Iron ore futures on Singapore's exchange leaped up 15 percent last week.

Shipping lines are refusing to load cargoes from Russia or travel the war-torn Black Sea, where some vessels already have been struck by missiles; banks and insurance companies increasingly are abiding by sanctions and refuse to be involved in transactions involving Russian materials.

The price of thermal coal in Europe, used by power plants, set a record of \$430 a ton on 7 March. U.S. gas futures climbed more than 4 percent, their third weekly gain, as European demand rose for liquefied natural gas.

"We've never seen such steep and sudden commodity price spikes across so many assets," analyst Henning Gloystein at Eurasia Group told Bloomberg.

"Until there's significant de-escalation, the record or elevated prices due to sanctions and disrupted supply chains will continue for many commodities," he said.

Soaring commodity prices "will stoke a torrent of inflationary pressures as the building blocks of the global economy get even more expensive," Ehsan Khoman, MUFG's research chief for emerging markets, told the *Financial Times*.

"We believe commodities are now marching to levels where demand destruction" —crashing demand due to unaffordable prices— "will become prevalent," he said.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have noted since the sanctions and other economic measures were taken against Russia by the U.S. and NATO, the restrictions on Russian exports will hurt Russian citizens and working people across the globe more than they will damage Russia's political, economic, and military elite.*

Beyond just the sanctions, other restrictions have blocked Russia's goods from the global market.

One is the refusal of shipping companies and insurers to try to safely move goods out of a war zone. Merchant ships in the Black Sea have been struck by missiles; insurance companies increasingly are loath to guarantee shipments will arrive intact.

The other is public opinion. If a company is perceived as being on the wrong side of an issue—in this case, seen as supporting Russia or war profiteering—their supposed transgressions will be beamed around the world through social media in moments.

Having seen cautionary examples such as Dell Computers' ["Dell Hell"](#) and the [Amy's Baking Company disaster](#), companies will not risk any misstep that could result in a reputational stain that would live on the Internet forever.

TREND FORECAST: *Runaway inflation already was steering the world economy toward recession before the war began. Central banks, always cautious, will not raise interest rates fast enough to tackle the additional surge of price increases the war has set off.*

At some point, prices will become high enough to exceed the budgets of large numbers of consumers. When that point is reached, markets for everything from houses to gadgets will contract dramatically and the global economy will fall into at least a recession and more likely [Dragflation](#), a Top 2022 Trend, in which prices are rising while economies are shrinking.

WORLD'S CONSUMERS TO FEEL WAR COST IN HIGHER FOOD BILLS



The war in Ukraine has sent global food prices skyrocketing.

Among the factors driving up prices is that the war is raging in a region, which is known as the breadbasket of Europe.

Together, Russia and Ukraine supply a third of the world's wheat exports, a quarter of its barley, and almost 80 percent of its sunflower oil, according to the International Food Policy Research Institute. They also supply more than 6 percent of Europe's food imports.

The global price of vegetable oils, of which Ukraine produces a major share, already had reached record levels before the war began.

"It's just tragic to see hunger raising its head in what has long been the breadbasket of Europe," David Beasley, executive director of the UN's World Food Program, said in a statement.

"The bullets and bombs in Ukraine could take the global hunger crisis to levels beyond anything we've seen before," he warned.

The longer the war continues, the greater the risk that Ukraine's winter wheat crop will not be harvested or that this spring's maize and other crops cannot be planted.

About 80 percent of Ukraine's latest wheat crop already had been exported before Russia attacked, but the Ukrainian port cities of Kherson and Mariupol now have been occupied by Russians, leaving future exports in doubt.

The world's ratio of grains in storage to grains being used fell from 31.9 percent four years ago to 28.7 now, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization reported.

Wheat's inflating price is driving up demand for substitute grains; corn prices have jumped 10 percent since Russia's invasion began, Commerzbank noted.

Poor countries already are feeling the war's impact on prices.

Turkey, one of Russia's major wheat customers, has cut its global import target from 370,000 tons to 285,000 due to wheat's soaring cost.

Inflation in Turkey ran at almost 55 percent, as we report in [“Turkey's Inflation Rate Tops 54 Percent”](#) in this issue.

While the United States and European allies are exploring banning imports of Russian oil, as we go to press, they have not been imposed. Any such embargo would crimp the fertilizer industry, which is likely to indirectly contribute to higher food costs. Belarus and Russia also export fertilizer, a source now closed to most of the world's farmers.

Poor countries, already struggling to recover from the COVID War and its costs, will feel food's rising costs the most, curtailing imports and worsening the nations' debt and balance of payments crises.

TRENDPOST: *Food inflation was rampant before Russia's Ukraine war began, as we have reported in articles such as [“Ag Products Beginning Mini-Supercycle. Executives Say”](#) (22 Jun 2021) and [“Groceries: Prices Climbing as Supplies Disappear”](#) (12 Oct 2021).*

Eating Less Costs More

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization's [FAO's] food price index rose 20.7 percent in February, year over year, the agency reported on 4 March, indicating factors other than the current war were driving prices higher.

“A much bigger push for food price inflation comes from outside food production, particularly [from] energy, fertilizer, and feed,” FAO economist Upali Aratchilage said to Reuters.

“All these factors tend to squeeze profit margins of food producers,” leaving them with less money to invest in expanding production, he said.

TREND FORECAST: *The U.S. has little direct reliance on food exports from Russia and Ukraine but still will feel the shortage’s effects as global food costs rise. As a result of Western sanctions many poor nations, mostly in Africa and the Middle East, will face severe food shortages by the end of this year.*

WILL RUSSIA’S ECONOMY SINK INTO DEPRESSION?



Western sanctions will shrink Russia’s economy by 35 percent in this year’s second quarter and 7 percent for the full year, analysts at JPMorgan Chase predict, a near-collapse comparable to those in 1998 after Russia defaulted on its debts, when the

country’s GDP withered by 5.3 percent.

Bloomberg sees Russia’s economy contracting by 9 percent this year.

“Sanctions and decisions of foreign businesses to pause or halt Russian operations have led to a stall in [Russia’s] international trade, reduced output, and supply-chain disruptions,” analyst Anatoliy Shal wrote in a note to clients.

“The shock implies a lower potential output, which will be accompanied with a spike in prices—a credit crunch will add to pain, although there are signs that the run on banks is easing,” he noted.

After NATO put up sanctions on Russian finance, trade, and travel, Russia tried to defend its economy by slapping on capital controls and doubling interest rates, among other steps that may help in the short term but that also will cripple economic growth.

“Sanctions undermine the two pillars promoting stability—the ‘fortress’ foreign-currency reserves of the central bank and Russia’s current account surplus,” JPMorgan analysts wrote.

“The sanctions will hit their mark on the Russian economy, which now looks headed for a deep recession,” they predicted.

“It is the long-term that is more troubling,” strategist Tim Graf at State Street Global Markets said to Bloomberg.

“The longer that sanctions are upheld, and especially if they are expanded to include gas and oil exports, the more likely Russia is to become an untouchable capital market for years to come,” he added.

Western allies have not yet sanctioned Russia’s roughly eight million barrels a day of crude oil and petroleum products, which are the nation’s chief source of hard currency, but today, the Biden administration implemented a ban on Russia’s petroleum products.

However, although the western alliance has not embargoed Russian oil and gas, traders, shippers, and insurers have backed away from those products, creating a de facto ban, as we report in [“Allies Debate Ban on Russian Oil While Markets Already Avoid It”](#) in this issue.

If Russia loses oil and gas revenue, its largest source of hard currency, its economy will shrink 14 percent this year, according to calculations by Bloomberg Economics.

WESTERN CORPORATIONS FLEE RUSSIA. DOES IT MAKE DOLLARS AND SENSE?



Despite decades-long political disagreements between Moscow and Washington, Russians have had a long love affair with things Western, from Levi's jeans to McDonald's fast food. Mikhail Gorbachev, former president of the Soviet Union, once appeared in a Pizza Hut commercial.

"It was a new smell, a new sensation, fast service, everything was clean," Vladislav Zubok, professor Russian history at the London School of Economics, told the *Financial Times*.

"Moscow was incredibly colorless [in Soviet times] and you suddenly had light, color, and efficiency in the midst of the collapsing Soviet economy," he said.

Now it is that triumph of what was called "diplomatic capitalism" that has collapsed.

BP is dumping its 20-percent stake in Rosneft, Russia's biggest oil company. ExxonMobil is pulling out of the vast Sakhalin Island development, of which it owns 30 percent.

Royal Dutch Shell is exiting its Russian projects and is seeking to extricate itself from its 10-percent stake in the recently-completed Nord Stream 2 pipeline to carry Russian gas to Europe.

Germany suspended the pipeline's operating certification when Russia invaded Ukraine.

Google and Facebook have shut off their services there. Clothiers H&M and Nike are winding down operations in Russia.

Microsoft is “horrified, angered, and saddened” by the war and will stop selling its products in Russia. Microsoft’s Windows operating system powers 55 percent of Russia’s computers, according to data service Stat-Counter.

Microsoft acted a day after software heavyweights Cisco and Oracle suspended their Russian operations.

Apple is suspending sales in Russia.

Apple, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, and Youtube all have booted government-controlled Russia Today and Sputnik media outlets from their platforms.

Facebook, Twitter and Youtube are labeling posts from Russian government and government-backed sources and have eliminated their ability to earn money from ads and clicks.

Most western vehicle makers have announced full or partial shutdowns or withdrawals.

BMW, Ford, and Renault have closed plants; Porsche has shut down manufacturing due to a lack of parts coming from Ukraine.

The lack of auto parts made in Ukraine also is curtailing production at some BMW and Volkswagen assembly plants in Germany and the U.K., the *FT* reported.

Aston Martin, Bentley, Honda, Jaguar, Rolls-Royce, Toyota, and Volkswagen have ceased manufacturing in Russia.

Volvo has halted production at its Russian truck plant and suspended car deliveries in Russia “until further notice.”

Honda already had announced in December that it will leave the Russian vehicle market this year.

Other western countries withdrawing from Russia:

- Visa and Mastercard have announced an end to services in Russia, beginning this week.
- Siemens, Germany's third-largest publicly-traded company, has "put all business in and international deliveries to Russia on hold," the technology giant announced. The company has a €1.1-billion contract with Russia to build high-speed trains.
- Daimler Truck, the world's largest truck builder, is halting its partnership with Russian maker Kamaz and has decided to "immediately suspend all our business activities in Russia." Mercedes-Benz owns 15 percent of Kamaz and is considering divesting, Mercedes said.
- Equinor, a Norwegian energy development company, is ending its Russian partnerships.

On 1 March, Grant Thornton became the first major business services firm to break with its Russian member company. Bain and Co., Boston Consulting Group, and McKinsey & Co. have announced they will refuse work from Russian government agencies but have not stopped servicing state-owned and other companies.

The head of McKinsey's Ukraine office called on the company to shut down its Russia operations and a former senior partner in Russia told McKinsey managing partner Bob Sternfels in a tweet to close the company's Moscow office and that "it's blood money on your hands, staining you with each day you keep it open."

McKinsey counts 21 of Russia's 30 biggest companies among its clients.

The "Big Four" international accounting firms Deloitte, EY, KPMG, and PwC have not announced any change in their Russian operations. Unlike business

service firms, global accounting firms are networks of affiliated businesses. Cutting out one of those affiliates can be a long and intricate process.

Several large Western public relations firms, including FTI Consulting in the U.S. and London-based Hudson Sandler, have dropped Russian clients to avoid being forced to polish the reputations of businesses with ties to the Kremlin or its allied oligarchs, the *Financial Times* noted.

The companies “don’t know if we can get paid and what work we could even do for them,” one PR executive told the *FT*.

Coca-Cola, Pepsico, and McDonald’s are among the Western icons that would be missed if they shut down operations, according to a Russian poll taken last week. Today, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, and McDonald’s announced that they were suspending business in Russia.

TREND FORECAST: Karl Marx, godfather of the failed Soviet Union, proclaimed the doctrine of “economic determinism:” the idea that economic relationships are the basis of a society and its politics.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine will not fail because of internal or external social or political opposition, and we forecast, while it will drive Russia’s economy down considering their natural and human resources, they will trend more toward a self-sufficient economy, one of our Top Trends for 2022.

Moreover, the business they lose with the West will be targeted toward the East—such as China and India—and Africa.

Among the big losers are the businesses whose incomes will decline because they are abandoning Russia—the 11th largest economy in the world, and the Russian employees who had those jobs.

WESTERN COMPANIES' RUSSIAN DILEMMA: STAY OR GO?



The distributor of Apple products in Russia saw a run on its stores, with people grabbing iPhones and Macbooks before rubles lost even more value and while the products were still available.

“This is a new kind of war, where soldiers are posting TikToks from the battle front and Google Maps is being used to identify where the tanks are,” Nathan Freitas, founder of the Guardian Project, a group of software and digital activists supporting human rights.

“You don’t want these things designed to serve people to be turned into weapons,” he said, nor do companies want to be perceived as siding with Russia against the Western alliance.

However, blocking Russian consumers’ access to technology “would be punishing the average citizen for actions taken by [their] government,” Joshua Brockwell, a director at Azzad Asset Management, contended in a *Financial Times* interview.

“If you applied that standard to other countries and governments around the world, you would have complete chaos,” he said.

For example, if a company establishes a moral precedent of turning its back on Russia, which accounts for about 2 percent of Western companies’ sales, would the same company then be obligated to close itself to China’s enormous market if China uses military force to annex Taiwan—and sustain enormous financial damage as a result? How would shareholders react?

The trend toward “CEO activism,” in which corporations take, and act on, political stands could, in this case, “punish the Russian people” more than government officials.

TREND FORECAST: *In most cases, companies are exiting Russia as a matter of public relations, principle, and government pressure. In an age when a company's decision can displease a segment of the public, any such complaint can be magnified around the world in moments over social media. No business wants to risk being flogged in the court of public opinion or to have to try to repair that kind of damage to its reputation.*

ALLIES DEBATE BAN ON RUSSIAN OIL WHILE MARKETS ALREADY AVOID IT



Canada, which buys a tiny amount of Russian oil, has blocked imports of Russia's oil. And today, President Joe Biden announced a ban on Russian petroleum products.

About 8 percent of U.S. oil and petroleum imports are from Russia, amounting to 245 million barrels or about 672,000 petroleum products a day. Oil and gas are the lifeblood of Russia's economy, which is about the size of Italy's and depends almost entirely on exporting raw materials.

Russia ships about 5 million barrels of oil a day, half going to Russia, and roughly 2.7 million barrels of refined petroleum products.

The \$235 billion Russia earned last year exporting petroleum products accounted for about half of its export revenue, according to the Institute of International Finance, and was its largest single source of hard currency.

Until they find other customers, banning those exports will inflict even greater damage on Russia's crashing economy. And only half of Russia's loss of Western revenue from oil and gas sales would be made up by the \$118 billion in new sales to China that Russia announced at last month's Olympics.

On the other hand, the world faces an oil and gas shortage already in place before Russia's war began.

When NATO cast Russia out of the world's financial system and sanctioned several of its banks, the allies specifically excluded the country's institutions necessary to keep oil and gas flowing.

It did so, in part, because Russia provides Europe with 40 percent of its natural gas, which is still flowing under long-term contracts with Gazprom, Russia's main gas company.

There are not enough sources that can replace the supply in the short term.

Italy also receives at least 40 percent of its natural gas from Russia and was perceived by NATO allies as the country most likely to "go soft" on sanctioning its provider.

It did not.

"In the case of interruptions of gas supplies from Russia, Italy has more to lose compared to other European countries that rely on different sources," Prime Minister Mario Draghi said in a 3 March speech to the country's parliament. "This does not diminish our determination to support sanctions that we deem justified and necessary."

The invasion is "a turning point in European history," Draghi declared, that has shattered "the illusion of permanent peace through economic and political integration" and has created "a new reality" for the region.

Draghi also said Italy is sending military aid to Ukraine because "it's not possible to respond [to the crisis] only with encouragement."

However, “sanctions should hit those who started and are conducting the war, not poor people in Russia and even in Italy,” opposition party leader Matteo Salvini, an avid Putin fan, said in a 27 February interview on Italian television.

Although Western allies have yet sanctioned Russia’s oil and gas exports, traders are behaving almost as if they have: as crude oil prices have spiked from \$92 to \$129 per barrel since Russia invaded Ukraine.

Also, refiners in Japan, South Korea, and other nations have cut back purchases of Russia’s oil, many shipping companies are refusing to load it, and insurance premiums on any such shipments have spiked on Russian oil being shipped.

Because of financial constraints and global opposition to Russia’s war, about 70 percent of Russian crude exports “can’t be touched,” research director Amrita Sen at the consulting firm Energy Aspects told CNBC.

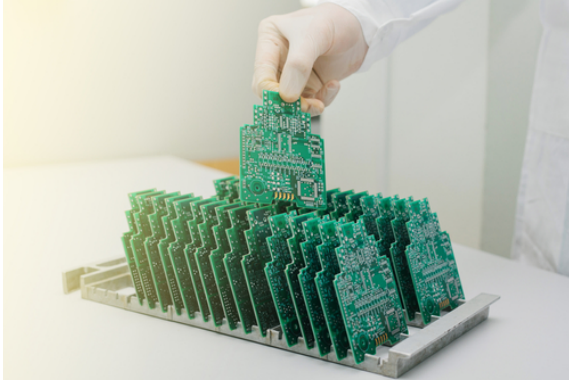
The Indian Oil Corp. has ended purchases of two grades of Russian crude and will buy others only if the price includes delivery to India, the company said. Normally, buyers arrange and insure their own shipments.

Rosneft, Russia’s largest oil company, is offering to deliver crude shipments in government-owned tankers in exchange for cash on delivery, the *WSJ* said, but so far has found no takers.

Russia provides about 7.5 percent of the world’s oil flow and 40 percent of Europe’s natural gas.

TRENDPOST: *Not only are the sales of Russian oil declining, so, too, is the price of Russian oil. A reporter for Bloomberg tweeted that Russian Urals crude was selling for \$28.5-a-barrel today, while Brent crude was selling for \$129 per barrel on the open market.*

U.S., ALLIES CUT OFF CHIP SUPPLIES TO RUSSIA



Export controls imposed by the U.S. government and its NATO allies on Russia will deny Western-made semiconductors to that nation's industries and military.

The “novel and complex” set of export controls have been designed to cripple Russia's military and industrial electronic capabilities while minimizing impacts on consumers, Kevin Wolf, a former senior commerce department official, told the *Financial Times*.

“The [U.S.] administration has set out a structure to cut Russia off from chips and this isn't going to go away,” he said. “There is massive allied cooperation on this.”

U.S. makers Nvidia and Intel, ranked as the world's largest chip maker by 2020 revenues, have pledged to comply; so has Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co., which controls about half the world's chip market, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

The controls on chip exports are modeled on those the U.S. imposed on Chinese tech giant Huawei, which the Trump administration blacklisted over the company's ties to the Chinese government.

“Russia is very well prepared but, over time, this is going to degrade their military capabilities severely,” former U.S. treasury officer Julia Friedlander commented to the *WSJ*.

However, the vacuum created by the absence of Western-made chips opens the door to China's tech industry to fill the void – specifically by Huawei, the company the U.S. sought to weaken.

“Huawei could monopolize the Russian telecom equipment market,” Artyom Lukin, a professor at Russia’s Far Eastern Federal University, pointed out in a *WSJ* interview.

“As a result of Western sanctions, China could gain 100 percent control over our country’s tech supplies,” he added.

That concern is overblown, according to an unnamed White House official who spoke to the *WSJ*. “China alone cannot supply all of Russia’s critical [chip] needs for the military,” the official said, pointing out that China now accounts for just 16 percent of the world’s semiconductor supplies.

“China certainly cannot compensate Russia for everything we’re restricting through these rules,” the official added.

“Even China, with its thriving technology ecosystem and immense government subsidies, has failed to produce advanced chips,” Martin Chorzempa at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, said to the *WSJ*.

“It’s unimaginable that Russia would be capable of doing so,” he added.

TREND FORECAST: *An absence of computer chips will have an impact on Russia’s war machine and general economy since they are essential for its aircraft, hypersonic weapons, and all high-tech needs and requirements.*

While there is doubt being expressed in the major media, politicians, and “experts” that Russia will be unable to fill the U.S. and NATO chip void, we forecast they will be able to sustain combat operations and high-tech advancements since they most likely have prepared for such sanctions and are working to become chip-self-sufficient.

WAR ROILS GLOBAL SHIPPING



A.P. Moller-Maersk and Mediterranean Shipping Co., the world's two biggest cargo container carriers, have halted services at Russian and Ukrainian ports.

Suspension of services to Russia complies with Western sanctions, while Ukrainian ports are now in combat zones. In some cases, ships in the Black Sea have been fired upon or detained by Russian forces.

On 28 February, the *Millennial Spirit*, carrying 600 tons of crude oil and diesel fuel, was struck by a missile and caught fire in the Black Sea.

More than 200 ships are waiting to navigate the Kerch Strait, which connects the small Sea of Azov on Ukraine's shore with the larger Black Sea, which is a passage to the Mediterranean, according to Lloyd's List Intelligence.

"No one saw this coming," Slava Sorochan, an Odessa-based executive with Stark Shipping, said to *The Wall Street Journal*. "That's why so many vessels are stuck."

Ship traffic across the Black Sea has plunged 62 percent since the war began; 22 ships left ports empty after being unable to load cargo, Mark Nugent, a broker at Braemar ACM Shipbroking, told the *WSJ*. However, the war's impact on shipping ranges far more widely than the Black Sea.

The U.K. has closed its ports to all Russian vessels. Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands have announced that all Russian-bound shipments will be held and inspected for military equipment.

“All those hubs in northern Europe are already pretty congested and every little thing that delays cargo flows will intensify the problem” of shipping delays around the world, Vincent Clerc, Maersk’s logistics chief, told the *WSJ*.

Daily freight rates have jumped even above their record levels that we reported in [“Shipping Delays Helping to Inflate Prices”](#) (25 May 2021), [“Shipper Books Tenfold Increase in Net Profits”](#) (21 Aug 2021), [“Supply Chain Crisis Worsening”](#) (9 Nov 2021).

Insurance premiums on shipments are up 4 percent since the invasion began, the *WSJ* said.

Although NATO and its allies have yet to ban Russian oil and gas exports, traders and shippers have enacted their own de facto ban.

“Tanker owners are reluctant to charter ships to buyers of Russian crude,” Peter Sand, chief analyst at consulting firm Xeneta, said in a *WSJ* interview.

“Very few ships are picking up Russian crude and that has significantly pushed up freight rates” for those shipments, he added.

TREND FORECAST: *Prior to the Ukraine War, it was the COVID WAR which began over two years ago. During that time, as much of the world sheltered in place and locked down, supply chain disruptions were one of the major elements that pushed inflation higher: demand outstripped supply.*

Now, with the numerous sanctions, restrictions, port closures, and sea travel restrictions, there will be new supply chain disruptions that will push inflation even higher. And, as we note, it will do very little, if nothing, to affect Russia’s military capabilities now or in the future.

RUSSIA'S ELITES STORE THEIR WEALTH IN LUXURY ITEMS



As Russia's ruble crashed and the country's stock markets shut down, rich Russians stashed their wealth in jewelry and high-priced watches, according to Bloomberg.

Bulgari, the Italian purveyor of jewelry, watches, perfumes, and other finery, reported rising sales in its Russian stores in the days following the Ukrainian war.

"In the short term, it has probably boosted the business," Bulgari CEO Jean-Christophe Babin said in a Bloomberg interview.

"How long it will last is difficult to say, because with the SWIFT measures fully implemented [which ban many Russian financial institutions from the global banking network] , it might make it difficult, if not impossible, to export to Russia," he said.

Cartier and Rolex are still doing business in Russia, as is Swatch Group with its Omega watches.

"We are there for the Russian people and not for the political world," Babin said. "We operate in many different countries that have periods of uncertainty and tensions."

Popular watches can sell in secondary markets for multiples of their original retail price, Bloomberg said, making them a good wartime investment.

TRENDPOST: Name the country, name the place, it's the same story everywhere: the rich get richer, the poor get poorer, and life goes on for them essentially unaffected. And when times get too tough, and the nations they live in get too dangerous, they exit to global hotspots they most desire.

MARKETS OVERVIEW



U.S. EQUITIES SLUMP AS UKRAINE WAR RAMPS UP

Market players struggled to keep up with a whirlwind of economic developments last week as Russia's war in Ukraine roiled global markets, sent commodities prices

soaring, and Western allies shut off Russia's access to essential goods and services.

Markets also are adjusting to the U.S. Federal Reserve's expected quarter-point interest-rate hike next week.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average slid for a fourth consecutive week, down 0.5 percent Friday to end the week 1.3 percent lower. The Standard & Poor's 500 index cast off 0.8 percent on the day, also losing 1.3 percent last week. The NASDAQ skidded 1.7 percent at the end of the week to finish 2.8 percent lower over the five trading days.

The NASDAQ is now 17 percent lower than its January high; the S&P's loss brought it close to 10 percent below its high for the year, a line that would signal a correction has begun.

Commodity prices, already at 40-year highs, are soaring even higher because of the war's uncertainties (see related stories in this issue).

Meanwhile, rising energy costs and looming scarcities of key materials threaten economic growth.

TREND FORECAST: While The Street is forecasting stagflation, stagnant growth and rising inflation, we forecast Dragflation... negative economic growth and rising inflation: the economy drags down as inflation goes up.

As a result, investors have taken shelter in safe havens such as government bonds and gold, driving up Comex gold futures to a record high of \$2,078.80 per ounce, before backing off to close at \$2,058 per ounce.

TREND FORECAST: As ***Trends Journal*** subscribers well know, we have long noted that gold is the world's #1 safe-haven asset. While prices have dramatically spiked higher over the past two weeks—and in all likelihood there will be a pullback—this latest flight to safety has positioned gold to maintain levels in the current range.

Before the Ukraine War, our downside for gold was in the mid-\$1,700 range per ounce. Considering the geopolitical uncertainty combined with unprecedented spiking inflation, our downside on gold is in the \$1,840-per-ounce price range.

And now, despite the U.S. dollar growing stronger, which makes the cost of buying gold higher, rising inflation and expectations that the Federal Reserve will slow down on its interest rate hikes, will be positive for gold and silver since low interest rates will not keep inflation from rising. Again, the higher inflation rises, so, too, will gold prices.

Bonds

The yield on 10-year treasury notes dipped to 1.772 percent, its biggest weekly drop since March 2020 as investors flocked into the market.

Bond yields fall as prices rise on strong demand.

Abroad, the European Stoxx 600 index tumbled 7 percent last week, with bank stocks hit especially hard. As we have noted, Europe will bear the brunt of shortages and higher prices resulting from NATO's sanctions on Russia.

The Japanese Nikkei 225 gave up 2.2 percent, Hong Kong's Hang Seng was down 2.5 percent, its lowest close since March 2020.

TREND FORECAST: While Wall Street is warning of the dangers of stagflation, a stagnant economy and rising prices, the real danger is [Dragflation](#), a declining economy and rising prices.

The Ukraine war will drive prices far higher and more quickly, shrinking the global economy without easing shortages, or lowering prices, of key materials such as metals, computer chips, and the long list of commodities that we have noted.

OIL: As noted above, Brent Crude closed today at around \$130 per barrel. There are a wide range of forecasts of oil prices spiking much higher, including JPMorgan Chase's prediction that Brent could end this year at \$185 a barrel if Russian oil is still off the market.

Today, West Texas Intermediate, which sets the domestic price for U.S. oil, was up \$5.27, closing at \$124.77. Oil prices have not been this high since 2008.

European gas futures prices ended last week almost 90 percent higher than the week before, close to €200 per megawatt hour; Europe gets about 40 percent of its gas from Russia, a fifth of that volume flowing through Ukraine. (See WAR IN UKRAINE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW for additional oil trends analysis.)

TREND FORECAST: Last year, at this time, Brent Crude was selling at about \$63 per barrel. Prices have more than doubled. As we have long been forecasting, should oil prices stay above the \$115-per-barrel range, it will greatly push inflation higher, and push global economies much lower. And as we've noted, oil prices have hit their highest levels since 2008... The Panic of '08. And now, 14 years later, the Panic is on!

BITCOIN: As we have long been noting, while positive on bitcoin, our chief safe haven assets are gold and silver. Among the reasons for this forecast is that precious metals are solid, "in your hands," tangible commodities, while crypto currencies are digital assets.

Last Tuesday, bitcoin jumped 5.2 percent hitting \$43,870 per coin... following its best one-day jump since May, gaining 11 percent. Today, as we go to press, bitcoin was trading at \$38,667.

TREND FORECAST: Last week, there was speculation, which we discounted, that bitcoin was moving up because the prices were too low and that the Russian government used cryptos to evade sanctions... and that with the banks in Ukraine and Russia frozen bank accounts and/or limited withdrawals of people buying cryptos so they can move their money out of their respective countries.

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 and those government regulations and actions taken against Russia and crypto-holders, as evidenced by the statement from Coinbase, has become a reality:

“In the past few weeks, governments around the world have imposed a range of sanctions on individuals and territories in response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. Sanctions play a vital role in promoting national security and deterring unlawful aggression, and Coinbase fully supports these efforts by government authorities. Sanctions are serious interventions, and governments are best placed to decide when, where, and how to apply them.

“No compliance program is perfect, including ours. But to play our part in these critical economic sanctions, Coinbase implements a multi-layered, global sanctions program.”

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

POWELL BACKTRACK: RATES TO RISE A QUARTER-POINT



Before the Ukraine War began, inflation rates hit a 40-year-high. The word on The Street was that the Fed was going to raise interest rates 0.50 percent after a year of denying inflation was rising... claiming inflation was just “temporary” and then “transitory.”

It should also be noted that for nearly a decade, they were selling the line that when inflation hit above their magic number of 2 percent, they would raise interest rates.

On 2 March, with the Ukraine War escalating, in testimony to Congress, Fed Chair Jerome Powell said the central bank would raise its key interest rate now by only 0.25 percent.

“We’re going to avoid adding uncertainty to what is already an extraordinarily challenging and uncertain moment,” Powell said.

Powell’s comment effectively settles the debate over whether the Fed might take the unusual step of bumping rates by a half-point at once when it meets this month.

The Core Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index (PCE), the Fed’s favored inflation measure, rose another 0.5 percent in January to an annual rate of 5.2 percent.

“This is strong, high inflation and it’s very important that we get on top of it and that’s exactly what we’re going to do,” Powell pledged.

The Fed’s policy committee expects inflation to peak and begin to ease soon, Powell added, but “to the extent that inflation comes in higher or is more

persistently high than that, then we would be prepared to move more aggressively.”

Powell’s comment leaves open the door to a half-point hike this summer if the bank sees that inflation remains unchecked.

The last time the Fed raised rates a half-point in one sitting was in 2000. The central bank has not raised rates at all since 2018.

Some lawmakers chided Powell over the bank’s delayed action to address inflation.

“I always thought there was a chance we’d be wrong, and if we were wrong we’d be able to pivot and we pivoted pretty quickly,” he said, referring to his December testimony in which he admitted that the Fed had failed to respond quickly enough to rising prices.

“But by then, the economy really was moving very, very fast,” he added.

TREND FORECAST: *The economy was moving even faster, and there was a case to be made for a half-point hike, but the Fed is unlikely to take such a bold step now.*

The U.S. and world economies are threatened by the instabilities and historically spiking inflation as a result of the fallout from the Ukraine War...which is causing the Fed to remain cautious.

Thus, the expectation on The Street, and from the comments from Powell, is that the central bank will raise its interest rate a quarter-point next week, fearing that a larger hike will harm the economy.

Instead of a larger boost at one time, the Fed will opt for a series of hikes, each one followed by a diagnosis of the effects on inflation, jobs, and economic output.

Meanwhile, the Ukraine war and its after-effects will drive inflation higher, threatening a global recession and [Dragflation](#), one of our Top 2022 Trends.

HOW MANY TIMES WILL THE FED RAISE RATES? THE BANKSTERS DON'T KNOW



Bank of America and Goldman Sachs maintain their predictions that the U.S. Federal Reserve will boost interest rates up to seven times this year, even though the word on The Street is that because of the economic damage wrought by Russia's attack on Ukraine—the rate raises will be

slowed.

The two banks still predict that the Fed's benchmark rate will climb from its current 0.25 percent to 2 percent by the end of this calendar year.

In contrast, JPMorgan Chase does not see the Fed pegging rates at that level until early 2023.

"The underlying rationale for normalization [of interest rates] hasn't yet changed," Praveen Korapathy, a strategist at Goldman Sachs, told Bloomberg.

"If all we get is a small hit to growth and still elevated inflation, it makes the Fed's trade-off worse, but I don't think it would get them to sit on their hands," he said.

Futures traders and other players are now betting that the central bank will push rates no higher than 1.7 percent this year, Bloomberg reported.

Blackrock Investment Institute and TD Securities are among market players reining back their expectations.

“A protracted stand-off between Russia and the West...has reduced the risk of central banks slamming the brakes to contain inflation,” Blackrock wrote in a 1 March note to clients.

NatWest Markets said Wednesday it was stopped out of “core strategic investment stances” and had exited money-market positions that were premised on a steeper path of hikes.

“Given the Fed’s twin goals of maximum employment and price stability, most market participants have lowered their expectations of the cumulative number of interest rate hikes—not just for 2022, but beyond,” NatWest Markets analysts said in a 1 March research note.

TREND FORECAST: *The number and size of the Fed’s rate hikes will not be dictated by the pace of inflation and its effects on U.S. jobs and gross domestic product.*

One of the key lessons in trends forecasting is that no one can predict the future. There are too many wildcards, be they man made or made by nature. The Ukraine War is a wildcard that has changed the course of history. Therefore, we forecast the Fed will be unable or unwilling, or both, to raise interest rates enough, or quickly enough, to slow inflation significantly in the near term. It can only play a losing game of catch-up until the Ukraine war settles and a clearer view into the future is seen.

STRONG FEBRUARY JOB GROWTH SIGNALS POST-COVID LABOR MARKET



U.S. employers added 678,000 workers in February, the largest one-month gain since last August, dropping the unemployment rate to 3.8 percent from 4 percent in January, the labor department reported.

The jobless rate is approaching half of the 6.2 percent notched a year ago and is barely a quarter of the COVID War's peak of 14.7 percent in April 2020.

Unemployment had marked a 50-year low of 3.5 percent just before the COVID virus appeared.

More than 300,000 new workers entered the labor force, and the number who said they were unable to work due to COVID-related causes fell by 1.8 million from January.

The labor force participation rate—the number of available workers with, or seeking, jobs—crept up to 62.3 from 62.2 in January, but still was 1.1 percentage points below pre-COVID levels.

Many older workers retired early during the COVID War, causing some analysts to doubt that the U.S. workforce will regain its former strength any time soon.

The growth in wages eased (see related story in this issue), indicating that employers may be having less trouble attracting workers and that the labor market is leaving COVID behind, *The Wall Street Journal* said.

The average hourly wage grew by a penny last month, following five consecutive months in which it added at least a dime, the *WSJ* found.

Although wages fell in education, health care, and manufacturing, workers overall earned 5.1 percent more last month than in February 2021.

However, inflation in February ran at 7 percent, leaving American workers with less income to spend despite rising wages and salaries. And now, with the unprecedented spikes of inflation, the wage-to-inflation factor will worsen.

The jobless rate among Black workers edged down 0.3 percent to 6.6 percent. Hispanic unemployment shrank 0.5 percent to 4.4 percent. Joblessness among workers lacking a high-school diploma fell to 4.3 percent, the lowest since at least 1992, the *WSJ* said.

Although the U.S. economy has added three million jobs since October, the labor market still is 2.1 million jobs, or 1.4 percent, smaller than in February 2020.

Hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues, and the hospitality industry in general led in numbers of new jobs as the number of business and vacation travelers grew.

TREND FORECAST: *Employment numbers were collected in mid-February, before Russia attacked Ukraine, and do not reflect any impact the war might be having on the U.S. jobs market.*

With the COVID War winding down, as we have forecast, there will be an increase in consumer spending across a variety of spectrums, including hospitality, travel, conventions, trade shows, restaurants, and entertainment sectors.

Therefore, job growth was expected to continue to rise. However, with inflation ramping up at historical levels, and fears of escalating war in Europe... with Dragflation on the horizon, job growth will decline.

WAGE GROWTH SLOWS AS INFLATION SPEEDS UP



U.S. wages rose 5.1 percent in February, year on year, throttling back from January's 5.5-percent gain, the labor department reported.

Wages have increased by 5 percent or more in four of the past five months, *The Wall*

Street Journal noted.

In contrast, wages rose an average of 3.2 percent in the two years ending February 2020 when the COVID virus struck.

Pay grew fastest for jobs hit hardest by the COVID War: wages for retail workers rose 7.1 percent, compared to 5.8 percent in January; transport and warehouse workers received 7.7 percent more, against January's 7.1-percent raise.

Lower-level factory and production workers found 6.7 percent more in their paychecks in February than a year earlier, the same annual rate of increase as in January.

Wages for food service, leisure, and hospitality workers jumped 11.2 percent last month, year on year, compared to 12.6 percent the month before. Payment in the sector has increased the fastest among all categories during the post-COVID economic recovery.

In higher-paid industries, pay grew more slowly. In financial services, for example, salaries edged up 1.9 percent over the previous 12 months.

Overall, service-sector pay swelled at a 5.2-percent annual pace, while wages for manufacturing jobs rose 4.6 percent.

At the same time, inflation galloped at 7 percent in February, pulling back from January's 7.5-percent bump but still significantly more than wages grew.

The difference shows that costs grew 1.9 percent more than wages last month, taking almost \$1,000 of purchasing power out of a \$50,000 annual income.

TRENDPOST: *Rising wages that are still unable to keep pace with inflation set the stage for a wage-price spiral. Thus, as workers are paid higher wages to cover the higher cost of living, businesses raise prices on products and services to cover the costs of higher wages.*

*In fact, the wage-price spiral has already begun in the U.S. and will accelerate globally. It is also part of our Top Trends for 2020, as we have detailed in this and other **Trends Journals**: unionization.*

TREND FORECAST: *As inflation outpaces wages, people will take to the street to protest the lack of basic living standards, government corruption, crime, and violence. It will be a continuation of the “New World Disorder” that was raging across the globe prior to the 2020 COVID War.*

And, as economic conditions continue to decline, there will be new anti-establishment “Off With Their Heads 2.0” political movements in protest of the rich getting richer while the middle class and poor get poorer.

TREND FORECAST: *The Ukraine war will swell prices even faster, widening the distance between prices and households' purchasing power. The implications are enormous, from prospects for recession, [Dragflation](#), and depression to political, corporate, and supply chain upheaval to individuals' mental health and family dissolution.*

TOP 2022 TREND: SELF-SUFFICIENT ECONOMIES: BIDEN PUSHING “BUY AMERICAN”



The Biden administration has finalized rules that will require products purchased by the federal government to have 60 percent of their value in components manufactured in the U.S., 65 percent in 2024, and 75 percent

in 2029.

At a 4 March White House event outlining the rules, Siemens USA CEO Barbara Humpton announced a \$54-million investment to manufacture components for data centers and electric vehicle charging stations, a project that will add 300 jobs in California and Texas.

Earlier this year, Intel announced a \$20-million plan to build two chip-making facilities near Columbus, Ohio.

Biden has focused on strengthening the U.S. industrial base and the economy has added 400,000 manufacturing jobs since January 2021, the White House claimed.

TREND FORECAST: *A major factor in populist movements that we forecast will accelerate will be for nations to become “Self-Sufficient.” A key element of anti-globalization/anti-establishment platforms will be a call to restore the individual and unique arts, crafts and trade talents that once identified countries... but has all but vanished with globalization.*

TREND FORECAST: *With its eye on the future, China’s “dual circulation” economic policy is leading the “Self-Sufficient” trend (“China Announces ‘Dual Circulation’ Economic Policy.” 9 Sep 2020).*

Since the 1980s, China has grown its economy by emphasizing manufacturing and exports, a policy dubbed “external circulation.”

Now China has cultivated an expanding middle class and moving up the ladder lower class that is capable of supporting its own consumer economy—an “internal circulation” of goods and services—where its population of 1.4 billion people buy products, create fashion, sounds and styles that are “Made-in-China.”

The dual circulation policy still emphasizes making goods for export and generating income from foreign sales, but places equal weight on consumer spending that will leave China’s economy less dependent on the ups and downs and geopolitical clashes of world markets.

For more on self-sufficiency and China’s dual circulation policy, see:

- [“Foreign Investors Pour Another \\$120 Billion Into Chinese Markets”](#) (16 Nov 2021)
- [“China’s Factory Production Slows, Services Continue Strong”](#) (2 Nov 2021)
- [“China’s Economy Slowing?”](#) (28 Sep 2021)
- [“China’s Consumers Boost Spending.”](#) (11 May 2021)

TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT



TOP 2022 TREND: SELF-SUFFICIENT ECONOMIES: CHINA LEADS THE CHARGE

After two years of COVID-related restrictions and lockdowns, China has been unable to persuade its consumers to start buying again.

December's retail sales gained only 1.7 percent, year on year, the slowest monthly gain since August 2020 and a fraction of the 8 percent growth notched in December 2019.

Disposable income among Chinese households grew 5.4 percent in last year's final quarter, less than the third quarter's 6.3 percent and far below the 9.2-percent jump during the same period in 2019, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

Household savings grew by the equivalent of \$855 billion in January, four times more than a year earlier, and new household loans were fewer by half, according to the People's Bank of China.

The figures indicate that Chinese households have money to spend but choose not to.

Self-Sufficient

As we have noted, igniting domestic consumption is a priority for the Chinese government if the country is to meet its 5-percent growth target this year; with the COVID War winding down, spending in the West is forecast to shift from goods and gadgets, China's specialty, to travel and services.

That shift could dent China's export sales, forcing it to turn more sharply to domestic consumption to keep growth on target.

As a result, Chinese parliamentary leaders meeting this month are expected to propose measures such as subsidies for vehicle purchases and vouchers for various forms of spending.

Also, lenders recently eased borrowing conditions, making loans more attractive to businesses and households, the *Wall Street Journal* reported.

China must enact relief measures for small retailers and "use every possible means to support a recovery of consumption," commerce minister Wang Wentao said in a 1 March public statement quoted by the *WSJ*.

Consumer spending is essential to China's long-range "dual circulation" economic strategy in which manufacturing, especially for exports, and domestic consumption play equal parts.

We have detailed China's dual circulation policy in articles including ["Xi Calls for Chinese Technological Self-Sufficiency"](#) (20 Oct 2021), ["China 2021: The](#)

[Chinese Century](#)” (8 Dec 2020), and [“China’s Consumers Boost Spending](#)” (11 May 2021).

Chinese consumers’ stinginess also has impacted Western countries.

Nike’s sales dropped 24 percent, year over year, during the three months ended last November, the company said. Starbucks reported a 14-percent decline in same-store sales over the three months ended 2 January.

However, losses to Western brands may be due to China’s newfound “consumer nationalism” that favors domestic brands over foreign, as we reported in [“In China, Domestic Brands Outpace Western Icons](#)” (29 Jun 2021).

TREND FORECAST: *China’s dual circulation policy exemplifies our Top 2022 Trend of the move toward [self-sufficient economies](#) that depend less on international trade and more on domestic sourcing, manufacture, and spending.*

TREND FORECAST: *As the Omicron variant fades and no new COVID version takes its place, China’s consumers will resume spending, especially with government stimulus programs that will pump more money into the economy that will help urge them on.*

Still Positive

Apparently undamaged by the country’s draconian “zero-tolerance” policy during the Omicron plague, China’s manufacturing purchasing managers index rose a fraction in February, notching 50.2 compared to January’s 50.1.

Ratings over 50 indicate growth; the higher number, the stronger the expansion.

It was the index’s fourth consecutive month showing the sector strengthening.

The sector grew despite shrinking demand, materials shortages, and a weak global economic outlook, which shows China’s Omicron countermeasures were

effective and did not damage the economy, according to Yang Jinghao, chief economist at Concat Data Technology.

China's economic fundamentals remain positive, Yang Yimming, a senior government economist, told a press briefing recently, although the second quarter may show a weakness that will require the government to take steps to ensure continued growth, he said

OPEC+ REFUSES TO PUMP MORE OIL DESPITE SHORTAGE, SOARING PRICES



At its monthly meeting on 3 March, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its allies (OPEC+), chiefly Russia, declined to raise production beyond established targets despite prices approaching \$120 a barrel and a looming global supply crunch.

Instead, the group agreed to continue the monthly production boost of 400,000 barrels a day for April.

That increment will have no effect on the current price surge, analysts told *The New York Times*, especially since several OPEC members already have been unable to deliver their share of past monthly increases, as we reported in [“OPEC+ Continues to Raise Oil Output: What’s the Deal”](#) (8 Feb 2022).

However, fundamental conditions and the future outlook indicate “a well-balanced market,” the group’s post-meeting statement said. It blamed current price “volatility” on “geopolitical developments” but did not name Russia’s attack on Ukraine.

“Such an argument will increasingly strain credulity,” analyst Helima Croft at RBC Capital Markets, said in a note to clients quoted by the *NYT*.

Several U.S. producers, including Continental Resources, Devon Energy, and Pioneer Natural Resources, have said they will continue to limit their oil production to avoid an oil glut and to keep prices profitable.

Occidental Petroleum, the ninth-largest U.S. oil company last year by revenue, finds “no need and no intent to invest in production growth,” CEO Vicki Hollub told analysts in a 4 March call quoted by the *NYT*.

A 60-million-barrel release from nations’ strategic reserves earlier this month failed to slow climbing prices, according to the International Energy Agency.

“We do not view this as sufficient relief,” Goldman Sachs analysts wrote in a 1 March note to clients.

Reducing demand for oil “is now likely the only sufficient rebalancing mechanism” to bring prices down, they said.

Alexander Novak, Russia’s deputy prime minister, is currently co-chair of OPEC+.

TRENDPOST: During the COVID War era that began in 2020 oil prices collapsed, which we reported in articles including [“Shale Leader Chesapeake Energy Files for Bankruptcy”](#) (30 Jun 2020) and [“Oil Companies Merging Amid Industry Turmoil”](#) (27 Oct 2020). Many U.S. producers went bankrupt; large producers pumped only red ink for months and now seek to replenish their finances.

*Last year at this time, Brent Crude was selling at \$63 per barrel and – as we noted in this **Trends Journal**—Brent Crude closed at around \$130 per barrel. As the old saying goes, “It’s the economy, stupid,” and OPEC+ wants to make as much money as they can per barrel of oil. With reserves dwindling in their “it’s the economy, stupid” world, selling less and making more is the bottom line.*

EUROPE'S INFLATION RATE QUICKENS, WILL ECB RAISE RATES?



The Eurozone's annual pace of inflation sped to a record 5.8 percent in February, the European Commission's statistics agency reported, the fourth consecutive month of a record rise.

Energy prices were 31.7 percent higher last month than a year earlier, rising faster than the 28 percent posted in January and the highest since at least 1977, *The Wall Street Journal* noted.

The war in Ukraine will guarantee even higher oil, gas, and electricity prices ahead.

The spiraling costs place the European Central Bank (ECB) under greater pressure to raise interest rates soon to tackle inflation, a move bank officials have pledged not to make this year.

However, ECB president Christine Lagarde seemed to hint at some flexibility in that position in a 3 February press briefing, as we reported in [“ECB About Face: Interest Rate Hikes”](#) (8 Feb 2022).

The bank has been using its interest rate, which it has held at -0.50 percent since 2014, to nurture Europe's unsteady recovery from the COVID War.

However, new inflation shocks may now pose a greater threat to the recovery than a higher interest rate, forcing the bank to act this year.

TREND FORECAST: *The war in Ukraine has given so much additional fuel to inflation that the ECB will, despite its unwillingness, raise interest rates from negative 0.5 percent at least to zero this year.*

CANADA'S CENTRAL BANK RAISES KEY RATE, WARNS HIGHER RATES TO COME



For the first time in three years, the Bank of Canada has raised a key interest rate, bumping its overnight rate by a quarter-point to 0.50 percent.

More increases are coming, with the war in Ukraine forcing the bank's hand to deal with inflation in Canada that the war is causing, the bank warned.

TRENDPOST: *Inflation in Canada is running at 5.1 percent, a 30-year high, and now with the Ukraine war pushing up inflation rates yet higher, there will be more pressure on its central bank to keep raising rates. But as with other nations, the fear of Dragflation—declining economies and rising inflation—may well slow down the rate increases.*

Canada became the second G7 country, following the U.K., to raise interest rates since the COVID War era began two years ago.

SPOTLIGHT: INFLATION



TURKEY'S INFLATION RATE TOPS 54 PERCENT

In February, prices in Turkey rose at an annual clip of 54.4 percent, the Turkish Statistical Institute reported.

The rate is the fastest since March 2002 and edged past the 52.5 percent expected by economists Bloomberg had polled.

Food prices skyrocketed 64.5 percent over the last 12 months and transport costs zoomed 75.8 percent.

February's producer prices more than doubled, year over year, increases that will be passed to consumers in the months ahead, analysts told the *Financial Times*.

The lira sagged another 0.8 percent on the news, settling at 14 to the dollar.

"I don't remember the last time I entered a butcher shop," one woman told the *FT*. "Meat is a meal for the rich."

"All I can do is turn off the lights," she said. "There's no other way to stretch my budget."

Under orders from Turkish president Recep Erdogan, the country's central bank cut interest rates by 5 percentage points over the past five months, despite inflation accelerating during that period.

We have documented Turkey's economic tailspin in articles including ["Turkey's Financial Markets Crash After Agbal Firing"](#) (30 Mar 2021), ["Turkey: Another Day, Another Central Bankster Fired"](#) (1 Jun 2021) and ["Turkey: The Famous Lira Dive"](#) (23 Nov 2021).

Erdogan, a self-proclaimed "energy of high interest rates," holds to his theory that low interest rates will reduce inflation and stimulate Turkey's staggering economy.

Turkey's lira has lost almost half its value in world markets since January 2021, a fate that Erdogan hopes will boost Turkey's exports by making them cheaper abroad and spark job gains at home.

Three-quarters of Turks responding to a Metropoll survey said the government is mismanaging the economy, despite the country's 9-percent GDP growth in 2021.

Erdogan now promises to bring inflation under control this summer, a promise that is fanciful at best if interest rates do not rise above the rate of inflation, economists told the *FT*, especially now that Russia's war in Ukraine has spiked global energy prices.

Turkey imports most of its oil, gas, and coal from Russia.

"Inflation will stay close to these high levels until the very final months of this year," economist Jason Tuvey at Capital Economics said to the *FT*, "but the central bank and, crucially, President Erdogan seem to have no appetite for higher interest rates."

Erdogan faces re-election in June 2023 and is watching his popularity crash with Turkey's economy.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: Read a more detailed account of Turkey's economic disaster in:

- ["Turkey's Central Bank Governor Fired After Rate Hike"](#) (23 Mar 2021)
- ["Turkey: Interest Rates Down, Lira Crashing. War Next?"](#) (19 Oct 2021)
- ["Turkey's Economy Continues to Implode"](#) (14 Dec 2021)

TREND FORECAST: *Erdogan is as unlikely to reverse his economic policy, to which he has glued his personal credibility, as he is to surrender power regardless of next year's election. His 2018 re-election was marked by widespread claims of vote-rigging and election fraud.*

As we said in ["Turkey's Inflation Rate Nears 50 Percent"](#) (8 Feb 2022), Erdogan has framed his opposition to higher interest rates in moral and military terms, proclaiming himself an "enemy" of high interest rates and casting his policy to be part of an "economic independence war."

It is not surprising that Erdogan frames his failed policies in warlike terms. As Gerald Celente notes, “when all else fails, they take you to war”—in this case, casting his economic failures as a response to what he will term “hostile outside forces” in hopes of unifying the nation behind him.

Erdogan has already played that card once, invading Syria in 2019 ([“Turkey Announces Invasion of Syria,”](#) 8 Oct 2019), and recently tried to insert himself as a peacemaker between Russia and Ukraine before Russia invaded ([“Erdogan Injects Turkey Into Ukraine Conflict,”](#) 8 Feb 2022).

It’s not working: Erdogan’s popularity, which is now around 40 percent, will keep sliding along with stock values and the lira.

Turkey will continue to spiral down into economic and political chaos, prompting street demonstrations and, in all probability, violent response from government troops as Erdogan clings ever more desperately to power.

LONDON METALS EXCHANGE HALTS NICKEL TRADING



The price of nickel skyrocketed 250 percent on the London Metal Exchange on 7 March, at one point trading above \$100,000 a ton and triggering a shutdown in trades of the metal.

The unprecedented one-day price surge was caused by traders desperate to close out short positions—bets that nickel’s price would fall.

Mining companies and refiners often take short positions to protect against price swings. In theory, price moves on exchanges and in physical inventories should negate each other, leaving the player even.

However, when prices rise quickly and sharply, those holding short positions have to put up more and more cash or collateral to make up the negative balance in their trading accounts.

China's Tsingshan Holding Group Co., the world's largest nickel and stainless steel producer, had accumulated a massive short account over recent months as nickel's price moved relentlessly up. Brokers were putting an increase on the company to meet its margin calls.

When Monday's price spiked, Tsingshan was faced with billions of dollars' worth of deficits it owed to brokers.

A division of China Construction Bank Corp., a Tsingshan broker, also missed hundreds of millions of dollars in margin calls on Monday but later made up the balance, Bloomberg reported.

After spiking into six figures, nickel fell back to trade at \$80,000 a ton before the suspension, a 66-percent one-day rise.

Prices of other metals fell after nickel trading was suspended.

The exchange announced it was considering "a possible multi-day closure, given the geopolitical situation which underlies recent price moves."

TRENDPOST: *Recession paranoia is starting to get stronger. At least, that's what a number of markets are suggesting as the oil surge and Russia's invasion of Ukraine put the global recovery in danger.*

- ***Bond market warning:*** *The Treasuries yield curve is the narrowest since the pandemic recession. History shows an outright inversion would signal a contraction is imminent.*
- ***Commodities chaos:*** *Many traders see the latest rally as something that could by itself kick the world into a downturn. The surge in energy prices is particularly ominous as it not only strains household consumption but adds to price pressures.*

- **Stock signals:** *Benchmarks in Europe and Asia are heading for bear markets. And while the S&P 500's peak-to-trough losses have been limited at 12 percent for now, analysis by Deutsche Bank suggests American stocks are still emitting their own troubling signals.*

NATIONS TURN TO COAL TO MAKE UP SHORTAGES OF OTHER FUELS



Coal, increasingly spurned as dirtier and more costly than natural gas and renewable fuel sources, is suddenly eagerly sought-after by European nations now in danger of losing Russia's energy exports or already cut off from them.

Russia accounts for 15 percent of the world's thermal coal—the variety burned by electric generating plants—traded by sea and 16 percent of higher-grade metallurgical coal used to make stainless steel and other products.

The U.S. price of thermal coal rose from \$380 per ton to a record \$459 on 7 March.

In Europe, thermal coal's price hit \$446 per metric ton, adding \$130 on 2 March alone and almost tripling the \$134-per-ton price where coal began this year. The price settled back to \$422 on 7 March.

“The thermal coal market was drum-tight ahead of the invasion so there is no chance of the world replacing Russian thermal exports,” analyst Matthew Hope at Credit Suisse told *The Wall Street Journal*.

Germany has been closing down the last of its coal-fired generators in recent years but now is considering extending their lives to 2030; Poland is seeking to buy coal from Australia to replace Russian imports.

Shares of Australian coal companies closed on 4 March as much as 40 percent above their opening price for the week.

“To deal with the immediate energy situation in Europe, all options should be explored, including increased use of coal in some countries temporarily,” Jean-Sébastien Jacques, former CEO of mining giant Rio Tinto, said to the *WSJ*.

Coal companies might reopen closed pits or intensify operations at working mines but opening untapped deposits is unlikely, he added.

“The energy transition will take time, potentially decades,” Jacques said. “We have to be flexible and pragmatic.”

TRENDPOST: *The war in Ukraine once again highlights the link between national security and dependence on oil and gas. If there is a silver lining to the disaster unfolding in Ukraine, it could be a realization that speeding the shift to renewable energy technologies is a key issue of nations’ security and world peace.*

SPOTLIGHT: BIGS GETTING BIGGER

INVESTORS GRABBING LAND FOR TRUCK DEPOTS OUTSIDE CITIES



With the U.S. short more than 70,000 truck drivers, real estate investors are locking up land outside cities as the prospect of self-driving trucks comes closer to reality.

Embark Trucks, which became a \$5-billion public company last November, will launch its fleet of self-driving trucks in 2024 in California, Texas, and other Sunbelt states.

The trucks will carry cargo on highways, then turn control over to human drivers once the trucks reach close-in urban corridors.

Embark will need space close to cities to build hubs for switching drivers and storing vehicles, but available land near cities is as pricey as it is scarce: the boom in e-commerce has claimed many such sites for warehouses and zoning laws limit the spaces available as truck depots.

To secure those spaces, Embark has partnered with Alterra Property Group, a Philadelphia real estate investor.

Alterra will purchase the land Embark needs and then lease the property to Embark.

Other investors are hoping to cash in on the boom in consumers' insatiable appetite for everything, which boosts demand for trucks hauling goods to metro areas.

JPMorgan Global Alternatives and Zenith IOS have partnered to invest \$700 million in similar properties and had spent about \$150 million by 1 March, *The New York Times* reported.

Cerberus Capital Management and Stonemont Financial Group have formed an alliance to do the same, the *NYT* said.

Outdoor storage yards and truck depots will see the same boom as single-family rental houses, Zenith IOS CEO Benjamin Atkins told the *NYT*.

As major property professionals start bundling the properties, pension funds and other institutional investors will buy in, driving prices higher, he predicted.

TD BUYS FIRST HORIZON FOR \$13.4 BILLION



TD Bank Group of Canada is buying Memphis-based First Horizon Bank for \$25 a share, 37 percent above First Horizon's closing price on 4 March.

The deal will make TD Bank the U.S.'s sixth-largest lender, the *Financial Times* reported.

As part of the sale, First Horizon CEO Brian Jordan will become vice-chair of TD's board and Leo Salom, TD's chief of U.S. retail banking, will be the combined entity's CEO.

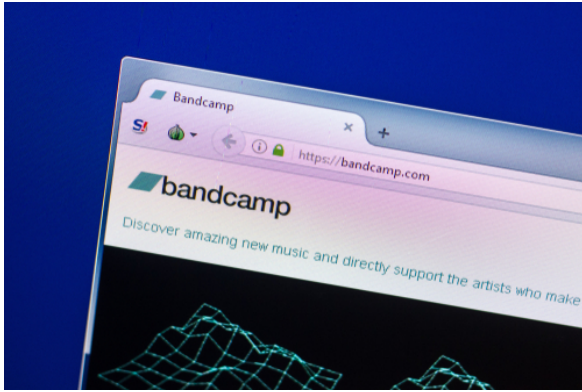
TD has been aggressively buying its way into the U.S. banking business since 2004, when it bought Maine's Banknorth. In 2005, it paid \$1.9 billion to acquire Hudson United and shelled out \$8.9 billion in 2007 to take over Commerce Bancorp.

Regulations have made it harder for larger U.S. banks to combine but left the way clear for Canadian financial firms to buy banks to their south.

At the same time, large American banks have sought to grow by subsuming smaller institutions.

In 2019, BB&T combined with SunTrust to create a major East Coast financial services firm. A year later, PNC Financial bought the U.S. business of Spain's BBVA for \$11.6 billion, making PNC America's fifth-largest banking firm.

EPIC GAMES BUYS BANDCAMP MUSIC PLATFORM



Epic Games, creator of popular video games such as Fortnite and The Dark Prophecy, has acquired online music platform Bandcamp. Terms of the sale were not announced.

Bandcamp, less well known than Spotify or Youtube, has become a favorite among musicians: the platform gives creators greater control over how their music is distributed and gives them a greater share of resulting revenue than other venues have.

Creators collect 82 percent of the money from each Bandcamp sale and have been paid almost \$1 billion since the platform opened in 2008, the company said.

In contrast, every time a song is clicked on Spotify, the service pays a third of a cent to be shared among music labels, publishers, and artists according to their agreements with each other.

On Bandcamp, musicians set their own terms.

Under Epic's ownership, "Bandcamp will keep operating as a stand-alone marketplace and music community," CEO Ethan Diamond wrote in a statement announcing the sale.

He assured musicians that "you'll still have the same control over how you offer your music."

Epic will help Bandcamp expand internationally and "push development forward," he said.

Bandcamp will “play an important role in Epic’s vision to build out a creator marketplace ecosystem for content, technology, games, art, music, and more,” Epic’s statement said.

GOOGLE BUYS CYBERSECURITY FIRM FOR \$5.4 BILLION



Google will pay \$23 a share for Mandiant, an 18-year-old cybersecurity firm that will become part of Google’s cloud computing operation, in a deal valued at about \$5.4 billion.

Mandiant’s market value was pegged at about \$5.25 billion before the purchase was announced. The move will enlarge Google’s cloud efforts as it seeks to grow to compete with Amazon’s and Microsoft’s cloud presences.

The acquisition will be Google’s second-largest, following its \$12.5-billion buyout of Motorola Mobility in 2012. Google sold its Motorola property in 2014 for \$2.9 billion, a 75-percent loss.

“Organizations around the world are facing unprecedented cybersecurity challenges as the sophistication and severity of attacks that were previously used to target major governments are now being used to target companies in every industry,” Thomas Kurian, Google Cloud’s CEO, said in a statement announcing the transaction.

The deal is expected to close later this year.

Google’s purchase will have a “major ripple effect” in the cybersecurity industry, Wedbush analyst Dan Ives wrote in an 8 March note to investors.

“Cloud stalwarts Amazon and Microsoft will now be pressured into M&A and further bulk up its cloud platforms,” he predicted.

SPECIAL UKRAINE REPORT



BIDEN SAYS PUTIN MUST PAY PRICE OVER INVASION IN UKRAINE

Last Tuesday, at his State of the Union address, President Biden called Russia's invasion of Ukraine "premeditated and unprovoked" and said he must pay a price for his actions.

"Throughout our history, we've learned this lesson—when dictators do not pay a price for their aggression, they cause more chaos," while claiming Russian President Vladimir Putin rejected the West's try at diplomacy.

Absent the President's speech was the fact that Mr. Putin had stated that it was the United States and NATO that refused to negotiate so as to de-escalate tensions. Among Russia's key concerns, as we have been detailing in the **Trends Journal**, was to halt NATO expansion, Ukraine would not be permitted to join NATO, Ukraine's acceptance of the Minsk agreement which permitted the breakaway Donetsk and Luhansk their autonomy... and the removal of U.S. nuclear weapons, troops and missiles in other country's bases near Russia.

However, the U.S. and its NATO partners have refused to negotiate with Russia to remedy their core concerns and U.S. Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, flatly denied Moscow's key security demands prior to the invasion.

In response to the refusal to negotiate, President Putin said, "We did not see adequate consideration of our three key demands regarding the prevention of NATO expansion, the refusal to deploy strike facilities near Russia's borders, and the return of the block's military infrastructure in Europe to the state in 1997."

And, Sergey Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, has called on U.S. nuclear weapons across Europe to be returned to American soil since the start of the conflict. He said it is unacceptable for these weapons to remain in place and are a "contradiction to the basic points of the Nonproliferation Treaty."

TRENDPOST: *The Trends Journal reported extensively on the diplomatic failures of the West leading up to the world being on the brink of WWII. (See ["KREMLIN BLAMES UKRAINE FOR STOKING TENSIONS AT BORDER."](#) ["UKRAINE WAR BUILDUP: COMEDY SHOW ON PARADE."](#) ["U.S. CONTINUES TO RAMP UP COLD WAR 2 RHETORIC."](#) and ["PUTIN ACCUSES U.S. OF TRYING TO PULL RUSSIA INTO CONFLICT."](#))*

Biden claimed that Russia was met by a united front in the world community. The United Nations held a vote and 141 of the 193 member states voted for a resolution calling for the immediate withdrawal of Russian forces. India and China abstained from the vote and Russia, Belarus, North Korea, and Eritrea voted against the resolution.

"Six days ago, Russia's Vladimir Putin sought to shake the very foundations of the free world, thinking he could make it bend to his menacing ways," Biden said at his SOTU. "But he badly miscalculated. He thought he could roll into Ukraine and the world would roll over. Instead, he met with a wall of strength he could never have anticipated, or imagined. He met the Ukrainian people."

What Biden did not mention, was that other countries representing nearly half the world's population abstained from voting against the measure.

War Talk

While Mr. Biden said he would not send U.S. troops into Ukraine to fight, there were “mobilized” ground forces in NATO countries to counter Russia.

“As I’ve made crystal clear,” he said, “the United States and our allies will defend every inch of territory, that is NATO territory, with the full force of our collective power.”

Over the past year, the U.S. has sent \$1 billion in military armaments to Ukraine, and another \$350 million in weapons and armor for Kyiv after the Russian invasion.

Also, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is working with Poland to send fighter jets to Ukraine. “That gets the green light,” said Blinken. “In fact, we're talking with our Polish friends right now about what we might be able to backfill their needs if in fact they choose to provide these fighter jets to the Ukrainians. What can we do? How can we help to make sure that they get something to backfill the planes that they're handing over to the Ukrainians?”

Sergey Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, warned Western countries against providing weapons and mercenaries to Ukrainian forces and said the move would lead to a “global collapse”... and would be a “catastrophic development.”

TREND FORECAST: *Ramping up the prospects for instigating a NATO war against Russia—since the Kremlin may take military action should Poland send in jets and other nations send troops and/or armaments into Ukraine—yesterday, Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said the U.S. will defend Baltic and eastern European nations if they are attacked by Russia. As we have forecast, WWII has begun.*

Yet, the only message from politicians and the mainstream media is to increase the military conflict rather than work toward a peace agreement. We continue to note that neither Napoleon nor Hitler could defeat Russia. Thus, to think that Ukraine can defeat Russia's military is nonsensical.

TRENDPOST: *Tracking trends is an understanding of “where we are and how we got here to see where we are going.*

On the Ukraine War front, the “how we got here” has been whitewashed from history. Not a word is mentioned of the United States 2014 coup of the democratically elected President, Victor Yanukovych and the role Victoria Nuland, currently America's Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, played in the overthrow of its government in 2014.

*A report from 2014 in the **Trends Journal** laid out the political maneuvers at the time in Ukraine: “Washington's coup in Ukraine brought not only a threat to the Russian population in Ukraine but also a direct strategic threat to Russia itself.”*

Nuland, who speaks Russian and French, boasted that Washington had invested \$5 billion in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Ukraine. Allegedly, the purpose of NGOs is to “teach democracy.”

Ukraine, however, already had a democracy. In reality, the NGO organizations are U.S. fifth columns that can be used to organize protests and to provide support for Washington's candidates for the Ukraine government.

Indeed, in early February 2014, a recording was leaked of Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Victoria Nuland, telling Geoffrey Pyatt, the U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, that the UN was on board to “help glue” the plan to replace Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovych with Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

“Yats is the guy,” Nuland informed Pyatt, urging her to move quickly because “the Russians will be working behind the scenes to torpedo” the deal. “F#& the EU!” Nuland told Pyatt.*

“Exactly,” he responded. Shortly thereafter, Yanukovych was overthrown and “Yats” became president.

U.S. SANCTIONS HIT THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE AND “WE THE PEOPLE” HARD



The U.S. government has made inflicting economic pain on the global community an art form. Biden vowed during his State of the Union address that he will choke off Russia’s “access to technology and will sap its economic strength and weaken its military for years to come.” He has also imposed a

series of economic sanctions on Russian corporations and businessmen.

Continuing its crash, yesterday the Russian Ruble was 0.0065 against the United States dollar. Fitch and Moody’s downgraded Russia’s sovereign debt to “junk.” One of the measures Western countries have taken is to cut the government off from most of its \$640 billion in reserves.

VTB, the country’s second-biggest lender, told Reuters that mortgage rates would go up by 4 percent to 15.3 percent on 28 February “due to the sharp rise in interest rates on the market.” Russia’s central bank increased its key interest rate to 20 percent last Monday after the country was hit with economic sanctions from Europe and the U.S.

Dmitry Medvedev, the former Russian president and Russia’s top security official, took issue with Bruno Le Maire, the French finance minister, who vowed an economic war against Moscow.

“Today, some French minister has said that they declared an economic war on Russia,” Medvedev tweeted. “Watch your tongue, gentlemen! And don't forget that in human history, economic wars quite often turned into real ones.”

TREND FORECAST: Margarita Balmaceda, a professor of diplomacy and international relations at Seton Hall University, told NBC News. “The way sanctions are hitting now, it's the middle class and the upper-middle class, those who travel who are feeling it.”

She is way off. Not only are the wide array of sanctions hitting the middle and upper-middle class, they are hitting the poor, the working class and citizens of the world.

*Yesterday, Brent Crude was trading at \$124 a barrel. Last year at this time it was at around \$63 per barrel. As we have greatly detailed in this and recent **Trends Journals**, a range of commodity prices are spiking as a result of sanctions and businesses pulling out of Russia. Yet, the political word is that Putin is the one who's paying the price rather than “we the people” of the world.*

MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES DON'T HATE RUSSIA



While the mainstream media in the U.S. is selling the line that every nation in the world hates Russia for invading Ukraine, many African nations are pro-Russia.

“Russia is our friend through and through,” Lindiwe Zulu, South Africa’s minister of social development, told *The New York Times*. “We are not about to denounce that relationship that we always had.”

The paper pointed out that 24 African countries did not join the UN vote last week to denounce Russia’s aggression in Ukraine. Eritrea voted against the measure.

Selling the “let’s fight Russia” mantra, Molly Phee, the assistant secretary of state for African Affairs, spoke recently about the crisis in Ukraine on a webinar

hosted by the U.S. Department of State, All Africa reported. She said the U.S. believes it is important for African voices to speak out on matters involving the international community.

A journalist from Madagascar asked Phee why it is important to require African states to take a clear stance on Ukraine.

“Isn’t this going against a state’s sovereign right and self-determination?” Garry Ranaivoson, the journalist, asked. “This is not our war.”

She told him that the U.S. was not requiring any country to do anything, but said “we believe it is in the interests of all states to join the entire international community in rejecting this aggression.”

Tone deaf to the plight and problems facing nations throughout Africa, Phee said there’s a tendency for people there—like in the U.S. who are protected by oceans—to “sometimes have the luxury of thinking that we don’t have to care about what happens thousands of miles away from us.”

TRENDPOST: “No foreign entanglements,” which U.S. President George Washington proclaimed at his farewell address is no longer the American way. From Vietnam, to Afghanistan, from Iraq to Libya, Syria, Yugoslavia, Yemen, etc., the American way is now, “Foreign entanglements at any time, in any place, for any reason.”

Indeed, as Russia is being criticized for its invasion, not a mention of the war crimes committed by the United States and its NATO allies over the past decades.

Who Likes Who?

Russia has worked on establishing better relationships with African countries that have faced political instability in recent years, including Mali, Sudan, and Libya. (See [“MALI JUNTA: DENMARK GO HOME.”](#) [“FRANCE, ALLIED COUNTRIES ANNOUNCE WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS FROM MALI”](#) and

[“FRANCE CONDEMNS CHINA’S ‘GENOCIDE’ AGAINST UYGHURS WHILE FORGETTING THEIR MASS MURDERS.”](#))

Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, the deputy leader of Sudan’s military junta, visited Moscow last Wednesday and the government in Bangui, the capital of the Central African Republic, also erected a statue in honor of the Russian paramilitary for “quashing an armed rebellion in 2020.”

Russia and Ukraine, which is known as the breadbasket of Europe, are top producers of wheat, sunflower, and aluminum. All of these prices have rocketed since the invasion of Ukraine, thus the African people blame the Americans for the sanctions that are driving up inflation that was hitting the general population hard before the Ukraine War began.

Russian flags also flew in Ethiopia on Wednesday to mark the 19th-century fight against Italians, the *Times* reported. Russian fighters sided with the Ethiopians and fought off the advancement. Some Africans recalled how migrants from the continent were stopped at the Polish border that raised allegations of racism. (See [“BELARUS VS. E.U.: AND THE WINNER IS?”](#) and [“REFUGEE CRISIS WORSENING: POLAND TO DEPLOY ADDITIONAL 10,000 TROOPS AT BORDER.”](#))

TREND FORECAST: Gerald Celente has 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.

UKRAINE HAS NOT SOUGHT NUCLEAR WEAPONS, INTERNATIONAL AGENCY SAYS



The United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency denied claims by Russia that Ukraine sought to acquire nuclear weapons prior to Moscow's invasion.

Rafael Grossi, the director of the IAEA, said the agency has no "information that there is any deviation of material, any undeclared material or activities leading to the development of nuclear weapons" in Ukraine.

His comments run counter to claims by Sergey Lavrov, the Russian foreign minister, that Kyiv has been playing "dangerous" games in its quest to acquire these weapons. *The Wall Street Journal* reported that Lavrov did not provide evidence.

Those who believe a no-fly zone should be established over Ukraine have seized on the 1994 Budapest Memorandum that vowed security assurances as long as Ukraine transferred its nuclear arsenal obtained after the fall of the Soviet Union.

The U.S. and U.K. vowed to come to Kyiv's aid, but denied Kyiv's request for a "legally binding guarantee."

"I'm going to point out the elephant in the room," Bill Browder, the CEO of Hermitage Capital, tweeted. "The U.K. and U.S. committed in 1994 to protect the territorial integrity of Ukraine in exchange for Ukraine giving up its nuclear weapons. Now that is being threatened, we have a moral imperative to at least set up a no-fly zone."

Some responses pointed out that security assurances are different from vowing to protect territorial integrity. Ukraine once held the world's third-largest amount of nuclear weapons—about 1,900 strategic warhead, 176 intercontinental ballistic missiles, and 44 strategic bombers, according to armscontrol.org.

TRENDPOST: RT reported yesterday that the Russian military accused the Ukrainian government of destroying pathogens at laboratories linked to the U.S. Department of Defense.

"If these collections fall into the hands of the Russian experts, they will highly likely prove Ukraine and the U.S. have been in violation of the Biological Weapons Convention," Russian Lieutenant General Igor Kirillov said, adding that "this is the only reason that can explain the hasty destruction" of those materials.

TREND FORECAST: This past Sunday, there was debate across America's mainstream media whether or not to impose a no-fly zone over Ukraine.

While Sens. Joni Ernst and Marco Rubio agreed that imposing a no-fly zone over Ukraine would increase the risk of a direct military confrontation between the U.S. and Russia.

"Basically, a no-fly zone is—if people understood what it means. It means World War III. It means starting World War III," Rubio told ABC News' "This Week."

On the other side, ramping up the war talk and dismissing the threats of war should Moscow militarily retaliate, Sen. Joe Manchin said, “I would take nothing off the table, but I would be very clear that we are going to support the Ukrainian people, the Ukrainian president, his government every way humanly possible.”

Considering the buildup of weaponry moving into Ukraine and the rhetoric of imposing no-fly zones and NATO’s obligations to defend Ukraine—which equals fighting Russia—the world is on the edge of WWII.

Yesterday, the Kremlin announced it will end military operations “in a moment” if Kyiv complies with a list of conditions. They include Ukraine’s ceasing of military actions and an alteration to the current constitution that will enshrine neutrality, recognize Donetsk and Lugansk as independent states (which is part of the 2015 Minsk Agreement), and acknowledge that Crimea is a territory of Russia.

These conditions were immediately denounced and rejected by its “allies.” Thus, the war will continue and more will die.

U.S. LOST EVERY WAR SINCE WWII, BUT IS TELLING UKRAINE HOW TO BEAT RUSSIA



Within days of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, mainstream media has been promoting U.S. military “experts” on how the Ukraine military can defeat Russia, one of the world’s top military powers.

Dozens continue to appear on the major networks such as Fox News, CNN, ABC, CBS, NBC, and MSNBC. Among them is Ret. Gen. David Petraeus, who hasn’t won a war since he’s been in command and was defeated in both the Afghan and Iraq wars.

It’s a Sick Joke.

Pretending that he knows what he's talking about, Petraeus, also a former CIA director, told CNN Wednesday that Russia did not have the number of troops needed for the invasion and "everyone in the entire country [Ukraine] hates them and most of the adults are willing to take action against them, whether it's to take up weapons or to be human shields."

Petraeus, who is now a partner at KKR, the private equity giant, comically compared Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to Winston Churchill and said Ukrainians are exploiting their "home-field advantage."

Robert J. O'Neill, the former U.S. Navy SEAL who reportedly fired the shot that killed Osama bin Laden, tweeted, "David Petraeus was just giving combat advice on tv. Bernie Madoff is up next on finance."

"I keep seeing 4 star generals on TV giving commentary on how to win this war," he posted. "They've never won a war. They lost. Want examples?"

TREND FORECAST: *Petraeus is just one of the many "military experts" who have been continually featured on the mainstream media on how Ukraine can defeat Russia. With the Ukraine War just 12 days old as we go to press, their comments of how the Ukrainian military is keeping Russia at bay and how Russian President Vladimir Putin underestimated the Ukrainian military's strength is the ongoing "news."*

Never is it mentioned by these military "experts" or the mainstream media that the Afghan War lasted for 20 years...despite U.S. generals' assurances that American troops were defeating the Taliban. And not a peep about President George W. Bush's "Mission Accomplished" declaration that the U.S. won the Iraq War...which the U.S. and its NATO allies, as with Afghanistan, ended up losing.

Therefore, it must be understood that the Ukraine War has just begun. And despite the BBC headline, "Ukraine can absolutely win against Russia—Blinken," we forecast Russia will soon defeat the Ukraine army.

RET. COL. DOUGLAS MACGREGOR SAYS RUSSIA WILL CRUSH UKRAINE



Douglas Macgregor, retired U.S. Army colonel, decorated combat veteran, and former advisor to the Secretary of Defense in the Trump administration, said in an interview last week that he believes the Russian forces have been “too gentle” during their invasion in Ukraine.

Images have emerged from the conflict showing Ukrainian civilians chatting with soldiers riding in tanks, and some even standing in front of military convoys rolling into cities surrounding Kyiv. He said Moscow seems to have corrected its approach to the war and has begun to inflict more pain. He predicted that the war would be completed in 10 days.

Macgregor made his comments during an interview with Fox Business’ Stuart Varney. He blamed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky for not ending the war sooner and accepting Russia’s demand of a “neutral Ukraine.” He called Zelensky a “puppet” intent on putting his people at “unnecessary risk.”

“I think the most heroic thing he could do right now is come to terms with reality,” he said. “Neutralize Ukraine.”

TRENDPOST: Gerald Celente, the publisher of the ***Trends Journal***, took to Twitter on Sunday to criticize U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken for telling the BBC that he believes Ukraine could ultimately defeat the Russians.

Blinken justified his assessment by pointing to the resiliency of the Ukrainian people.

"I can't tell you how long this will go on. I can't tell you how long it will take. But the idea that Russia can subjugate to its will 45 million people who are ardently fighting for their future and their freedom, that does not involve Russia having its thumb on Ukraine, that tells you a lot," Blinken said.

Celente said Ukraine will not defeat Russia and Zelensky's decision to face off with Putin will lead to unnecessary deaths.

It should be noted that surrendering for peace if you are going to be defeated is not the mainstream, American way. Macgregor has been attacked for his assessment that the Ukraine Army would lose, and was slammed by pro-war advocates as being pro-Putin.

MACRON SELLS WAR WITH RUSSIA BEFORE ANNOUNCING RUN FOR SECOND TERM



French President Emmanuel Macron on Wednesday tried his best to sell the public on why French troops should be sent to Romania while Russia carries out its invasion of Ukraine.

Macron called Russia's invasion "brutal" and warned citizens that the challenges will likely only increase as the war unfolds. WSWS.org accused Macron of attempting to lie about Russian motivations to invade.

The report said 70 percent of the French population is opposed to joining the conflict and Macron has laid the blame squarely on Russian President Vladimir Putin. The report said Moscow is responsible for carrying out the invasion, but NATO has "systematically worked to threaten Russia and cut off negotiations with it, goading Putin to take military action."

Macron was seen as Europe's top negotiator with Putin before the war. He has an election coming up in April and would have been able to celebrate scoring a major diplomatic win if Putin agreed to scale down his forces. The report said Macron clearly "failed" in that effort.

Macron spoke with Putin for two hours on Sunday to get Russia to stop the conflict and to protect nuclear sites in Ukraine. Despite the Western media's attempt to describe Russia's military in a state of disarray, Putin said that the campaign was going as planned and the onslaught will continue until Ukrainians stop resisting.

The WSWS report accused Macron of lying about NATO's presence in Ukraine and said the French leader was less than straightforward when he described the West's role in the lead up to the Ukraine invasion.

"In February 2014, the NATO Powers backed a putsch, led by neo-Nazis of the Right Sector group, that installed a pro-NATO government in Ukraine. Since then, CIA advisers and U.S. mercenaries from the private firm Academi (formerly Blackwater) have helped Ukrainian forces carry out attacks on Russian-speaking areas of Ukraine," the report said.

Macron followed U.S. President Joe Biden's lead and warned citizens that there will be economic pain caused by the Russian invasion and subsequent sanctions.

"Our economic growth, currently high, will inevitably be affected," he said.

"Rising prices for oil, gas, and raw materials will impact our purchasing power. Tomorrow, filling up your tank, heating your home, the cost of key products will likely rise even further."

Macron announced on Thursday that he will run for a second term.

"We have not achieved everything we set out to do. There are choices that, with the experience I have gained from you, I would probably make differently," he said.

Expected to win April's election, Macron, benefiting from the Ukraine conflict, saw his poll numbers move up from about 24 percent to 27 percent, further pulling ahead of his chief opponent Marine Le Pen, who has been polling at around 17 percent.

"Rarely has France been confronted with such an accumulation of crises," he wrote in French newspapers. "I am a candidate to defend our values that are threatened by the disruptions of the world."

TRENDPOST: *Lining up with other politicians whose poll ratings have gone down for ruthlessly fighting the COVID War, Macron's Ukraine war talk has helped distance himself from his mandates, lockdowns, and foreign policy failures in Africa. As the Ukraine War continues, Western politicians will continue to trumpet their anti-Russian sentiments, winning over large segments of the population who have obediently joined the Cold War 2.0.*

ONE SIDE ONLY: MEDIA SELLS RUSSIA INVASION IN UKRAINE AS 'UNPROVOKED'



Western news outlets have framed Russia's invasion in Ukraine as "unprovoked," which a media watchdog says "obscures" the U.S. entanglement in the country's history.

FAIR, (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting) the national media watchdog group, cited the chorus of headlines that included the word "unprovoked" to describe the Russian invasion from news sources like Vox, CNBC, and Axios.

The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on how the U.S. backed a coup of the democratically elected Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovich back in 2014 and ignored America's vow not to move NATO "one inch eastward" after the reunification of Germany. (See ["VICTORIA 'FUCK THE EU' NULAND WHO](#)

SPEARHEADED OVERTHROW OF DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE IN 2014, STILL IN POWER.” “BLINKEN BELLOWS: U.S. COMMITMENT TO UKRAINE’S SOVEREIGNTY IS ‘IRONCLAD’ and “PUTIN ACCUSES U.S. OF TRYING TO PULL RUSSIA INTO CONFLICT.”)

The FAIR report pointed to a column written by *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman back in May 1998 that included a quote from George Kennan, a diplomat credited for his strategy of U.S. Cold War containment:

“I think this is the beginning of a new Cold War,” he said, referring to NATO’s expansion east. “I think the Russians will gradually react quite adversely and it will affect their policies. I think it is a tragic mistake. There was no reason for this whatsoever. No one was threatening anybody else.

“Of course, there’s going to be a bad reaction from Russia and then [NATO expanders] will say that we always told you that is how the Russians are—but that is just wrong.”

But that did not stop countries like Poland, Czech Republic, and Hungary from being added to the Alliance in 1999 and then countries like Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Romania in 2004.

Asserting that NATO is, in fact, in Ukraine, the article pointed to a speech by Russian President Vladimir Putin in December 2021 when he told top military officials that NATO countries “have been almost constantly present on Ukrainian territory under the pretext of exercises.”

A fact never noted in the Western media, was Putin’s criticism of the U.S. and NATO for deploying forces and weapons in Europe. He noted how a hypersonic weapon positioned in Kyiv could take five minutes to strike Moscow, and said this issue is a “huge challenge for us, for our security.”

While there are no hypersonic weapons currently in the U.S. arsenal, Putin said Washington is working on its development.

“Do they really think we do not see these threats? Or do they think that we will just stand idly watching threats to Russia emerge? This is the problem: We simply have no room to retreat,” Putin said.

The FAIR report said the U.S. media simply refuses to “present this crucial question to their audiences, instead couching Putin’s motives in purely aggressive terms.”

PUBLISHER’S NOTE: *Rumor (history?) has it that the Cold War between the U.S. and Russia, which began in 1947, ended in 1991. But rather than seeking Peace on Earth and keeping relationships respectful, most of America’s politicians and all of the military-industrial complex—and their western counterparts (i.e., “allies”)—have not stopped waging the Cold War.*

As we have been reporting since the end of the Cold War—from America’s Gulf War to the U.S. and NATO’s Yugoslav War, Afghan War, Iraq War, Libyan War, plus its 800 military bases in 70 countries—Russia is a minor war-mongering nation compared to the U.S. track record of killing millions and stealing trillions from its taxpayers to wage these wars.

And, as we have reported in detail since the so-called “Russiagate” was launched by the Democratic Party and its media Presstitutes immediately following Trump’s win of the 2016 election, there has not been one shred of hard evidence proving Russia interfered with the election.

Yet, the drama continues, and most people buy it, just as most have swallowed other war lies sold to them by their governments over the centuries. “Remember the Maine” that was an excuse for America to invade Cuba back in 1898? How about the Gulf of Tonkin lie in 1964 that was an excuse to start the Vietnam War? And for all of those suffering from amnesia, how about George W. Bush’s lie that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction?

As the founder of Occupy Peace & Freedom, as I see it, to keep pedaling hatred between the two nations, rather than creating movements toward peace, is morally, spiritually, and economically destructive. Indeed, as inflation skyrockets

and equity markets tank as a result of America and NATO's sanctions on Russia, people of the world are paying the price. And considering the ramping up of war talk and military actions, the worst is yet to come.

Indeed, America was an ally of Russia in World War II and would not have achieved victory when it did without them.

Yet, following World War II, Russia became its enemy, while Japan and Germany—for which over 400,000 Americans died fighting—became U.S. allies and business partners.

CHINESE NEWS ACCUSES U.S. OF TRYING TO 'HIJACK' NARRATIVE ON UKRAINE INVASION



The Global Times, which is owned by the Chinese Communist Party's flagship paper, accused the U.S. of trying to pit other countries against Russia after it invaded Ukraine despite Washington being the “root cause” of the tension leading up to the conflict.

The U.S. is in “no position to ask other countries to follow it closely” and condemn or sanction Moscow, the paper said.

“It cannot ask the whole world to pay for the chaos it has created. No party other than the U.S. and its close allies in NATO should bear the responsibility,” the paper wrote. (See: [“CHINA CALLS FOR RESTRAINT IN UKRAINE. BLAMES WEST FOR CALAMITY.”](#) [“CHINA SIDES WITH RUSSIA IN CLASH WITH WEST. WILL THE BOTTOM LINE LIMIT SUPPORT?”](#) and [“WAR IN UKRAINE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW.”](#))

The Chinese paper cited the U.S.'s pressure campaign against India as evidence of its attempt to form a new coalition of the willing. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken held a phone call with his Indian counterpart, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, on Friday and urged New Delhi to join the world's "strong collective response" to the invasion, according to Reuters.

Russia is India's biggest provider of weapons and Russian President Vladimir Putin has a close relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, *The Washington Post* reported. Blinken's phone call with Jaishankar did not persuade New Delhi to vote with the U.S. to condemn Russia's aggression in Ukraine.

As with Israel, Mexico, Brazil, many African nations, and India, governments are attempting to avoid imposing sanctions on Russia and/or remain neutral in the Ukraine War because of economic and geopolitical concerns.

TRENDPOST: We note this article to illustrate how Americans and Europeans are only getting one side of the Ukraine War narrative. And because of the one-sided reporting, it is made to appear that the entire world is anti-Russia and pro-Ukraine, pro-U.S., and pro-NATO.

RUSSIAN ARTISTS LOSE JOBS FOR BEING RUSSIAN AFTER UKRAINE INVASION



The Metropolitan Opera in New York announced last week that it aims to "ring the alarm" in its fight against oppression by refusing to work with any Russian artist who backs President Vladimir Putin's actions in Ukraine.

Peter Gelb, the general manager of the opera house, said in a statement obtained by CNN that the Met believes in a "warm friendship" with artists and

institutions in Russia, but it can no longer engage with them until the invasion “and killing has been stopped, order has been restored, and restitutions have been made.”

The banishment of Russian artists is not limited to the US. The Munich Philharmonic announced that it would part ways with Valery Gergiev, its chief conductor, after he refused to denounce the invasion, according to *The New York Times*. Anna Netrebko, the Russian diva who had engagements in Switzerland and Germany, has also been canceled.

Netrebko reportedly spoke out against the Russian invasion, but her sin was that she “remained silent on Mr. Putin.”

“It’s not fair to force artists, or any other personality, to express their political opinions in public and denounce their homeland,” she said.

Vladimir O. Potanin, a Russian worth about \$21.9 billion, has supported the Guggenheim Museum for years and announced that he would step down as a trustee, the *Times* reported. The report said that there was no reason given for his decision, but he has been known to have close ties with Putin.

The museum’s statement was vague and thanked Potanin for his years of generosity but mentioned that it “strongly condemns the Russian invasion and unprovoked war against the government and people of Ukraine.”

The bans are not limited to music and Russians in all kinds of public roles are feeling the pressure.

Roman Abramovich, the Russian billionaire and owner of the Chelsea soccer team, announced that the team is for sale and will set up a foundation that will use any money made in the transaction to “benefit all victims of the war in Ukraine,” according to CNBC.

“As I have stated before, I have always taken decisions with the club's best interest at heart. In the current situation, I have therefore taken the decision to

sell the club, as I believe this is in the best interest of the club, the fans, the employees, as well as the club sponsors and partners,” he said.

Abramovich had been asked by Ukraine to negotiate to help end the war, Reuters reported. *Jewish News* reported that he has been trying to help bring the conflict to a peaceful resolution.

WSWS.org reported on the effort to eliminate Russia from the world’s stage through its contributions in art and mentioned how a university in Italy tried to ban Dostoevsky novels in literature. The author of “Crime and Punishment” died in 1881.

Art institutions across the world are in the process of vetting their artists to see if any previous social media post could betray a fondness for Putin, the *Times* reported. The issue is not only those who praised Putin in the past but those who remained silent on his actions in Ukraine. These institutions are scanning these social media posts for “contentious statements about the war,” which means there could be no suggestion that Russia is anything but diabolical.

“We’re facing a totally new situation,” Andreas Homoki, the artistic director of the Zurich Opera, told the paper. “Politics was never on our mind like this before.”

The report said media outlets waged a bullying campaign based on propaganda against anyone who doesn’t buy that the world was a “peaceful paradise until the evil mastermind Vladimir Putin” invaded Ukraine.

WSWS said corporate media companies present everything through a black and white lens, which leaves “no space for the brain to work.”

The website reported that no Russian artistic institution called on American artists to apologize for American wars that have been being waged for decades, including Iraq, Afghanistan, and “the savage bombardment of Serbia.”

Alexander Neef, the director of the Paris Opera, spoke out against the effort to expose musicians for their past comments about Putin.

“You can’t just put everybody under general suspicion now,” he told *The Times*. “You can’t demand declarations of allegiance or condemnations of what’s going on.”

TREND FORECAST: As *WSWS.org* notes, there was no such condemnation of American or artists from NATO countries for the wars they raged that killed millions of people in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yugoslavia, and Libya.

The “hate Russian people” for what their government is doing is similar to the U.S. putting Americans of Japanese and Italian descent of being “enemy aliens” and locking them down in internment camps during WWII.

All Russians, regardless of their political beliefs, have now been identified as “enemy aliens” and the stage has been set for WWIII.

WHITE HOUSE ASKS CONGRESS FOR \$32.5 BILLION TO FIGHT UKRAINE WAR AND COVID WAR



Last week, the White House said it wants \$32.5 billion in emergency aid to keep fighting the COVID War and to help fight the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The aid will include \$22.5 billion for more vaccines, antiviral drugs, and testing—and \$10 billion for military and humanitarian aid for Ukraine. The request was delivered to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The \$10 billion for COVID is \$4 billion more than the White House mentioned last month, the paper said. (See [“THERE’S NO BUSINESS LIKE THE VAX](#)

[BUSINESS.” “PFIZER DRUG LORD PUSHING YEARLY COVID JABS. CALLS THOSE WHO WON’T SWALLOW BULLSHIT. ‘CRIMINALS’” and “DRUG DEALER TRIO MAKE FORBES’ ‘RICHEST’ LIST.”\)](#)

Shalanda Young, the acting director of the Office of Management and Budget, wrote in the letter that the situation on the ground in Ukraine is “rapidly evolving.”

“I anticipate that additional needs may arise over time,” she said, referring to Ukraine. She said the money earmarked for COVID-19 will “help America move forward safely and get us back to our more normal routines.”

CBS News reported that the \$32.5 billion could be added to the annual spending bill that is already being debated in Washington. Sen. Mitch McConnell, the Senate minority leader, told the network that Republicans hit a “snag” regarding the additional assistance for Ukraine.

Sen. Chuck Schumer, the Senate minority leader, said, “Nothing would make Putin happier than having Democrats and Republicans divided.”

U.S., Europe Ramps Up Effort to Arm Ukraine

The U.S. and its European allies have been sending weapons into Ukraine non-stop since the Russian invasion, including 14 “wide-bodied” planes on Friday alone, according to a report.

The shipment included guns, ammunition, rocket launchers, and “a bristling array of Javelin anti tank missiles,” *The New York Times* reported. (See [“WAR IN UKRAINE ECONOMIC OVERVIEW.”](#))

The paper reported that soldiers from 22 countries are working 24 hours a day to unload these planes and get the weapons to the Ukrainian military. The weapons delivered from the U.S. included the munitions that were part of a \$350 million package.

“All of the US have been tremendously impressed by how effective the Ukrainian armed forces have been using the equipment that we've provided them,” a senior Pentagon official told the paper. “Kremlin watchers have also been surprised by this, and how they have slowed the Russian advance and performed extremely well on the battlefield.”

As we have reported, since 2014, the U.S. has provided Kyiv with more than \$3 billion in “security assistance” and about \$1 billion of that amount was sent in the past year.

Bullshit Has its Own Sound

“Ukraine will win this war,” Dmytro Kuleba, the Ukrainian foreign minister, said, after meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken Sunday at the border with Poland. “The question is the price of our victory. And if our partners continue to take bold, systemic decisions to step up economic and political pressure on Russia, if they continue to provide us with necessary weapons, the price will be lower.”

Blinken said, “We’re in it with Ukraine—one way or another, short run, medium run, the long run.” The paper said that Blinken mentioned he was in “awe” of the country’s resistance to Russia.

“The world is here with you; the world is with you,” Blinken told Kuleba, according to the paper.

TRENDPOST: “The world” is not with you, Tony. As we have detailed, countries that represent half the world’s population abstained from voting on a key UN measure to condemn Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine. We have also noted that a number of countries are pro-Russia. Thus, we note this to, again, illustrate the pure media bias that is being fed to the people by providing a one-sided only context to a multi-dimensional conflict.

Indeed, as detailed in yesterday’s Chinese newspaper, The Global Times, Cui Hongjian, director of the Department of European Studies at the China Institute

of International Studies, said that China should not fall into the trap set by the Western media and that it needs to set its own pace and agenda on mediating the crisis.

"The Western media set up its own standards to evaluate China's action on the Ukraine situation. For example, whether China follows the West-led sanctions on Russia, whether China follows the West-led condemnation of Russia or whether China persuades Russia for a ceasefire," Cui said, noting that China has refused to take a unilateral stance.

"Instead, China has been doing everything it can to promote dialogue, which is seen as the only correct way to end conflicts and divergences," he said.

A Call For Arms

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kuleba took to social media calling on countries to provide Ukraine with fighter jets.

"Dear partners who still have not provided Ukraine with military aircraft: how can you sleep when Ukrainian children are under bombs in Mariupol, Kherson, Kharkiv, other cities? You can take this decision now. Do it!" he tweeted.

Who is Getting These Weapons

WSWS.org reported that the weaponry that is being provided to the Ukrainians could be seen as yet another example of a NATO provocation. The report also pointed to a recent comment by the commander of Ukraine's Special Forces who announced that there will be no more Russian prisoners and artillerymen would be "cut up like pigs."

"Such policies are in direct violation of the Geneva Conventions regarding the treatment of prisoners of war, which call for the humane treatment of POWs "in all circumstances."

The Azov Battalion, which has some members who wear SS symbols, has been accused of rape and assassination, WSWS reported. Members hold positions in the country's National Guard and have been accused of posting photos of dead Russian troops on social media.

Jonathan Brunson, a former analyst for the U.S. embassy in Ukraine, told *Newsweek* that military aid to the “far-right” has been plausibly accidental. But he pointed out that Ukraine is willing to arm anyone willing to fight. He said all hands on deck “means just that—and enables Ukraine’s far right to play a heroic role they otherwise wouldn’t.”

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. Yet, it will continue to ramp up the Ukraine War and promote vitriol that is not only aimed at the Kremlin and Putin, but as we noted in the article in this **Trends Journal**, “[RUSSIAN ARTISTS LOSE JOBS FOR BEING RUSSIAN AFTER UKRAINE INVASION.](#)”*

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.

Putin has nothing to lose and will never let Ukraine or its comedian president embarrass him on the world’s stage.

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.”

TRENDPOST: *In 1997, when President Bill Clinton was expanding NATO's borders eastward, fifty American foreign policy leaders sent him a letter saying*

that it would be “a policy error of historic proportions. We believe that NATO expansion will decrease allied security and unsettle European stability,” and “NATO expansion, which continues to be opposed across the entire political spectrum, will strengthen the nondemocratic opposition, undercut those who favor reform and cooperation with the West, bring the Russians to question the entire post-Cold War settlement... .”

June 26, 1997

Dear Mr. President,

We, the undersigned, believe that the current U.S. led effort to expand NATO, the focus of the recent Helsinki and Paris Summits, is a policy error of historic proportions. We believe that NATO expansion will decrease allied security and unsettle European stability for the following reasons:

In Russia, NATO expansion, which continues to be opposed across the entire political spectrum, will strengthen the nondemocratic opposition, undercut those who favor reform and cooperation with the West, bring the Russians to question the entire post-Cold War settlement, and galvanize resistance in the Duma to the START II and III treaties; In Europe, NATO expansion will draw a new line of division between the "ins" and the "outs," foster instability, and ultimately diminish the sense of security of those countries which are not included;

In NATO, expansion, which the Alliance has indicated is open-ended, will inevitably degrade NATO's ability to carry out its primary mission and will involve U.S. security guarantees to countries with serious border and national minority problems, and unevenly developed systems of democratic government;

In the U.S., NATO expansion will trigger an extended debate over its indeterminate, but certainly high, cost and will call into question the U.S. commitment to the Alliance, traditionally and rightly regarded as a centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy.

Because of these serious objections, and in the absence of any reason for rapid decision, we strongly urge that the NATO expansion process be suspended while alternative actions are pursued. These include:

opening the economic and political doors of the European Union to Central and Eastern Europe;

- developing an enhanced Partnership for Peace program;
- supporting a cooperative NATO-Russian relationship; and
- continuing the arms reduction and transparency process, particularly with respect to nuclear weapons and materials, the major threat to U.S. security, and with respect to conventional military forces in Europe.

Russia does not now pose a threat to its western neighbors and the nations of Central and Eastern Europe are not in danger. For this reason, and the others cited above, we believe that NATO expansion is neither necessary nor desirable and that this ill-conceived policy can and should be put on hold.

Sincerely,

George Bunn	Townsend Hoopes	Sam Nunn
Robert Bowie	Gordon Humphrey	Herbert S. Okun
Bill Bradley	Fred Ikle	W.K.H. Panofsky
David Calleo	Bennett Johnston	Christian Patte
Richard T. Davies	Carl Kaysen	Richard Pipes
Jonathan Dean	Spurgeon Keeny	Robert E. Pursley
Paul Doty	James Leonard	George Rathjens
Susan Eisenhower	Edward Luttwak	Stanley Resor
David M. Evans	Michael Mandelbaum	John Rhineland
David Fischer	Jack F. Matlock Jr.	John J. Shanahan
Raymond Garthoff	C. William Maynes	Marshall Shulman
Morton H. Halperin	Richard McCormack	John Steinbruner
Owen Harries	David McGiffert	Stansfield Turner
Gary Hart	Robert McNamara	Richard Viets
Arthur Hartman	Jack Mendelsohn	Paul Warnke
Mark Hatfield	Philip Merrill	James D. Watkins
John P. Holdren	Paul H. Nitze	

This letter—signed by top U.S. government officials and politicians—has been totally ignored by the U.S. media and the White House who continually promote NATO expansion while ignoring the consequences as they violate the February 1990 U.S.-Russia agreement that NATO would not expand “one inch.”

WESTERN MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN UKRAINE WAR, BUT IGNORED THEM IN U.S./NATO WARS



Since the start of the Ukraine War, the Western media has featured headlines and photos of civilian deaths resulting in Russia's attack on Ukraine.

As a result of this focus, Russian President Vladimir Putin has been portrayed as a murderous dictator while increasing the public's hatred for the general Russian population.

For example, *The New York Times* ran a graphic photograph on its cover on Monday that reportedly showed a family fleeing the Ukrainian city of Irpin that was gunned down by Russian forces. At least three family members for four died from the gunshots—including two young children.

The United Nations estimated that 474 Ukrainian civilians have died since the start of the war and 1.7 million have fled the country. Russia has been accused of targeting civilians who were fleeing cities during the onslaught as well as launching missiles against civilian infrastructure.

Nearly every major news outlet has angled their stories on the civilian death toll from the conflict. CNN ran a headline, "UKRAINE SLAMS MOSCOW'S OFFER TO EVACUATE CIVILIANS TO RUSSIA AND BELARUS AS IMMORAL," and *The Wall Street Journal* ran a story, "RUSSIA PUMMELS CIVILIAN TARGETS WHILE TALKS MAKE SCANT PROGRESS."

While media outlets condemn Russian military actions that have killed Ukrainian civilians, these same outlets did not feature front page photos, and day-after-day headlines of the civilian deaths directly and indirectly to the American and NATO military interventions in countries like Iraq, Syria, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Libya, Yemen, Afghanistan, etc. (See [“HEY STUPID! PROPAGANDA NETWORKS WILL TELL YOU ‘WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT UKRAINE.’”](#))

TRENDPOST: *Moscow has said it will continue the fight until Kyiv gives up, and then it will stop its aggression at a “moment’s notice.” There is no mention of Ukraine’s decision to fight to the end against Russia and the impact that that decision will have on the civilian death toll in the country. Russia will not stop its assault and Ukrainian civilians will absorb the costs.*

*As Gerald Celente has noted, Ukraine will not defeat the Russian military and all of the hype about Ukrainian heroes fighting the Russian invaders is only making a deadly situation much worse. As the cover of this week’s **Trends Journal** clearly illustrates: Negotiate for Peace, or Rest in Peace.*

Numbers Game

Over 3 million Vietnamese were killed by Americans during the Vietnam War.

Serbian President Aleksander Vucic said in 2019 that at least 90 children were killed in NATO bombings in 1999. About 4,000 people were killed in the bombings, reports said. According to Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, over 500,000 Syrian civilians died in the war launched by President Obama and U.S. allies in 2011.

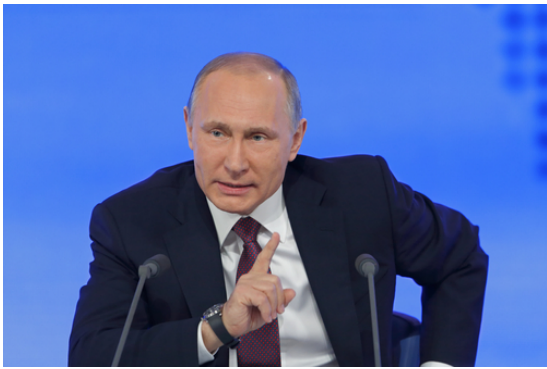
Up to 209,349 civilians were killed in Iraq following the U.S.’s 2003 invasion. All of these deaths, and hardly a mention about it in the mainstream media.

Brown University’s Watson Institute reported that 71,000 civilians have been killed in the Afghan War since it started, including a jump in casualties after the

U.S., in 2017, “relaxed its rules of engagement for airstrikes,” which “resulted in a massive increase in civilian casualties.”

TRENDPOST: *Every time the media runs “civilian” in the title, and shows an image of a dead child—it is a deliberate editorial decision to influence the public's perception of the war. Again, as we clearly illustrate, these headlines and photos were virtually absent during the course of U.S.-NATO military interventions that we have listed.*

PUTIN: WESTERN SANCTIONS ARE A ‘DECLARATION OF WAR’



Last Saturday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said the sanctions that have choked off Russia from Western countries are “akin to a declaration of war.”

“Thank God, it has not come to that,” he said.

Putin told reporters that his aims regarding Ukraine has not changed since the beginning of the war. He wants “demilitarization and deNazification” of Ukraine and he wants the country to become neutral, so it is no longer a threat to Russia.

TRENDPOST: *Since the Ukraine War broke out on 24 February, diplomatic efforts to end the fighting have been ineffective. Mainstream news outlets have called the invasion “unprovoked,” but Russia’s demands—which he says have been ignored and are, according to Putin, still not being addressed.*

Moscow wants Ukraine’s military to cease all fighting, alter its constitution to clearly state that it will not join NATO, and acknowledge Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk as independent states.

Putin came out strongly against any country that assists Ukrainian forces by setting up a no-fly zone over the country.

“That very second, we will view them as participants of the military conflict, and it would not matter what members they are,” he said. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and his top officials have all but begged Western countries to fly F-16s and F-22s over Kyiv to eliminate Russia from the skies. But no country has agreed to assist Ukraine which would mean a confrontation with Europe’s largest military.

Putin has insisted that military goals are being achieved, but Western media outlets say Russian ground forces have been stalled in their march toward Kyiv due to strong Ukrainian resistance.

TREND FORECAST: *We agree with President Putin that the sanctions are, indeed, a declaration of war...a declaration of war against “We the People.” The sanctions, as we detail in this and previous editions of the **Trends Journal**, have driven up commodity prices to new highs, which has, in turn, greatly inflated inflation and is costing everyone much more to live.*

We forecast that this long list of sanctions will do nothing to reverse Russia’s military stance, and is just another example of political incompetence that has been exemplified by the U.S. and NATO’s series of wars such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, etc., that have killed millions, cost trillions and made bad situations much worse.

FEATURED ARTICLES BY GUEST WRITERS



ABOLISH VIOLENT AND CORRUPT POLICE FORCES

By *Michael J. Talmo*

All over this world police forces physically abuse, rob, and kill innocent people on a daily basis. These appalling facts have been brought to light through court cases, news reports, videos, civil rights groups, special government commissions, scientific studies, and even other cops. Nevertheless, politicians continue to call for more police to fight a plethora of social ills while police departments continue to hide the brutality of their fellow officers behind the proverbial “blue wall of silence.”

How brutal the police are depends on the country. Some places are worse than others. But data reported by CNN in a June 2020 [article](#) shows that cops in my country, the US, are among the worst.

[Dr. Paul Craig Roberts](#), former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury For Economic Policy under Ronald Reagan and former associate editor of the *Wall Street Journal* summed it up best in a 2013 [article](#):

“At the state and local level every American faces brutal armed psychopaths known as the police. The ‘law and order’ conservatives and the ‘compassionate’ liberals stand silent while police psychopaths brutalize children and grand mothers, murder double amputees in wheelchairs, break into the wrong homes, murder the family dogs, and terrify the occupants, pointing their automatic assault weapons in the faces of small children...If a person Googles ‘police brutality videos,’ he will discover that there are more videos that can be watched in a lifetime.”

Dr. Roberts isn’t exaggerating. Here are some examples:

March 14, 2005: a five-year-old girl was arrested and handcuffed by three cops for throwing a tantrum at her school in St. Petersburg, Fla. The whole disgusting incident along with the child’s screams were captured on [video](#). If you acted up in class when I went to school you were sent to the principal’s office, given detention, or your parents were called. This and similar acts of child abuse are not unique events as reported in a 2013 [article](#) published in [Mother Jones](#).

November 22, 2014: Tamir Rice, age 12 [was killed](#) by policeman Timothy Loehmann in Cleveland Ohio. Loehmann and training officer Frank Garmback were responding to a call about a guy pointing a gun at people. Turns out the weapon was a pellet gun and was tucked in Rice’s waistband when the cops pulled up, Loehmann got out of the car and shot the kid. As the [video](#) shows, there was no reason for the cop to draw his gun.

Loehman was fired, but no charges were brought against him. It also turned out that Loehmann had previously resigned from another police department rather than get fired. The other police department was going to fire him because he lacked the emotional stability to be a police officer. In June 2020, the peer review journal *Nature* [reported](#) that “officers who are fired for misconduct are frequently rehired.” Obviously, a practice that needs to end.

Cops Shooting family dogs has become an epidemic according to a 2019 [article](#) in [Counterpunch](#) and it doesn't have to be a vicious dog. Friendly dogs, and even little dogs are all fair game. For example, a sheriff's deputy shot a chihuahua, a tiny dog that usually weighs less than five pounds, for barking too much. The dog survived, but her jaw was shattered and had to eat out of a feeding tube. This story was also [reported](#) in the *Washington Post*. In this case the cop was fired, but usually nothing happens because cops can claim, as they do with humans, that they felt threatened so they had to shoot and the courts have upheld this nonsensical reasoning. Why do cops think that their safety is more important than the safety of the public? Imagine if firefighters thought this way and refused to rescue people from burning buildings.

July 5, 2011: Kelly Thomas, a homeless man diagnosed with [schizophrenia](#), was [beaten to death](#) by three cops in Fullerton, CA. It was later described as “one of the worst beatings in (US) history.” The bones in Thomas' face were broken, he choked on his own blood, and compression of the thorax made it impossible for him to breathe normally which deprived his brain of oxygen. He died five days later. The cops were charged with second degree murder and involuntary manslaughter—they were found not guilty in spite of a [video](#) of the beating which can be watched on CNN's website.

A 2016 [study](#) in the *American Journal of Public Health* reported that each year 100,000 people are treated in hospital emergency departments for nonfatal injuries inflicted by police and from 2005-2012, 1,552 people were killed by police in 16 states alone. But as [reported](#) by the BBC back in 2016, “Official data on the number of people killed by the police turns out to be remarkably unreliable.” And grossly underreported according to a [2021 study](#) published in *The Lancet*.

Armies and other factions like [constables](#), [slave patrols](#) in the South, the [Texas Rangers](#) etc. have always performed some police actions over the centuries. But the first modern police force as we know it today, the “[Bobbies](#),” were created in England by Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850) in 1829. Bobbie is a nickname for Robert. In 1838 my country [created](#) the first police force in Boston, MA. In 1845

New York City created the NYPD. Today, virtually every recognized country has a police force.

The US has the world's third largest police force behind China and India. There are over [900,000](#) cops in about [18,000](#) law enforcement agencies nationwide. And that's not even counting the several hundred thousand civilian personnel who also work in these agencies.

We have municipal police, county police, state police, federal police, transit police, college campus police, elementary, middle and high school police, and housing police. We have cops patrolling in cars, vans, trucks, and helicopters. We have cops on motorcycles, on horseback, on boats, on bicycles, and on foot. But do our gargantuan in-your-face-all-over-the-place police forces reduce crime?

For a one year period, 1972-1973, a [study](#) on the effectiveness of police presence reducing crime was conducted in Kansas City, Missouri. It was called the "Kansas City preventive patrol experiment." The study can be read in detail [here](#). It involved three different police beats in the city. One area received the normal level of police patrols, in another police patrols were doubled—sometimes tripled. In the third area routine police patrols were eliminated entirely. Officers only went into the area when called. Result: no difference in crime rates in any of the three sections of the city. The presence of police and the lack of police didn't matter.

A November 2021 [study](#) by Washington University School of Law concluded:

"Day-to-day policing has remarkably little to do with crime, despite public perception to the contrary. The vast majority of police time is spent on noncriminal functions such as health, transportation, and public order...A recent survey of several cities who self-reported time spent by police revealed that only four percent of police time was spent working on violent crime. The bulk of police time was spent on calls about noncriminal matters...Most individuals who commit offenses are never held accountable for the crimes they commit."

If cops spend so little time fighting crime why do we have so many of them? Why are cops at road construction sites just standing around or sitting in their cars? Why are cops used to direct traffic—especially on quieter streets? An elderly retired person with a handheld sign could do this. Why do cops usually show up for medical emergencies? Why are SWAT teams, originally created in the 1960s to handle violent crisis situations like like hostage taking and mass shootings, breaking into homes and businesses (no-knock raids) to bust up poker games, terrorize doctors for practicing alternative medicine, crack down on unlicensed barber shops, and serve petty warrants? SWAT raids have [skyrocketed](#) from around 3,000 per year in 1980 to as many as 80,000 a year in 2015.

[A Nation in Turmoil. Elections Looming. The Militarization of U.S. Police Forces](#)

The way I see it, one of the reasons for cops doing things that civilians could be doing and enforcing victimless crime laws is that we have too many cops so they have to invent stuff for them to do in order to justify their phony baloney jobs. But the main reason is to hide their true nature.

The police are first and foremost a standing army—they are professional soldiers.

It doesn't matter if a cop is black or white, male or female. Once they put on that badge race and gender disappear. They become automatons of the state—trained to obey and trained to kill. The problem isn't, as some argue, that there aren't enough minority and women officers, or that not enough policemen come from the communities they work in, or that their education and training is inadequate: the problem is the police force itself. Like all professional soldiers, cops develop an us vs them mentality. Due to power that they wield which places them above and separate from the people, they become ticking time bombs waiting to explode.

Cops have always been brutal, corrupt, and oppressive. Anyone who doesn't know this is either ignorant of history or delusional. To believe that a few reforms

will stop police forces from behaving like every standing army that has ever existed throughout history is magical thinking.

In many ways our modern police forces are like the [Praetorian Guard](#) of the ancient Roman Empire. Praetorian Guardsmen didn't fight in wars like the regular army nor endure its hardships. Instead, they were the Emperor's private henchmen, carrying out whatever whims he dictated. But eventually the Emperors also feared them. During their 300 year reign of terror they assassinated 13 Roman Emperors and in some cases auctioned off the imperial throne to the highest bidder. The power of the Emperor depended on their good will.

In the same way, today's cops enforce a litany of unjust laws and regulations that serve the interests of corrupt politicians and the special interest groups that finance them. Policemen are the hired thugs of the rich and powerful who rule this world. Wealthy people have always needed large military/police forces to protect what they have from the have-nots. Police forces do not serve the interests of the poor and middle-class.

Performing some protective functions doesn't change the fact that their real purpose is to stifle dissent, to keep us in line, not to protect us. In cases like [Warren v. District of Columbia](#), 1981 and [Town of Castle Rock v. Gonzales](#), 2005, the courts ruled that the police are under no obligation to protect anyone. "...the duty to provide public services is owed to the public at large." For individual citizens, "no specific legal duty exists."

My country's Founding Fathers knew what it was like to be oppressed by a standing army which is why many of them were [opposed](#) to creating one. In addition to the great principles of liberty enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the Founding Fathers also listed their grievances against the King of England which includes condemnation of the British troops who occupied the colonies. It [states](#):

"He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people and eat out their substance...He has

combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws...For quartering large bodies of troops among us: For protecting them, by mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states:"

Sounds a lot like our modern police forces doesn't it?

There are some who argue that the police aren't soldiers and thus are not a standing army. In the 2011 case of [Mitchell v. City of Henderson](#) in Nevada, police demanded that Mitchell allow them to use his home for a stakeout regarding domestic violence at a neighbor's house. Mitchell refused and the police broke down his door, abused him and his dog, and arrested him and his father. The Mitchells rightly argued that the police violated the [Third Amendment](#) to the US Constitution which prohibits the quartering of soldiers without the owner's consent. But Federal **District Judge** [Andrew Gordon](#) ruled that policemen are not soldiers and thus did not violate the Third Amendment.

Judge Gordon's ruling is beyond absurd. Most cops wear uniforms, they have military ranks like sergeant and captain, and since the 1990s have been armed to the teeth with military equipment supplied free of charge by the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security.

This kind of militarization doesn't only apply to American cops, but to police forces [worldwide](#). In addition to tanks, attack drones, grenade launchers, etc., modern police in many parts of the world are clad in an array of body armor that makes them look like Mutant Ninja Turtles. So, obviously, the police are soldiers. A standing army is a standing army no matter what you call it. No amount of Orwellian ["DoubleSpeak"](#) can change the obvious.

In 1776, American Founding Father [Samuel Adams](#) (1722-1802) [warned us](#) about "DoubleSpeak" long before [George Orwell](#) (1903-1950) did in his book *Nineteen Eighty-Four*:

"How strangely will the Tools of a Tyrant pervert the plain Meaning of Words!"

Better police training and putting limits on their power will save lives. There is no doubt about that.

One of the biggest problems with American cops is that they are trained to shoot first and ask questions later. According to a 2015 [article](#) in the Daily Kos, one of the architects of this mentality is [Dr. William J. Lewinski](#), a psychologist and founder of Force Science Institute who trains police forces nationwide. He also charges a thousand dollars an hour to appear in court as an expert witness for cops who kill people. The Daily Kos reported that he will justify police killing people even if they were unarmed and even if they were shot in the back.

The ideology of people like Lewinski has caused the death of countless innocent people, such as 14-year-old Valentina Orellana-Peralta last December in a Los Angeles, CA clothing store. The *New York Post* [reported](#) that LAPD cops accidentally killed Valentina because a guy was running amok in the store assaulting customers with a bicycle lock. That's all he had. Instead of just disarming the guy, the stupid cops open fire killing the guy which was completely unnecessary. And even more tragic, a stray bullet hit Valentina in the chest while she and her mother were hiding in a dressing room.

In contrast, here is a 2011 [video](#) of British police disarming a man with a machete without guns and without killing him.

Another problem with the police is that they are rarely punished for abusing and killing people as reported in a January 2021 [article](#) by the American Bar Association and an August 2020 [report](#) by Amnesty International. One of the reasons for this are disastrous court rulings that give them way too much leeway as well as special rights like [“qualified immunity.”](#) Under this US Supreme Court concoction cops and other government agents are shielded from liability even when they break the law.

Do away with qualified immunity. Federal and state laws need to be passed that will put cops in jail for 10-20 years without parole if they physically abuse or

accidentally kill someone. If they intentionally murder someone they should get life in prison without parole.

If a cop even verbally abuses someone they should lose their job. And any cop who arrests or threatens a citizen for filming him or her should go to prison for at least 10 years. Don't forget, cops have always abused people. But it is only since cell phone cameras that so many of their egregious acts of tyranny have been exposed for all the world to see.

And ponder this: Why do we call policemen "officer"? Does that make the rest of us privates? It would seem so. As is the case in the military, we are not permitted to disobey the officer, strike the officer, talk back to the officer, or to question the officer's authority. If we do, we can be arrested, beaten, jailed, and executed. This must be changed. We must do away with laws like resisting arrest and eluding which allows the police to trump up charges. We also need to demilitarize them and take away their army surplus equipment and weapons of war.

In spite of all I just said, reforming the police won't work because putting restraints on them goes out the window when they are weaponized against the people and execute their primary function: oppressing and terrorizing the civilian population. This danger will always remain as long as police forces exist.

Traditionally, police forces have been used to control poor people and slaves and to target minority groups for abuse and harassment. But since COVID-19 all bets are off. It's open season on everyone. Under the New World Order if globalists like Klaus Schwab get their way, all of us will be poor and slaves. To quote Schwab's 2015 World Economic Forum [video](#): "You'll own nothing. And you'll be happy."

In his 2007 Oscar-nominated documentary film ["Sicko"](#) which compared America's broken for-profit healthcare system with other countries, Michael Moore showed how Europeans went out and protested when they didn't like something. Moore declared that unlike the US, European governments were afraid of the people. How wrong he was. European governments merely blunted

the sword of tyranny. But with COVID-19 it has been sharpened and police all over Europe have bared their sadistic fangs as can be seen [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Are there alternatives to modern police forces? The answer is yes. The first step is to realize that there are too many police and too many laws. We need to get rid of all the unnecessary laws that clutter our statute books, clog our courts, overcrowd our prisons, and ruin our economy. Since too many cops are violent personalities to begin with, the more power they have and the more laws they enforce, the more violent confrontations with civilians will occur. This is even more blatantly obvious today due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Take Australia where COVID restrictions have been particularly draconian. Here is a [video](#) of a cop choking a woman on the street for not wearing a mask. Here is another [video](#) of a man being pinned to the ground by a whole gang of cops for not wearing a mask. Brave, aren't they?

And let's not forget about what happened last month in Canada after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau invoked the Emergencies Act against the trucker protest in Ottawa. Videos of police abusing protesters can be seen [here](#) and [here](#). Without a standing army, Trudeau probably would have had to back off and end the vaccine mandates.

So, why not replace modern police forces with a citizen police force—a militia that serves for 30 days and then rotates back into their regular jobs. It would be like jury duty. But service would be voluntary and rigorous training would be provided so police academies would remain. But the training methods would have to change to better serve the public, such as emphasizing peaceful resolution rather than arrest and punishment for every petty offense.

And a big part of their training should be to refuse to obey any orders or laws that are illegal and or unconstitutional. They shouldn't be carrying guns nor walking around in body armor, but have access to them if needed as is the case with the Bobbies in England along with other countries where the police don't carry guns.

A small squad of full time detectives could remain as well as county sheriffs with a small staff to investigate and handle murders, robberies, and other types of crimes like arson and fraud. But they cannot be used by politicians to stifle dissent so it is important that their numbers be kept small and what they can and cannot do is clearly defined.

A militia has always been considered inferior to professional full time soldiers. But since cops deal with civilians and don't fight in wars, a militia would be far superior when it comes to law enforcement. They are also less likely to develop the us vs them mentality of professional soldiers, get drunk with power, nor blindly obey oppressive orders.

When large groups of people exercise their First Amendment rights to peacefully protest against government policies they should just be there to keep things peaceful rather than obey the orders of government officials. If rioting occurs the National Guard which is mostly made up of [part time](#) soldiers can handle it.

Other situations that involve domestic violence, people with mental health issues, homelessness, and substance abuse could be handled by "trained professional emergency response teams." As reported in a 2020 [article](#) in Detroit Michigan's WDIV Local 4 News. Unlike cops, who are trained to arrest and punish, these trained professionals would get people the help and protection that they need.

However, since some people can't handle having any kind of power even for a little while, the laws and controls I mentioned previously still need to be put in place.

[The Preamble](#) of my country's Constitution says that one of its purposes is to "establish Justice." One of the ways to do this is to replace full time state and federal prosecutors with private lawyers who, like a citizen police force, would serve for 30 days and then rotate back into their regular practice. This would avoid the cozy relationship full time prosecutors have with cops and would put the emphasis on justice instead of winning cases to get ahead politically. And in Grand Jury proceedings defense attorneys should always be allowed to

participate. Under the current closed system prosecutors can manipulate jurors to the point where, as the [saying](#) goes, it's possible to "indict a ham sandwich."

For those who think what I'm suggesting wouldn't work, step back and look at the big picture. Don't get locked into the idea that there is only one way to do things. I know how difficult this can be. Lots of people have family and friends who are cops, myself included.

I grew up with positive images of cops as portrayed on television like Sheriff [Andy Taylor](#), Officer [Joe Bolton](#), and officers Reed and Malloy of [Adam-12](#). Then there are the movies that idealize violent rogue cops like Dirty Harry. All of these factors along with believing that the cops are there to protect them combined with constant media hype about the fear of crime makes juries [unwilling to convict](#) cops even when the crimes they commit are captured on video. Don't give in to fear and prejudice folks. Don't hero worship cops. See them for what they really are.

More than anything else, COVID-19 has demonstrated that the biggest mistake this planet ever made was creating standing armies to function as police forces. They have become a cancer on democracy, a festering sore that is eating away our freedom, a putrid mass of corruption that sees the public as mere objects to be pushed around, abused, and exploited.

Obviously, there are good policemen out there who save lives and don't abuse their authority. But I have come to the inescapable conclusion that the existence of a massive standing army that has nothing better to do than harass people for the most minor infractions and that stands ready to enforce any law no matter how unjust is inherently evil. Such a military institution must have a dehumanizing and brutalizing effect on all who participate in it. No one's life, liberty or property is safe as long as these horrible armies exist.

But understand this: in an imperfect world such as ours there are no ideal solutions—there are only choices between lesser evils. No matter how hard we try, we can't get rid of all the idiots and psychopaths in power. All we can do is minimize the damage that they can inflict. But they will always be with us, lurking

in the shadows, spinning their spider web of deceit, always trying to get around protecting the rights of the people, waiting for the right moment, the right opportunity to strike. We must always keep a watchful eye on them and never let down our guard if we want to maintain our freedom.

*Note to readers: Please click the share buttons above or below. Follow us on Instagram, @globalresearch_crg and Twitter at @crglobalization. Forward this article to your email lists. Crosspost on your blog site, internet forums, etc.

Michael J Talmo *has been a professional writer for over 40 years and is strongly committed to the protection of civil liberties. He also did three music videos on COVID-19. [The Masker Mash](#), [COVID Vaccine Man](#), and [The Corona Globalists](#). He can be reached at michaeltalmo@aol.com*

TRENDS IN THE MARKETS



THE “CURE” FOR COVID? WAR! AND INFLATE THE DEBT

By *Gregory Mannarino* [TradersChoice.net](https://www.TradersChoice.net)

Who knew that to eradicate Covid all they would need to do is start a war and vastly inflate the debt?

It's simple... The mechanism being utilized to keep the debt-based system going is to orchestrate a crisis after crisis scheme so as to pull more debt into the system itself. Moreover, as one concocted “crisis” comes to an end, another must be put in place to replace it.

The ONE glaring fact that is being hidden in plain sight from the public is this: the debt-based system DEMANDS that every reason imaginable, and even unimaginable, must be created to relentlessly inflate the global debt.

The debt-based system is totally dependent upon unyielding debt creation, and the number one way, BAR NONE, which allows debt to be pulled into the system is to create another “crisis.”

Creating a “crisis situation” gives puppet governments a blank check, for which the public **MUST** stand behind (**because a crisis is an emergency**).

And as in any crisis or emergency, unlimited cash must be thrown at it... Cash that must be borrowed from central banks—**and it is your patriotic duty to support it!**

Today the situation is dire from several perspectives. Looking deeper, the crisis-to-crisis scheme is being utilized to fuel global debt faster than ever before. Today, commodity prices are surging at their fastest pace in over a century! And inflation is raging higher. People in the middle class continue to be systematically wiped out, and the one- and two-percenters are richer today than ever before—and getting richer.

Moving forward, you will see a series of more “crisis” situations develop.

Expect much higher food and energy prices, possibly even major shortages. Expect so called world leaders to speak out loudly, calling on the public to get behind and support financially to the tune of hundreds of billions of dollars every manner of concocted crisis. Expect human suffering on a world-wide scale to get much worse, and a massive transfer of wealth right up to the elite to accelerate.

TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM



WHAT IF YOUR ATTACKER SURRENDERS?

By *Bradley J. Steiner*, [American Combato](#)

Here indeed is a “first ever” question! It comes from a student who is a regular monthly visitor to all our web sites. We thought that this question—certainly deserving an answer—would be of serious interest to a lot of our regular readers; to include some teachers as well as students:

“How do you recommend handling a situation where an attacker seems to quit and give up after you initiate resistance but have not yet dis-abled him? It seems cruel to ignore his ‘giving up’ and just clobber him, anyway.”

First off, dismiss the “cruel” nonsense. What is cruel is starting violence against an innocent person. The only “cruelty” that we see is the attackers toward an innocent defender.

When someone initiates violence against another, except to preempt a dangerous, violent attack by an assailant, whatever he gets is his problem, his doing, and his responsibility.

We certainly do not suggest, recommend, or teach that force should be continued against an attacker once he has been neutralized and the danger is gone, but we believe that no proper defense has been achieved until and unless the danger is decisively ended, and the threat is gone.

A violent offender is no longer a threat if:

- He turns and physically flees
- His intended victim has created an opportunity for himself to safely flee the scene of the attack, and fleeing is clearly a feasible option at the time
- He has lost the capacity and the will to be any further danger to the intended victim. We do not see how or why a mere verbal “I give up!” or “I’ve had enough!” or “Stop, I surrender!”, etc. should cause a defender to cease aggressive action.

In COMPETITIVE SPORT, yes, it would be disgraceful and should be cause for immediate forfeiture of the contest to continue rendering punishment after one’s opponent gives up. But we are not concerned here with competitive sport or match contests.

An individual who is a violent felon ought to be assumed to be easily capable of lying, too. And the “words” that he utters should be ignored and dismissed (actually, your focus in defending yourself should be such that auditory exclusion takes place and you do not even hear the bastard!).

So long as that attacker remains physically capable and has not made any attempt to physically flee, continue your defensive actions. His words could easily be a ploy to give him a second to pull a knife or gun, or to recover and renew his attack against you—lethally.

Any extralegal violent offender must be stopped decisively before the defender is justified in ceasing his countering force against that attacker.

An individual who has initiated violence against an innocent person has NOT been “stopped decisively” just because he says that he “surrenders.”

You can be badly, permanently injured—even killed—when you are set upon by a violent offender. This has nothing to do with sport! Take no chances. If his “surrender” is a trick, you might end up dead.

TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY



By *Joe Doran*

AI MENTAL HEALTH “INTERVENTIONS” ABOUT TO GET REAL

You’re on your favorite news forum, or social media platform.

A post or piece of news catches your attention. It gets your juices going. You have something you want to say, share, question or rant about.

So you type away.

And then a message pops up. You’ve exhibited signs of a mental health issue. You’re being asked to proceed with further digital screening, after which you’ll be given helpful information about where to go for further help.

In some cases, “help” may be coming to you.

The above scenario is the next step of corporate-government overseers in using “health” dangers to impose authoritarian suppression of dissident viewpoints.

And the framework for its implementation is being assembled right now, via government agencies including the CDC, political bodies including Congress and the Biden administration, and tech companies and leading university research programs.

Dartmouth Develops AI Driven “Mental Health” Tech

Dartmouth University last week showcased an Artificial Intelligence powered system that researchers claim can identify “mental problems” of users participating in online discussion forums.

The AI system reportedly utilizes an emphasis on emotions rather than the exact substance of the social media messages being studied in its approach.

The researchers say the technique works better over time, regardless of the themes mentioned in the postings. Their work was encapsulated in a paper presented at the 20th International Conference on Web Intelligence and Intelligent Agent Technology.

According to Xiaobo Guo, Guarini '24, a co-author of the paper, the Dartmouth research, which was developed using Reddit forum posts as inputs, is meant to potentially help in identifying and intervening in cases where “mental health” problems might warrant.

Guo noted that people tend not to seek care for mental health illnesses for a variety of reasons, including stigma, excessive fees, and a lack of access to resources.

Guo said the Dartmouth AI technology being developed might be used to “prompt” users, and that via an alert, they might be more receptive or inclined to seek assistance with AI identified mental health issues.

He also said digital screening technologies might play a part in a process, where admittedly posters were not seeking help, or a medical or mental health diagnosis by their online activities on forums.

"Social media offers an easy way to tap into people's behaviors. The data is voluntary and public, published for others to read," said Guo.

Invasive Technology, Political Danger

Of course, the Dartmouth researchers fail to acknowledge that people posting those "public comments" aren't doing so to authorize a mental health screening, much less an intervention.

If that isn't ominous itself, the progressive political distortion of what counts as a mental health issue, in the age of MAGA, COVID, and now the Russia and Ukraine conflict, raises the specter of even more political suppression than is already the case via technocratic and government collusion.

The suppression and smearing of dissidents as mentally disturbed is a common feature of totalitarian regimes. It's happening more frequently in supposed Western democracies that claim to value freedom of thought and conscience.

As the **Trends Journal** has pointed out in previous recent articles, a dangerously politicized CDC is already weaponizing "health dangers" to erode first and second amendment rights to free speech and self-defense. For more on that, see ["GOVERNMENT: FREE SPEECH IS BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH"](#) (21 Sep 2021) and ["UPDATE: FREE SPEECH IS BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH"](#) (5 Oct 2021).

During the COVID War, the government, including the CDC and Congress actively coordinated with and pressured social media platforms to suppress and censor dissident viewpoints concerning COVID policies and official narratives, under the guise of combating "health misinformation."

CDC Director Rachel Walensky has also gone on record advocating restrictions on gun ownership rights by cherry-picking statistics and declaring a gun related “health crisis.”

Now, with the frenzy of propaganda being furiously arrayed against Russia, people expressing opinions or information contrary to the government’s war narrative, might have even more to worry about than merely being smeared as Russian operatives.

They might qualify as mentally deranged, certified by dispassionate, “scientific” AI.

By a veneer of official sanction by authorities like the CDC, prevailing political orthodoxy, and sophisticated tech engineered at leading universities, the political perversion of “science” to justify suppression of “dangerous speech” is likely to accelerate.

And systems like Dartmouth's AI social media mental health screening technology may well serve as a potent weapon in the technocracy’s arsenal.

THIS WEEK IN SURVEILLANCE



ISRAELI SPYWARE ON U.S. CONSUMER PHONES DRAWS MORE ATTENTION.

Two Republican legislators are pressuring Apple and the FBI to reveal details regarding spyware developed by the Israeli NSO Business Group.

Letters were issued last Thursday by House members Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) and Mike Johnson (R-Louisiana), according to CNBC.

Jordan serves as Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee, while Johnson is ranking member on a subcommittee on Civil Rights.

The lawmakers are questioning yet another example of illegal spying on citizens by U.S. Intelligence, which has already corroded the nation and undermined protest rights and free elections in the world's supposed bastion of freedom and democracy.

In a letter to FBI Director Christopher Wray, the representatives said the FBI's acquisition of NSO spyware was "deeply troubling and presents significant risks to the civil liberties of U.S. persons."

An investigation by news organizations last year discovered that NSO's software was used to hack into the phones of journalists and activists.

The **Trends Journal** reported on the story in ["PEGASUS SOFTWARE USED TO SPY ON POLITICAL OPPO"](#) (20 Jul 2021).

That story noted that:

"Countries including Poland, Mexico and others have targeted human rights activists, journalists, and attorneys using hacking tools provided by the Israeli spy business NSO Group."

U.S. Intelligence agencies denied implementing the sophisticated spyware, which requires no user actions in order to be triggered on an infected Apple or Google android phone.

Among other things, the Pegasus spyware lets its clandestine operators read messages from encrypted applications.

Despite the U.S. Intelligence denials, the Biden administration took the step of banning the NSO Group a few months after the research was released, claiming that the company knowingly gave its technology to other governments for malicious purposes.

Responding to the controversy surrounding their acquiring the Pegasus software, the FBI in January responded in tragically typical Orwellian fashion:

According to *The New York Times*, the agency said it looks at new technologies “not just to explore a potential legal use but also to combat crime and to protect both the American people and our civil liberties. That means we routinely identify, evaluate and test technical solutions and services for a variety of reasons, including possible operational and security concerns they might pose in the wrong hands.”

TRENDS IN CRYPTOS



WEB3 WILL FORCE CHANGE IN THE ENTERPRISE

Many average crypto enthusiasts and investors may not be aware of the “blockchain” and DLT names associated with enterprise use.

That’s because the technologies and networks built on Corda, Hyperledger Fabric, and a handful of other major enterprise class DLT systems are private, permissioned, and not made for or marketed for individuals.

But those solutions, and the companies and groups of companies that have been utilizing them for years—commonly called consortiums—are beginning to feel the squeeze of Web3 and its advantages.

Fast evolving technology by start-ups in the insurgent cryptocurrency blockchain sector can’t be ignored by corporations, say industry analysts.

That means, in one way or another, corporations will have to migrate to new DLT functionality that is building out things like:

- interoperability between systems
- tokenization of info and assets
- automated processes and community decision-making (via DAOs, or Decentralized Autonomous Organizations)
- “identity” data ownership by individuals and not corporations;
- and even more transparency with regard to transactions (while still preserving necessary anonymity)

Some industries, including gaming, social media, music and art, and promotion are obviously being impacted by technology built on permissionless, crypto-incentivized public blockchains like Ethereum, Solana, Algorand, Cardano and others.

Users of these networks want things like interoperability (for example, the ability to use assets like crypto tokens and Non-Fungible Tokens or NFTs, across ecosystems).

They want more direct and controllable profit share and ownership, and greater decision-making than the “stock holder” model of traditional investment.

Via DAOs and cryptocurrencies, blockchain investors can have those things.

As Mark Cuban [noted](#) in 2021 about DAOs, for example:

“The future of corporations could be very different as DAOs take on legacy businesses. It’s the ultimate combination of capitalism and progressivism. Entrepreneurs that enable DAOs can make \$. If the community excels at governance, everyone shares in the upside. Trustless can pay”

And also:

“There are so many features and processes in any given company that can be more efficient and productive using a decentralized, trustless approach. As companies are built on this approach we will see some incredibly disruptive businesses built”

For more on DAOs, see [“VENTURE CAPITAL GETTING A DAO MAKEOVER”](#) (16 Nov 2021) and [“THE CRYPTO ‘AGE OF UTILITY’ HAS JUST BEGUN”](#) (12 Oct 2021).

Siloed Corporate Blockchains Facing Their Limits

Ruth Levi Lotan is a vice president of sales and marketing at ClearX. The blockchain initiative provides a platform for enterprises to join with partners (or forge new partnerships), and tap into their DLTs to seamlessly offer on-demand services or bundle, sell and monetize complex multi-party products.

Writing recently at Coindesk.com, Lotan [argued](#) that corporations will need to venture beyond siloed DLT systems to remain competitive.

“...consortia are still tied to private-permissioned implementations. The enterprise blockchain space simply can’t ignore evolution. Greater interoperability and the incoming wave of Web3 mean that we need to reassess the pivotal role played by blockchain consortia in the equation.”

Identity and personal data is one example where individuals want more control than the current corporate paradigms can’t provide.

One of the things Web3 promises is that users won’t have their identities, or their assets canceled or locked for expressing themselves or engaging in legal activities, simply because some corporate authority disapproves.

Another obviously huge area where newer paradigms have disrupted traditional companies is in the area of finance and banking. Cryptocurrencies and permissionless blockchains have allowed users, especially young users and workers sending remittances, to participate and accrue and preserve wealth in ways they clearly appreciate. (See [“CRYPTO OPENING WEALTH TO YOUNGER GENERATION.”](#) 2 Nov 2021.)

Solutions that offer greater digital empowerment for end-users, which is a large part of the promise of Web3, are clearly gaining momentum via crypto-powered blockchain ecosystems.

As data and digital assets become more fungible and more widely and directly owned and controlled by millions of users, technologies that facilitate DLT and blockchain interoperability, like ClearX, Quant (QNT) and Cosmos may be especially important.

For those wondering whether crypto-based permissionless blockchain technologies are just a flash in the pan, it's helpful to try to gain more understanding of what problems these initiatives are addressing, and what innovations they're introducing.

Corporations are undoubtedly paying attention.

BIDEN WILL SIGN EXECUTIVE ORDER REGARDING CRYPTOS



According to reports, President Joe Biden is expected to issue an executive order this week telling government agencies to look into possible crypto regulatory reforms, as well as the national security and economic implications of digital assets.

The White House's stance on the sector has been renewed as a result of sanctions imposed by Washington and its allies on Russia, raising speculation that corporations and people in the country may utilize cryptocurrency to circumvent the limits.

Russia is already working with China and other countries on alternatives to U.S. sanctions. And some have noted that Russia promoting an international BRICS system that would offer an alternative to SWIFT international payment

settlements and even the petto-dollar, are a big factor behind America's animus toward Vladimir Putin.

The Biden directive would require federal departments throughout the government to report on their digital asset policies later this year, said Bloomberg news.

The Crypto industry leaders have long complained about a lack of clarity in U.S. laws.

But the wrong kinds of regulations will further dampen innovation in an important new phenomenon at a time when the world doesn't need any more politician-led disasters.

COINBASE TOADIES TO POLITICAL PRESSURE



Coinbase on Monday became one of the first major centralized crypto exchanges to announce a wide ban on Russian people utilizing its services.

Coinbase, said hundreds of accounts linked to Russians have been banned, and the company said it would support Western sanctions on Russia.

“Today, Coinbase blocks over 25,000 addresses related to Russian individuals or entities we believe to be engaging in illicit activity, many of which we have identified through our own proactive investigations,” a statement from the company read.

Coinbase CEO Brian Armstrong had already said last week that Coinbase would go along with sanctions against Russia by blocking the accounts of Russian clients of major Russian banks listed under sanctioning.

Coinbase is a centralized exchange, which means it holds cryptos for people using its service, unless users transfer crypto off the exchange and into their own crypto wallet, protected with private keys (involving a phrase a user can keep from anyone's access).

Savvy crypto investors have a saying: “not your [private] keys, not your crypto.”

EUROPE MULLS CRYPTO CONTROLS TO TIGHTEN SANCTIONS ON RUSSIA



The European Union (EU) is considering new rules that would make it more difficult for Russian oligarchs and government agencies to move money by laundering it through digital currencies, the *Financial*

Times reported.

Among those calling for tighter oversight is Christine Lagarde, president of the European Central Bank, who urged laws forbidding firms dealing in crypto assets or transactions to service Russian clients, the FT said.

However, “if people want to avoid sanctions, there’s always multiple methods,” Changpeng Zhao, CEO of the crypto platform Binance, said last week in a BBC interview.

“You can do it using cash, diamonds, gold,” he said. “I don’t think crypto is anything special.”

European authorities have noticed a rise in the use of crypto since Russia invaded Ukraine, Paolo Gentiloni, EU economics commissioner, told the *FT*.

Legislators in the U.K. and U.S. also have expressed concerns that Bitcoin and crypto could be used to circumvent the sanctions; Switzerland is freezing crypto assets held within its borders by sanctioned Russian entities and individuals, as we report in [“Switzerland Freezes Russian Crypto Assets”](#) in this issue.

Democrats on the U.S. Senate’s banking committee wrote a letter to treasury secretary Janet Yellin warning that digital currencies could be used to skirt the bans.

The treasury did not respond to the letter, but a department official said it would be difficult for Russia’s government or oligarchs to use crypto to beat the sanctions.

Britain’s parliament is “considering how the U.K., along with its allies, can prevent crypto assets from emerging as loopholes,” member Joanna Penn of the House of Lords told her colleagues last week.

TREND FORECAST: *As regulators tighten their hold on digital currencies, crypto’s volatility will decrease. The result will be greater comfort for investors, but fewer crashes and windfall paydays for speculators.*

SWITZERLAND FREEZES RUSSIAN CRYPTO ASSETS



Switzerland will freeze all digital assets held within its borders by Russian businesses and individuals sanctioned by NATO allies, the government has announced.

The country will comply with the European Union’s (EU’s) sanctions and add its own strictures on Russian crypto holdings, officials said.

“As of today, all four EU sanctions packages have been adopted and implemented,” finance minister Guy Parmelin said on 5 March.

Since 28 February, 223 Russians, including “oligarchs and close Putin confidantes” have had their bank accounts and other assets found and frozen, Parmelin added.

Crypto has been included in the actions to “protect the integrity” of digital currencies, which are widely seen as having the potential to launder money and hide criminal transactions.

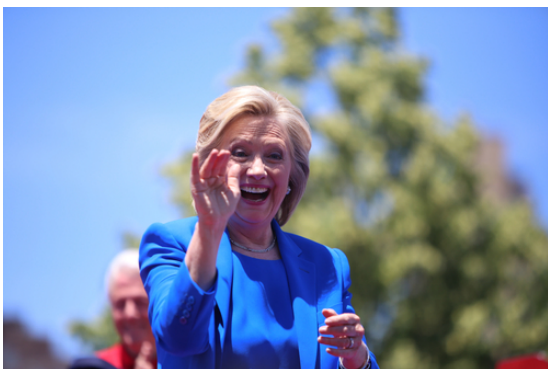
Switzerland has become a global center for crypto trading and storage.

“If someone holds their crypto key themselves, then it’s going to be virtually impossible to identify them,” a senior finance ministry official told the *Financial Times*, “but if they’re using crypto services—funds, exchanges, and so on—these service points we can target.”

Meanwhile, the Czech National Bank announced it will intervene to shore up the value of the koruna, the national currency, which has slipped 6 percent since the beginning of February.

Many currencies in central Europe have slipped in value since Russia invaded Ukraine.

BLOCKCHAIN BATTLES



POLITICIANS PUSH FOR CRYPTO BAN ON RUSSIANS. Several major centralized crypto exchanges including Kraken and Binance have so far declined to disable transfers to all Russian accounts.

The request was made by the Ukrainian government.

Reacting to the news, former Secretary of State and two-time failed Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton said she was disappointed that some “so-called crypto exchanges” were “refusing to end transactions with Russia for some philosophy of libertarianism or whatever.”

Clinton made the comments to opinion host Rachel Maddow on MSNBC.

Following the partial but significant ban of some major Russian banks from the international Swift monetary cross border settlement system, the U.S. and many other nations have been pushing for even tighter financial sanctions and cut-offs for Russia.

Some legislators, including U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) pushed this past week for crypto regulations that would try to exert more control over crypto transactions, ostensibly to stop Russia from circumventing financial sanctions. Warren stated:

“These sanctions are powerful, but Russia can dodge some of this pain by using the same cryptocurrency tools that are currently used by drug traffickers, cybercriminals, and tax cheats...”

“Crypto takes the sting out of sanctions. The whole point of crypto is that it allows someone to conduct financial transactions without having to go through the traditional banking system or traditional financial intermediaries. Right now, millions of transactions are taking place that are completely unregulated with no one verifying who gets what.”

Warren failed to note that fiat money is by far the most common medium of exchange used by criminal enterprises, including massively corrupt government and banking officials.

She also ignored the fact that the vast majority of crypto holders are trying to preserve the value of their labor against inflationary fiat, earn interest that is

virtually absent in the current banking system, and/or reduce costs of remittances that are subject to obscene gouging by traditional monetary institutions.

It's becoming clear that the Russia-Ukraine conflict is offering a convenient opportunity that some do not want to waste, with regard to gaining more control over a sector and a technology that has been disrupting powerful factions of the traditional monetary system.

COVID, J6 and Trudeau's Emergency Act Use Paved the Way

The financial crackdown on the Truckers Freedom Convoy in Canada, and before that, the cut-offs of January 6 protestors and organizers from their bank accounts, demonstrated how supposed Western democracies are becoming more brazen in wielding financial institutions and mechanisms as weapons.

COVID opened the doors to a kind of dictat style of governance that has seen international and national authorities using cries of "crisis" and "emergency" to trample laws, and indeed, legal order.

The Russia-Ukraine conflict is now ushering in new levels of authoritarian overreach.

The unprecedented political use of Swift has led many in the crypto sector to reaffirm the value of cryptos that were created to decouple money from the kind of control now being wielded in a complex geopolitical crisis.

Michael J. Casey at Coindesk pointed out that despite Clinton's trivialization, the issue involves quite a bit more than some minor ideological matter:

"It's all very well for governments to profess support for free speech, but if they prevent citizens from obtaining or sending funds to pay for, say, a computer or for internet access, they effectively deny them that right."

The Canadian crackdown is stunning, according to Neeraj Agrawal, director of communications at Coin Center, a Washington nonprofit focusing on cryptocurrency policy, who told the *Washington Examiner* that such steps are seldom seen by Western nations with democratically elected politicians.

According to Agrawal, freedom of expression and financial freedom are linked. Because it is difficult to demonstrate, organize, and speak out without funding, the right to transact is an element of the freedom of expression.

The Canadian government, on the other hand, did not merely target conventional bank accounts and crowdfunding. It also attempted to limit the use of cryptocurrencies, including crackdowns on donors.

Without getting the owner's private keys, the Canadian government, and governments in general, are unable to freeze an individual's Bitcoin or cryptocurrency address. This is due to the fact that crypto is based on a blockchain, a digital public record that enables transactions to take place peer-to-peer rather than via a middleman, such as a bank.

Crypto Technology Offers Resilience in a Time of Authoritarian Ascendancy

The desire of elites to use access to finances as an ultimate weapon against dissident individuals and nations, has perils and limitations, both within the traditional international monetary system, and the world of cryptos.

Some have pointed out that barring Russia from the Swift system may only speed a move by nations like Russia, China, Iran and likely others to erect an alternative where the U.S. dollar is not the reserve currency.

Even without the Russia Ukraine war, America's inflationary abuse of the dollar, and growing penchant for using the dollar hegemony as a weapon in sanctions, was inviting other nations to actualize a post dollar-as-reserve-currency future.

Meanwhile, cryptos offer another kind of resistance to the political manipulations of financial power being used more nakedly by the globalist order.

Nunchuk, a self-custodial bitcoin wallet and software supplier, provided an example during the Canadian trucker protest of how crypto transactions that don't go via third parties are less vulnerable to government monitoring.

The corporation claimed it made the request after a judge ordered it to freeze and reveal information about assets linked to the Canadian protesters, the *Washington Examiner* reported.

In response to the request, the corporation emphasized, “We are a software provider, not a custodial financial intermediary. We do not collect any user identification information beyond email addresses. We do not hold any keys.”

Many politicians and other authorities have yet to fully understand how cryptocurrencies, with security phrases and cryptographic private keys, provide a level of ownership and ability to quickly and directly transact with others, previously unknown.

Even so, some leading voices in the blockchain space felt compelled to say their platforms were not likely to be subject to sanction avoidance by Russia, the latest and largest target of financial canceling the world has yet witnessed.

Brad Garlinghouse of Ripple (XRP), currently embroiled in a years long battle of their own with the SEC over supposed illegal activities, commented on 2 March:

“RippleNet, for example, has always been - and remains today - committed to NOT working with sanctioned banks or countries that are restricted counterparties. Ripple and our customers support and enforce OFAC laws and KYC/AML.”

RUSSIANS, UKRAINIANS FLOCK TO DIGITAL CURRENCIES. Citizens of Russia and Ukraine have been snapping up Bitcoin and crypto as a place to store value as the worth of their national currencies plummet.

On Binance, the world's largest exchange, Bitcoin traded at the equivalent of \$46,646 in Ukraine's hryvnia currency; on Kuna, Ukraine's chief exchange, Bitcoin traded as high as \$51,240 worth of hryvnia.

At the same time in the U.S., Bitcoin was trading at about \$44,178, according to CoinDesk.

Bitcoin also has rallied in exchange for rubles from 20 through 28 February, before the war began. During that period, 1,792 Bitcoin was bought with rubles, compared with 522 during the nine days before that, Binance data shows.

"The situation in Ukraine has brought to light the value of Bitcoin as an alternative monetary network," Timo Lehes, co-founder of the Swarm Markets crypto trading platform, said in comments quoted by *The Wall Street Journal*.

FANTOM BLOCKCHAIN ROCKED BY DEVELOPER RUG-PULL. It wasn't just the departure of two leading developers that caused the Fantom blockchain to take a dive over the weekend.

It was also the news from Anton Nell, senior solutions architect at the Fantom Foundation, who said that some 25 "apps and services" running on the network via smart contract technology would be terminated on 3 April 2022.

Nell and technical advisor Andre Cronje are both "moving on" from Fantom at the same time.

Among the takedowns include yearn.finance, a popular DeFi app, and others.

The news sent the Fantom network token, and tokens related to different apps on the platform, plunging into double-digit losses.

Yearn Finance's YFI token dropped 10.04 percent in 24 hours, while FTM, the Fantom blockchain's native token, lost more than 15 percent.

The Fantom Foundation issued statements to try to assure token holders, mentioning upcoming good news, including a Fantom Virtual Machine that would help interoperability with other blockchain networks:

“...the development of Fantom won't be impacted by Andre's decision.

“Big things are coming, as scheduled.

“We're still on track to ship snapsync and a db upgrade in the short term and to release middleware improvements such as flat storage and the fvm.”

As of Monday, FTM appeared to have stabilized, at least for the moment, at 1.43 dollars a token.

Take-Away Lessons for Investors

The lesson of the Fantom situation is that people who introduce smart contracts, which are analogous to software programs, can decide to close up shop, in the same way that software companies or websites that offer different functionalities, can shut down.

There's also an important difference, though. Blockchain apps often have associated tokens that people can buy as investments. Successful apps can see their token prices rise. And vice-versa. In the case of a DeFi app, tokens might also be locked up while earning interest etc.

The news about yearn.finance and other apps running on the Fantom blockchain, lead to confusion and panic about what would happen to investments in different situations.

The main Fantom token may only suffer in the short or medium term from what has occurred in that ecosystem. But the rug-pull by Nell and Cronje will hurt people who supported their app projects, and should make users holding tokens of apps on Fantom and other networks more closely examine smart contract

powered apps in which they may be investing, and the people or groups behind them.

There are increasing cases where a group that has utilized a certain network—say Ethereum—to launch and run an app, switch to another network, to reduce transaction fees or speed, or for some other reason. But in these cases, token holders usually have much less to worry about. The project is continuing, and advantages of a new network may even enhance the value of project tokens.

As the Gemini Exchange [noted](#), in 2021 Ethereum was still by far the leading network for dApps, due to several factors:

“Despite the growth of alternative blockchain networks, decentralized applications (dApps) exist almost exclusively on the Ethereum blockchain. The Ethereum Virtual Machine (EVM) is the primary driver of this trend, with development kits and application templates serving to continuously improve the developer experience. In combination, these tools enable the development of any application that lacks its own platform. Projects can leapfrog the development of a proprietary blockchain by using the Ethereum framework. Decentralized apps on the Ethereum blockchain also benefit from a vast community of developers, amplifying the network effect.”

In general, smaller and start-up blockchain projects and networks make for riskier investments, though they might also promise a chance at higher returns.

TRENDS IN THE COVID WAR



CAPITOL HILL DROPS MASK MANDATE

In a blink of a political eye, without a scintilla of scientific evidence, the same lack of evidence they used to start and fight the COVID War, Dr. Brian P. Monahan, the attending physician at the U.S. Capitol, announced that wearing masks would no longer be required inside the Capitol Building.

Republicans—many who resisted the mask mandates that carried fines—seized on Monahan’s remarks.

“On the Senate side of the building, half the senators haven’t been wearing a mask for months,” Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., said, according to *The New York Times*. “And I’m glad to see the other side of the building catching up.”

While mask mandates were strictly imposed on citizens in many states throughout the nation, for children of all ages attending school, public transportation, eating in restaurants, flying on airplanes, for the political hierarchy they do as they please. Politico noted that unlike the colleagues in the House of Representatives, the Senate “lords” never fully adopted the mandate.

Get Vaxxed, Get COVID

Among the new cases at the Capitol in the past two weeks, 89 percent of infections occurred in fully vaccinated individuals, Politico reported, citing the Office of the Attending Physician. Of those, 63 percent of the cases were symptomatic. The U.S. has seen COVID-19 infections decrease over the last seven days—with an average of 51,743 new cases and 1,559 deaths per day. (To put the number in perspective, about 2,000 Americans die from heart disease each day in the U.S.)

The **Trends Journal** has reported on the number of so-called “breakthrough” infections among Americans who are fully vaccinated. (See: [“‘BREAKTHROUGH’: NEW TERM FOR VACCINE FAILURE.”](#) and [“AMERICA’S #1 COVID JAB SALESMEN GET JABBED AND GETS THE VIRUS...LIKE OTHER BIG NAME JAB LOVERS.”](#))

Lloyd Austin, the fully vaccinated U.S. Defense Secretary who pushed for all troops to be vaccinated or resign, is one of the many who contracted the virus. (See [“FULLY-VAXXED, FULL OF COVID, FULL OF CRAP.”](#) [“CELEBRITY SELLOUTS SELL COVID VAX”](#) and [“GET VAXXED, GET THE VIRUS, GET SICK.”](#))

Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, has been one of the most outspoken members in Congress against the vaccines and recently told Fox News’ Tucker Carlson that the government wants to sweep facts about the vaccine under the rug:

“The fact of the matter is, we’re looking at [Ukraine] and we’re talking about war crimes? I want to talk about the crimes against humanity that have been perpetrated by Anthony Fauci, CDC and the federal government against the American people. I want to talk about the dead Americans—people who had myocarditis, people who had a reaction to the vaccine.”

The Politico report said the mask requirement became something of a “political flashpoint,” pitting some Republicans against their Democrat colleagues. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Ga., reportedly faced tens of thousands in fines for not wearing a mask for months.

TRENDPOST: *As we have forecast over two months ago, the COVID War would end by late March, mid-April. And as illustrated in our February 2022 **Trends Journal**, the COVID War would bleed into the Ukraine War, and absent a universal peace movement, the Ukraine War will escalate into World War III.*

HUNDREDS OF NEWS ORGS TOOK GOV'T CASH TO SHILL COVID PROPAGANDA



According to records released from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the federal government paid hundreds of news organizations to promote the vaccinations as part of a comprehensive media campaign.

To boost vaccination trust, the Biden administration bought commercials on TV, radio, print, and social media, timed to coincide with the rising availability of vaccines, according to info obtained by theblaze.com.

The government also used earned media to promote vaccination in the news by interviewing "influencers" from groups struck severely by COVID-19 and COVID War hardliners such White House top medical advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci.

The revelation substantiates that mainstream media is hopelessly compromised themselves, earning a tag that Gerald Celente originally coined, and has used to describe them: Presstitutes.

CNN, Fox News, The Washington Post and Newsmax were just a few of the organizations that reportedly took government COVID propaganda money.

Shani George of the Washington Post tried to minimize the fall-out of that mega-billionaire Jeff Bezos owned company being on the take:

“Advertisers pay for space to share their messages, as was the case here, and those ads are clearly labeled as such. The newsroom is completely independent from the advertising department.”

Though nearly all of these newsrooms covered the COVID-19 vaccines, the taxpayer dollars flowing to their companies were not disclosed to audiences in news reports.

Some media companies approached for comment have tried to defend their actions by claiming their editorial teams operate independently of media advertising departments, and news teams felt no need to make the disclosure.

Under the Biden administration in fiscal year 2021, Congress set aside \$1 billion for the secretary of health to spend on efforts that would:

“carry out a national, evidence-based campaign to increase awareness and knowledge of the safety and effectiveness of vaccines for the prevention and control of diseases, combat misinformation about vaccines, and disseminate scientific and evidence-based vaccine-related information, with the goal of increasing rates of vaccination across all ages ... to reduce and eliminate vaccine-preventable diseases.”

For some past related articles, see:

- [“CRUCIAL COVID DATA IGNORED BY PRESSTITUTES”](#) (3 Nov 2020)
- [“AD COUNCIL APPROVES VACCINE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN”](#) (1 Dec 2020)
- [“MEDIA: GET JABBED, END THE COVID WAR”](#) (13 Apr 2021)
- [“DRUG COMPANIES CASHING IN ON COVID”](#) (11 May 2021)

U.S. SURGEON GENERAL GOES FULL COMMIE, TELLS TECH TO GIVE HIM NAMES OF PEOPLE WHO DIDN'T BUY GOVERNMENT'S COVID LINE



The COVID-19 War may be winding down, but the U.S. government seems poised to start a new war with those who spread COVID-19 “misinformation” on social media.

Dr. Vivek Murthy, the U.S. surgeon general, on Thursday called on tech companies to provide information on “exactly how many users saw or may have been exposed to instances of COVID-19 misinformation” on their sites. His office also wants information on the “major sources” of this “misinformation.”

“Technology companies now have the opportunity to be open and transparent with the American people about the misinformation on their platforms,” Dr. Murthy said in an emailed statement. He added: “This is about protecting the nation’s health.”

TRENDPOST: Indeed, Murthy’s gone full commie. In America that was once called “Land of the Free,” as evidence by the massive censorship of those questioning the COVID War and refusing to join it, they are now being targeted by the government.

Again, there’s no mention by Murthy or the Presstitute media of who’s died from the virus and why. Instead, they sold it as a Black Plague that would kill every one of every age... whether in good health or bad. Further illustrating the moronics of Murthy – a COVID vax champion – he and his family who have been fully jabbed and boosted came down with the virus. (See [“AMERICA’S #1 COVID JAB SALESMAN GETS JABBED AND GETS THE VIRUS...LIKE OTHER BIG NAME JAB LOVERS.”](#))

The New York Times reported that these tech companies will have until 2 May to provide Murthy with these details. He's even asking citizens to turn in their neighbors.

"We're asking anyone with relevant insights—from original research and data sets to personal stories that speak to the role of misinformation in public health—to share them with us," he said.

TRENDPOST: *The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on COVID-19 vaccines and the effort by governments and The Drug Lords, i.e. Big Pharma, to find as many arms as legally possible to take the jab. (See [“BIDEN’S BOOSTER PLAN: VAX YOU!”](#) [“SELLING BOOSTER SHOTS, CDC’S WALENSKY SAYS ‘FU’ TO AGENCY ADVISERS”](#) and [“THE VAX/BOOSTER MARKET: DRUG DEALER ON PARADE.”](#))*

TRENDPOST: *The number of COVID-19 infections among those who are fully vaccinated raised legal questions about the Biden administration's effort to mandate these jabs.*

*Luc Montagnier, the winner of the 2008 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for discovering the human immunodeficiency virus, and Jed Rubenfeld, a constitutional scholar, wrote an op-ed in *The Wall Street Journal* questioning the merits of a mandate for a vaccine that does not seem to be effective.*

"It would be irrational, legally indefensible and contrary to the public interest for the government to mandate vaccines absent any evidence that the vaccines are effective in stopping the spread of the pathogen they target. Yet that's exactly what's happening here," they wrote.

*As far as getting everyone vaxxed, the Florida Department of Health announced that it will be the first state to come out against having children take the COVID-19 vaccine. Why? We have detailed it extensively in the **Trends Journal**. Young, healthy people are not dying from COVID-19. (See [“YOU ARE WRONG IF](#)*

YOU BELIEVE ALL VACCINES ARE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE” and “MORE KIDS DIE FROM SUICIDE THAN COVID-19.”)

PFIZER DATA RELEASE CONFIRMS VACCINE DECEPTIONS



It's clearer than ever why Pfizer wanted to bury the data they had on COVID gene therapies deceptively called vaccines.

From adverse reactions to lies about how the infusions work and don't work, including areas of the body they target, and potential devastating long term ill consequences, have come to light with the recent Pfizer data release.

Former Newsmax reporter Emerald Robinson dove into the data and gave an excellent analysis in her substack column.

Robinson [noted](#) that the FDA approved the Pfizer vaccine even though 15,000 people had serious disorders of the nervous system after taking it. More than 20,000 persons had various significant problems (defined as "general disorders") after being vaccinated and reported them to the FDA, yet the vaccine was authorized anyhow.

Figure 1. Total Number of BNT162b2 AEs by System Organ Classes and Event Seriousness

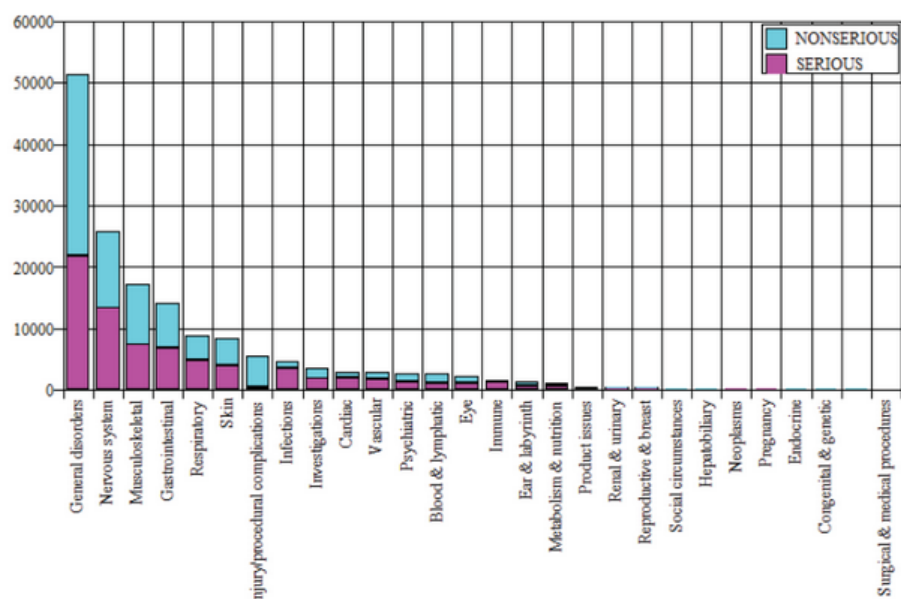


Table 2 shows the most commonly ($\geq 2\%$) reported MedDRA (v. 23.1) PTs in the overall dataset (through 28 February 2021).

The FDA was forced to release 55,000 pages of clinical data on its mRNA “vaccine” treatments, on order of a federal judge.

Robinson, who was banned from Twitter for her COVID related reporting, said data has proved, among other things, that Pfizer was aware the lipid nanoparticles in their COVID vaccination did not remain in the injected person's bicep muscle. The nanoparticles instead migrate away from the injection site and congregate elsewhere, including the liver and ovaries, where they can do serious damage.

For more, read Robinson’s excellent work [here](#).

For related **Trends Journal** articles, see:

- ["COVID VACCINE: SCIENTISTS WARN 'CAUTION'"](#) (8 Dec 2020)
- [“COVID VACCINE: ‘SIGNIFICANT SAFETY CONCERNS’.”](#) (15 Dec 2020)

- ["COVID-19 VACCINES: TRACKING ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS."](#) (19 Jan 2021)
- ["CRUCIAL COVID DATA IGNORED BY PRESSTITUTES"](#) (3 Nov 2020)

TRENDS-EYE VIEW



REI WORKERS AT NYC STORE VOTE TO UNIONIZE: 2022 TOP TREND ON THE RISE

Workers at the REI location in New York City’s SOHO neighborhood voted to unionize last Tuesday after employees complained about poor treatment, little pay, and the lack of career advancements.

The company said in a statement after the vote that it believes the decision on whether or not to be represented by a union is an important one “and we respect each employee’s right to choose or refuse union representation,” according to *The New York Times*.

Majority Rule

The vote was 88 to 14.

Stuart Appelbaum, the president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, said that the employees are ready to negotiate a “strong contract that will

allow them to “uphold the co-op’s progressive values while providing the top-notch service REI customers have come to expect.”

Last month, the **Trends Journal** ran an article titled, [“REI: UNIONIZATION TREND EXPANDS AS FORECAST.”](#) and pointed out that workers took issue with the work environment and pay. Kate Dedend, a worker at the location, told Motherboard that the company—which bills itself as progressive—has employees that don’t make a living wage:

“Why do you have to work 40 hours a week for 12 months to get health benefits? Why is there no guarantee of hours after the holiday season? These are very basic things that [REI] has gotten away with not doing, despite this facade of being a progressive, liberal company.”

The *Times* pointed out that the chain has 170 stores and 15,000 employees nationwide. The average age of employees is 37, which the paper said is five years younger than the median age of all U.S. workers.

John Logan, a professor of labor studies at San Francisco State University, told the *Times* that REI seems to be another example of “predominantly young workers who are not buying the arguments about unions being special interest groups.”

The **Trends Journal** has also pointed out that another result of the outbreak was that the rich got richer and the poor keep getting poorer; 37.2 million Americans are living in poverty in the U.S., which marks a 3.3 million jump since 2019. (See [“\\$4 TRILLION FOR BILLIONAIRES AS MIDDLE-CLASS SHRINKS”](#) and [“COVID WAR: RICH GOT RICHER, POOR GOT POORER.”](#))

TREND FORECAST: Again, this is old news for **Trends Journal** subscribers. One of our Top Trends for 2022 is “Unionization.” (See [“LABOR UNION COMEBACK.”](#) 30 Nov 2021.)

And, the deeper economies fall, the stronger the unionization trend will grow.

UNION VS. OWNERS: MLB STRIKES OUT, OPENING DAY CANCELED



Major League Baseball players and owners have been unable to strike a deal for a new collective bargaining agreement and announced last week that resulted in the cancelation of opening day.

Rob Manfred, the commissioner, announced that teams will miss their first two series. Opening day had been set for 31 March. He told The Associated Press that the league “exhausted every possibility.” He said players will not be paid for the games missed.

The average salary in the league is \$4.17 million a year, which represents a 4.8 percent drop since 2019. AS.com reported that the average salary does not show the full picture because there are many player with massive contracts that inflate the numbers. (Mookie Betts, a Los Angeles Dodger, helps lead the way after signing a 12-year, \$365 million contract.) The league minimum was \$563,500 in 2021.

“The game has suffered damage for a while now,” Tony Clark, the head of the union, told The AP. “The game has been manipulated. The value inherent and how players are respected and viewed has changed. players have been commoditized, monetized in a way that is really hard to explain.”

These players join millions of Americans—many with far smaller salaries—to demand fair wages from super-rich owners. The service industry seems to have the biggest pull to unionize. (See [“UNIONIZATION ON-TREND: AMAZON WORKERS VOTE TO UNIONIZE.”](#) [“STARBUCKS STORE TO UNIONIZE, A TOP TREND FOR 2022?”](#) [“ACTIVISION STUDIO GROUP WILL FORM A UNION, SOLIDIFYING TRENDS JOURNAL FORECAST.”](#) [“POLITICO JOURNALISTS FORM UNION. A TREND OF THE TIMES”](#) and [“REI: UNIONIZATION TREND EXPANDS AS FORECAST.”](#))

The lockout started three months ago and it is not immediately clear when they will begin again.

Ross Stripling, the pitcher for the Toronto Blue Jays and union representative, accused MLB of “trying to sneak things through us, it was like they think we’re dumb baseball players.”

“They did exactly what we thought they would do,” Stripling, who is also a financial adviser, said. “They pushed us to a deadline that they imposed, and then they tried to sneak some **** past us at that deadline and we were ready for it,” he said.

TREND FORECAST: Like Bob Dylan’s song goes: “The Times They Are a-Changin.’” Bleacher Report said this strike is different from the one in 1994 because the players have the ability to communicate directly with the fans through social media and the owners are unable to just spin the story in the press.

Manfred has argued that owners have not made a killing in recent years and “below what you’d get in the stock market” due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The report called the claim “hooey” and pointed to a CNBC report that said the average return price of an MLB club was 669 percent from 2002 to 2021. The report said that it beats out the S&P with its 458 percent returns.

Unionization will continue to be a Top Trend; the more limited the supply of workers (made worse by “No Jab, No Job” mandates; (see [“WANT TO KEEP YOUR JOB? GET THE JAB!”](#) and [“NO JAB, NO JOB. VACCINE MANDATES ‘WORKING’](#)”), the more powerful the trend toward unionization will be.

And, as inflation continues to rise faster than wages, corporations that wish to incentivize their workforce to do and give the best they can, will raise the pay scale to levels higher than inflation rates. In doing so, they will create atmospheres of mutual appreciation.

NY TIMES TECH WORKERS VOTE FOR UNIONIZATION, START OF ‘WAVE’ IN TECH INDUSTRY



Tech workers at *The New York Times* voted in favor of unionizing Thursday in a 404 to 88 vote, with one software engineer saying she believes the vote is the “start of a wave of organizing in the tech industry.”

Nozlee Samadzadeh, a senior software engineer, told the *Times* that the union will be represented by the NewsGuild of New York, which will have a similar mandate to the newsroom’s unit. She said these issues involve “pay, diversity, and equity, a strong contract to make our workplace more fair.”

The paper said it will honor the vote that impacts about 600 software engineers and other tech-side workers. The paper has been accused of trying to silence workers who supported the push, but denied the claim.

The Times Tech Guild is considered the largest tech-worker union in the U.S., Reuters reported.

TRENDPOST: As the **Trends Journal** pointed out in this week’s issue and earlier ones, workers in the U.S. are looking to unions to protect them from staying in dead-end jobs with the risk of termination—all while fat-cat owners see record profits. (See [“POLITICO JOURNALISTS FORM UNION. A TREND OF THE TIMES”](#) and [“UNIONIZATION,’ TOP TREND FOR 2022, ON-TREND.”](#))

AMAZON WORKERS WILL HOLD VOTE TO UNIONIZE, A TOP TREND FOR 2022



Amazon is facing growing calls by its workers for union representation after a second warehouse on New York's Staten Island obtained enough signatures to hold a vote.

The **Trends Journal** has identified the push to unionize as a [“TOP TREND IN 2022.”](#) and there may be no company more impacted by the movement than Amazon, which is famous for its massive warehouses and accusations of poor work environments from employees. (See [“AMAZON UNIONIZATION: 2022 TOP TREND ON THE RISE.”](#)) Amazon has been accused of going “all out” to kill unionization bids.

There is an Amazon location on Staten Island, named JFK8, which will be holding a unionization vote from 25 March to 30. The latest warehouse to express interest in a vote to unionize is called LDJ5, *The New York Times* reported.

The Seattle-based company told the paper that it looks forward to “having our employees’ voices heard.”

TRENDPOST: Amazon’s claim that it wants to listen to its factory employees run counter to allegations that the company has made Herculean efforts to snuff out efforts to unionize at other locations.

Steven Greenhouse, a journalist and author, wrote in The Guardian last month that the average Amazon warehouse worker leaves the job within just eight months, which is an “unmistakable sign that Amazon’s jobs are unpleasant, to put it kindly, and that many Amazon workers quickly realize they hate working

there because of the stress, breakneck pace, constant monitoring and minimal rest breaks.”

The Times reported that workers at the LDJ5 warehouse were told by the company that unionizing has few benefits and the union will promise “better pay and benefits just to get your support,” but they could very well end up with essentially the same pay while having to pay union dues.

TRENDPOST: *The shortage of workers and the desire of employed workers to organize and go on strike share a common root cause: people are far less inclined to perform menial, unfulfilling jobs for meager pay. (See [“STARBUCKS STORE TO UNIONIZE, A TOP TREND FOR 2022?”](#) [“ACTIVISION STUDIO GROUP WILL FORM A UNION, SOLIDIFYING TRENDS JOURNAL FORECAST.”](#) [“POLITICO JOURNALISTS FORM UNION. A TREND OF THE TIMES”](#) and [“REI: UNIONIZATION TREND EXPANDS AS FORECAST.”](#))*

TREND FORECAST: *Unionization will continue to be a Top Trend; the more limited the supply of workers (made worse by "No Jab, No Job" mandates; (see [“WANT TO KEEP YOUR JOB? GET THE JAB!”](#) and [“NO JAB, NO JOB. VACCINE MANDATES ‘WORKING’”](#)), the more powerful the trend toward unionization will be.*

And, as inflation continues to rise faster than wages, corporations that wish to incentivize their workforce to do and give the best they can, will raise the pay scale to levels higher than inflation rates. In doing so, they will create atmospheres of mutual appreciation.

TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE



By *Ben Daviss*

MICROBES TURN AIRBORNE WASTE INTO INDUSTRIAL CHEMICALS

Like the world's vehicles, the chemical industry runs on petroleum: crude oil is the feedstock from which factories make everything from paints to plastics.

Now, just as oil's price is rising and its public approval rating falls, researchers at Northwestern University and the private Illinois company LanzaTech have found an alternative: feeding industrial wastes to microbes that process the noxious trash into industrially useful compounds.

The group nominated the bug *Clostridium auto* to do the job.

They sifted through *C. auto*'s cell components to find enzymes that could be used to produce acetone, a wide-ranging chemical used in everything from paint thinners to the manufacture of textiles.

The scientists then sequenced the genes for those enzymes and inserted combinations of them into a strain of microbe that was genetically altered to not make other, unwanted substances.

In the end, the bioengineers created versions of *C. auto* that thrive on waste gases from steel plants and churn out acetone and isopropanol, a chemical with a range of uses, from an ingredient in aftershave lotions and cosmetics to stripping paint.

The team sees no barrier to producing the bugs at commercial scale and expects the same technique could be used to create bacteria that eat the same or other forms of waste to produce common chemicals such as butanol, a common solvent, and the preservative propanediol.

TRENDPOST: *The researchers have added another facet to the circular economy, in which waste from one process is a feedstock—literally, in this case—for another. At the same time, feeding waste gases to microbial chemical factories can keep toxins and pollutants out of the air.*

Top 2022 Trend: Low Tech

IT HIT THEM LIKE A TON OF BRICKS



The inspiration behind Swiss startup Energy Vault: use stacks of “brick like” composite blocks to store energy—in effect, turning a pile of blocks into a battery.

It’s a simple idea: use solar- and wind-generated electricity the grid doesn’t need at the moment to raise stacks of composite blocks to a height. Leave them there until the grid needs more power, then lower them and release their stored energy.

The company's old-fashioned technology uses motors fueled by excess renewable energy, such as a desert would produce in the middle of the day or an ocean at tides, to spool cables that raise the blocks up a shaft.

When the grid runs short of electricity, the blocks slowly descend, pulling on the cables that, in turn, spin a generator.

Energy Vault's proprietary technology raises one 35-ton composite block 100 meters, or more than 325 feet, in less than a minute.

Normally, the composite blocks descend at about two meters, or a little more than six feet, per second but artificial intelligence can slow or speed the pace, depending on how much power needs to be generated and how quickly.

A "vault" of 10,000 blocks could produce 27 gigawatt-hours of electricity a year with 80- to 85-percent efficiency, according to the company.

The estimated operating cost: about \$65 per megawatt-hour, almost half the \$128 per mwh cost of using a lithium-ion battery.

In the demonstration project, 35-ton composite blocks were made locally from dirt and other locally sourced materials, even solid waste, and needed no cement to bind the materials into a solid mass.

TRENDPOST: *Beyond operating costs lower than lithium-ion batteries and using locally-sourced materials that don't need cement as a binder, the system doesn't need water or rare earth minerals, can deliver power when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine, and won't degrade over time.*

Tests at the California Institute of Technology indicate that the shafts of composite blocks could withstand category 4 hurricanes and magnitude 8 earthquakes.

One drawback: the Swiss demonstration site takes up 14 acres of land.

However, there are thousands of sites in deserts, atop toxic waste dumps, and in other places not useful in other ways where energy vaults could provide renewable power for decades to come.



The workings of an energy vault, showing shafts, composite blocks, and the motors that move them.

Credit: Energy Vault.

MICROMAGNETS TURN BRAIN CELLS ON AND OFF



Illnesses that reside in the brain often are caused by cells that are weak or dormant. Treating the conditions with drugs, light, sound, and electrodes implanted deep in the brain often are only partly successful and carry risks.

At University College London, neuroscientists have developed tiny magnetic particles that could work more reliably.

Metal particles as big as three ten-thousandths of an inch are injected into the brain in areas where cells are to be stimulated to amplify or quiet their signals.

The particles are coated with an antibody that binds them to astrocytes, cells between neurons and the brain's blood vessels that activate or moderate brain circuitry. Astrocytes are sensitive to touch.

When a micromagnetic pulse stimulates the particles, they press on the astrocytes, which, in turn, stimulate the neurons.

The technique's early applications could include stimulating neurons to produce dopamine to ease symptoms of Parkinson's Disease or serotonin to treat depression.

TRENDPOST: *While the technology shows obvious therapeutic benefits, it also offers a tool that invites misuse. Although medical science has stronger ethical guardrails in place than other technologies generally do, new strictures will need to be created and enforced to govern activating or deactivating brain patterns at will.*