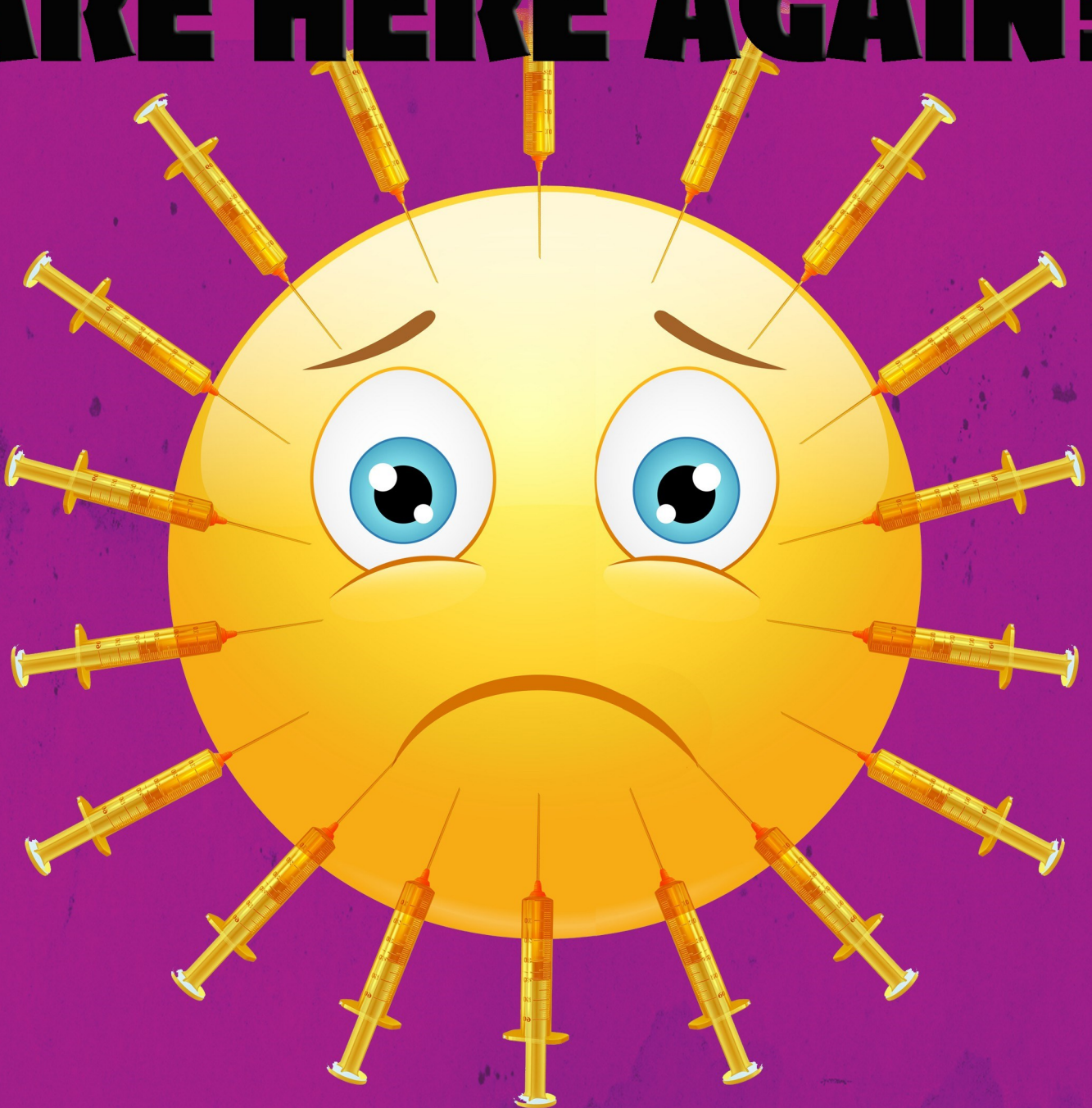


TRENDSJOURNAL

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HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN?





18 January 2022

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Inside

TRENDS ON THE U.S. ECONOMIC FRONT	5
TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT	33
FEATURED ARTICLES BY GUEST WRITERS	57
TRENDS IN THE MARKETS	63
TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM	65
TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY	68
TRENDS IN CRYPTOS	80
TRENDS IN THE COVID WAR	92
TRENDS IN GEOPOLITICS	134
TRENDS-EYE VIEW	140
TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE	143



HAPPY DAYS

Welcome to this week's [Trends Journal](#): HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN? While there is still much

gloom in the air, we maintain our forecast that the COVID War will begin to wind-down late March, mid-April.

In fact, today, the Cartoon News Network (CNN) ran a front-page story admitting to what we have been reporting since the COVID War began: the elderly and infirm are the vast majority of the virus victims.

Citing CDC data, CNN noted that only 0.2 percent of COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. are children, three-quarters are seniors, including over 25 percent of people aged 85 and older.

Thus, as we see it, they are lessening COVID fear because they know the devastating toll it is taking on businesses and the economy. And as a company that depends on advertisers, their concern is the bottom line.

On the economic front, it is very important to note that while many of the world's central banks are raising interest rates, China, the world's #2 economy, is lowering them. What does this mean? What are the consequences? What's next?

From economics, health, survivalism, geopolitics, the metaverse, to hi-tech science, etc., we are giving you all we have to help guide you into a prosperous, healthy and Happy New Year and beyond.

And for more trends you won't find anywhere else, [tune in](#) each Wednesday at 6 PM ET for my special podcast with America's #1 constitutional authority, Judge Andrew Napolitano. Also, for more unique insights into the future, watch [my interview](#) with the legendary Robert "Rich Dad" Kiyosaki.

We are helping you in making a brighter future.

Gerald Celente and the Trends Journal Team

COMMENTS

AMERICA'S GIFTS BEING GUTTED

People need to wake up...now, what can we do???? How can I help??? With this government this country is going to become a "third world country."

I migrated from Colombia in 2001 when I was 19 years old... I came to this country with the idea to study english for 6 months and go back to finish my business degree in Colombia. But when I saw what the US was back then... I fell in love with the culture, law and order, work opportunity and ethics, "no corruption."

I decided to stay and finish my degree here in the US... I was very proud to become an American... today Americans don't know what is coming... very sad...

Diego Messa

CURRENT MONETARY SYSTEM CAN'T SURVIVE

I think we have maybe 5-7 more years, more or less. End of Money or at least, banknotes? New Digital FED Dollar would

first need the 5G Wireless System up and running. Sovereign Debts must be defaulted on while at the same time, leaving your physical property as the (Primary) support basis for the New Global (Monetary) Order.

This is possibly when a wealth tax would become near universal (national) along with UBI for all. Single Payer Health Care, as well? Policy Choice: Open Borders OR Govt. provided health care for all, but NOT both after the “Great Reset” happens.

Craig Bradley

KAZAKHSTAN COLOR FAIL?

A botched up attempt by American and British intelligence for another Maidan scenario. Kudos for Putin and Tokayev. The time of toppling regimes through coloured revolutions is finally coming to an end. Stability in Kazakhstan will secure the implementation of BRI while chaos would have dealt it a serious blow.

“The fear for Beijing is a world where Moscow can impose tariffs on oil and gas that flows through Kazakhstan to China.”

Total nonsense. Russia and China are on their way to building a long and strategic relationship after having exhausted all means to come to terms with an arrogant and decadent West, to no avail. We can only thank the demonrat and repulsive cant politicians along with the Neo-cons for pushing Russia and China closer than ever. After all, the interest of the MIC supersedes that of the American people who could benefit from a peace dividend.

joseph_1

FAILING SCHOOLS = OPPORTUNITY

I taught JROTC as a Senior Army Instructor in Louisiana from 2015-2020. Too many of my students could not spell, do basic math, or read. While there were dedicated teachers doing their best, a significant number were simply babysitting, and passing students on to the next grade regardless of performance level.

Given the dysfunctional structures (i.e. school boards, administrations, and teachers unions) this current system is irredeemable. The problem is not money, as we spend plenty per student; it's the allocation of those funds.

New and innovative methodologies must be considered, such as using blockchain and expert teachers online 24/7. Also, teaching practical trade skills should be resurrected. Not every student needs 12 years of their butt in a chair. A good starting point would be answering the question, “What must we do to produce qualified, skilled, and contributing members of society?”

James Tillman

NEW ZEALAND COVID REGIME FANATICAL

In New Zealand I have just watched a news item about a woman who contracted Bell's Palsy after her first dose of the vaccine. She applied for an exemption from getting the second jab but was refused. She will now lose her job. What is wrong with these people?

I despise the NZ Government and their policies. They boast about having the lowest death rate from Covid in the OECD but that is primarily because we are an island nation that is relatively easy to quarantine. Their policies have caused social and economic disruption and they

are all based on a faulty test as outlined by the trends journal. They should compare themselves with India, Bangladesh or Japan. Countries that have faced real problems and through the use of early treatment with Ivermectin and similar drugs had real success at combating covid. I will never ever vote for any of the current crop of NZ politicians again

Ian Kiddle

DEPOPULATION PLAY

This is clearly a depopulation agenda, and it is brilliant. We have been wondering for a decade now how they were going to deal with the looming overpopulation problem, and those that have planned this out have done it perfectly.

They have been patient enough to wait until the soft and stupid world populations (America especially) were distracted enough by easy lives and dominating technologies that compel and coerce at least half to of people out there to do whatever they are told to do not only without question, but to demonize those that do not follow the herd.

I think that this is not only going to be effective in culling a huge number of useless eaters out of the gene pool but will be lauded by the survivors as a job well done. NIMBY, Not In My Back Yard, a phrase that says it all about Americans, no one cares what happens to you, they only care what happens to them.

Walter Baumgarten

OF TRADE DEFICITS AND “BUILDING BACK BETTER”

Build Back Better is dead and that's a good thing. Gridlock in Washington is a good thing. The progressive Democrats can't continue to destroy the nation. In spite of Trump's twitter mouth, he brought prosperity to the nation.

But most Democrats are like Pavlov's dog when it comes to the name Trump. It's better if he stays behind the curtain. The Biden administration will be blamed for the Jimmy Carter style inflation that's upon us. And that's a good thing too!

Anne Schmidt

THE NEED FOR OVERWHELMING FORCE

Prof. Steiner presents effective techniques that flow and more importantly Mind Set and a lot of hard work to become an efficient fighting machine measured in hours, not years. Thank you American Combato.

Kenneth Gerry Anderson

HEALING THE BRAIN WITH LIGHT

Wonderful to read , dare I say “enlightening” !

Thank you.

Robert Mc Nally

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TRENDS ON THE U.S. ECONOMIC FRONT



MARKET OVERVIEW

EQUITIES CONTINUE DESCENT INTO 2022

Remember the Santa Clause Rally?

Forget about it. On the stock market front, it has not been a Happy New Year.

U.S. equity markets sank last week, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average and Standard & Poor's 500 posting their second straight week of losses, the NASDAQ its third.

Investors continued to sell bonds, pushing rates higher for the fourth consecutive week and posting yields' best four-week gain since last March.

The Street continues to ponder the impact of the U.S. Federal Reserve's accelerated plan to end bond purchases and boost interest rates amid the Omicron surge.

Despite data proving Omicron is less deadly and its symptoms more mild than the coronavirus and Delta variant—and that it has peaked in South Africa where it first appeared—COVID Hysteria is still the major headline news.

Therefore, with fear winning out over fact, as we have detailed in this and other **Trends Journal's**, Omicron is killing more businesses and livelihoods worldwide than it is killing people.

Industrial stocks stemmed their slide after Fed chair Jerome Powell—the idiot or liar who said a year ago that inflation was only “temporary”—now declared inflation likely will throttle back by mid-year and that interest rates, though rising, will remain low.

However, news released on 12 January that inflation ran at 7 percent in December sent stocks south the next day, led by the tech-laden NASDAQ's 2.5-percent stumble.

A late-session buying rush on Friday carried the NASDAQ and S&P into positive territory for the day, adding 0.6 percent and 0.1 percent, respectively, but the Dow sank 0.6 percent.

Still, the NASDAQ and S&P ended the week down 0.3 percent, with the Dow closing off 0.9 percent.

Feeling the higher interest pain, some 220 U.S. listed companies with market capitalizations above 10 billion have sunk into bear territory, down at least 20 percent from their 2021 highs.

As reported in *The Wall Street Journal*, according to Jason Goepfert at Sundial Capital Research, nearly 40 percent of stocks in the Nasdaq index are down some 50 percent from their highs.

He said that not since the 1999 dot-com bubble have so many Nasdaq fallen that far while the index was this close to its high.

Will equities continue their dive? Different strokes for different folks. Read Gregory Mannarino's article: "MARKETS: EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED, AND MORE."

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast that the COVID War is likely to peak late March, mid-April. However, higher interest rates and inflation are likely to offset any relief investors feel as the Omicron variant fades.*

Markets Today

Overseas, it was gloomy Tuesday on the equity front with the Asia-Pacific major indexes closing down. However, with consumer sales and real estate slumping, in an attempt to boost its economy, the People's Bank of China cut the borrowing costs of its medium-term loans yesterday, for the first time since April 2020... which helped push up Chinese mainland equities.

Over in Europe, fearing central bank rate hikes and spiking oil prices as a result of increased Middle East tensions, the pan-European Stoxx 600 ended the day down 1 percent with tech stocks dropping 2.2 percent.

Closed yesterday in honor of Martin Luther King Day, in the U.S., equities continued their losing streak. The Dow was down over 600 points as bond yields continued to rise.

On the bond front, with expectations that the Fed will quickly raise short term rates, the 2-year yield broke above 1 percent for the first time since February 2020, which was the onset of the COVID War.

The benchmark 10-year note climbed to 1.86 percent, its highest since January 2020, the month before the COVID War was officially launched.

There was more bad banking news, as Goldman Sachs stock slumped some 8 percent after failing to meet equities analyst's expectations.

The Dow ended the day down 543 points, the S&P 500 fell 1.84 percent.

And with interest rates set to rise and the cheap money starting to dry up, the tech-heavy Nasdaq closed down 2.60 percent. Higher interest rates typically hurt growth stocks which rely on low rates to borrow money on the premise that it will lead to their promises of advanced innovation.

How far will the tech stocks fall? See, "TECH STOCKS' ROUT CONTINUES" and "RISE IN REAL BOND YIELDS TANKS TECH STOCKS" in this **Trends Journal**.

GOLD/SILVER: With Treasury yields rising and the dollar getting stronger, gold slipped 0.13 percent today, closing at \$1.814 per ounce. As interest rates rise and the dollar value appreciates, gold prices decline since interest rate hikes push-up government bond yields which raises the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding gold and silver. Gold does not yield interest, so investors switch to interest-bearing assets, such as treasuries.

Running opposite to gold, silver, which has been in a slump, hit a seven-week high as market players believe it has been down too low for too long. Silver closed up 2.63 percent to close at \$23.52 per ounce.

TREND FORECAST: *Should interest rates radically rise, it will crash the greatly overvalued equity markets, which have been artificially propped up with cheap money. And when Wall Street crashes, Main Street will crash with it. Thus, there will be strong demand for safe-haven gold and silver assets.*

Moreover, we suspect that the Fed—which has its former chair Janet Yellen now playing the role of U.S. Treasury Secretary—will raise interest rates strongly to bring down inflation.

In doing so, it will send the nation deep into recession. Therefore, despite the higher interest rates, there will be strong demand for safe-haven assets during a period of economic gloom.

Then, in anticipation of the 2024 presidential race, they will dramatically lower interest rates to pump up the economy prior to Election Day. Remember, the major interest of the general public is the bottom line: “It’s the economy, stupid.”

OIL: As **Trends Journal** subscribers well know, we have been long warning that Middle East military tensions would be a wild card that will drive up oil prices despite diminishing demand and over supply.

Today, Brent Crude, up 2.43 percent and closing at 88.63 per barrel, hit a seven year high following the Houthi attack on United Arab Emirates capital Abu Dhabi on Monday.

Yemen’s Houthis claimed responsibility for the attack, which resulted in three petroleum tanker explosions near state oil firm ADNOC’s storage facilities.

As we have continually noted, the higher oil prices equal higher inflation... and a heavier debt burden on businesses and consumers.

And, with interest rates rising and the debt loads getting heavier, plus inflation increasing the cost of living and running business, defaults will escalate.

Furthermore, should military conflict erupt in the Middle East and oil prices spike to above \$100 per barrel, it will crash equity markets and the global economy.

TRENDPOST: *In response to the attack, UAE’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said “We condemn the Houthi militia’s targeting of civilian areas and facilities on UAE soil today. We reiterate that those responsible for this unlawful targeting of our country will be held accountable.”*

Totally absent from the mainstream coverage of this occurrence that killed three people in the UAE, is the Yemen War, of which the UAE has been fighting along with its ally Saudi Arabia.

Officially launched from Washington, D.C. in March of 2015 from the Saudi Embassy with the blessing and support of America's Noble Piece of Crap Prize Winner Barack Obama, according to the United Nations, the people of Yemen are suffering the worst humanitarian crisis on earth.

But of course, when big countries slaughter hundreds of thousands in small countries, as have the UAE and Saudi Arabia—and those in Yemen whose nation has been destroyed retaliate—they are called “terrorist” acts.

*The **Trends Journal** has been covering the Yemen War since the onset. But while the mainstream media rants about celebrities dying, getting divorced or getting COVID, the Yemen War, who started it and why is barely reported.*

Here are just a few of our past Yemen War articles:

- [“Yemen War on track to destabilize Middle East”](#)
- [“YEMEN WAR INTENSIFYING... OR ENDING?”](#)
- [“THE OIL WILD CARD”](#)
- [“U.N.: YEMEN HELL”](#)
- [“YEMEN CRISIS WORSENS. IT'S NO NEWS”](#)
- [“MURDEROUS YEMEN WAR: MILLIONS IN PERIL. WHO CARES?”](#)

BITCOIN: Nothing of significance has changed on the bitcoin front from last week. Even the mainstream media message is the same, with the CNBC headline again blaring that bitcoin briefly tumbled below \$40,000. Last Tuesday it was trading at \$42,747 per coin, when we went to press, today it's at \$41,680 as we go to press.

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast that it will be a rocky road ahead. As with precious metals, as the Fed raises interest rates, safe haven assets which pay no dividends, will decline in price as investor's park money in*

interest-bearing accounts... where they can keep their money safe and earn interest.

However, we maintain our GSB—Gold, Silver, Bitcoin—forecast that all three will maintain and then pass their current and previous highs after the U.S. Fed rate hits 1.5 percent, equity markets sharply fall and the economies sink into Dragflation: Declining Gross Domestic Product and rising inflation.

And, should military actions escalate in the Middle East, bitcoin will be among the safe-haven assets investors in affected nations will seek that will be out of the hands of governments that impose “at war” financial restriction mandates.

We also maintain that a major factor in forecasting the future price of bitcoin and other crypto currencies is dependent upon government regulations.

However, that threat in the U.S. and Europe will lessen as more banks, businesses and investment funds are going crypto, thus, the upward crypto trends, especially bitcoin, will continue to gain momentum.

(For more on bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, please see our “TRENDS IN CRYPTOS” section.)

TECH STOCKS’ ROUT CONTINUES



More than 36 percent of tech stocks listed on NASDAQ have lost at least half their value compared to their 52-week highs, although the index itself remains just 8 percent below its recent peak, Bloomberg reported.

Typically, when the tech-heavy NASDAQ is within 10 percent of its highest recent value, only about 12.5 percent of its stocks are down by half or more, Bloomberg noted.

Now, however, the index's overall value is being propped up by a few super-stocks such as Amazon, Apple, Meta, and Microsoft, which have been barely damaged by the prospect of higher interest rates.

In contrast, a large proportion of NASDAQ tech stocks depend heavily on financing and the hope of future profits, both of which are at risk now that the U.S. Federal Reserve is poised to raise interest rates three or more times this year.

"Market breadth for NASDAQ stocks is pretty pathetic," Ed Clissold, chief strategist at Ned Davis, said to *The Wall Street Journal*.

"When you're in the middle of something like this, it's tricky to decipher whether it's a normal rolling correction or a bull market peak," he added, "but the longer this goes on, the harder it is to ignore."

In the last 50 years—since 1972—there have been only 39 days in which the NASDAQ held within 10 percent of its high price while 35 percent or more of its stocks had fallen from their peaks by more than half.

Until last month, all of those days took place in 1998 and 1999 as the Internet bubble was about ready to burst, Bloomberg pointed out.

TREND FORECAST: *We signaled the tech sector's looming troubles in this Trends Journal and ["U.S. Markets Stumbled into the New Year"](#) (11 Jan 2022). We forecast the tech equity market struggling through the rest of this year as chip shortages continue, commodity prices rise, and inflation picks consumers' pockets... and central banks raise interest rates.*

RISE IN REAL BOND YIELDS TANKS TECH STOCKS



Real bond yields—the return investors make on bonds after inflation takes its cut—have been rising, luring investors away from tech stocks and causing their share prices to slide, analysts told the *Financial Times*.

Share prices for tech stocks not showing a profit are down 7 percent this year; last year's IPOs are down an average of 9 percent.

During the first 11 days of January, the yield on treasury inflation-protected securities (TIPS) rose 0.24 percent to -0.86 as investors aligned their portfolios with expectations that the U.S. Federal Reserve will raise interest rates steadily through this year, perhaps as many as four times (see related story in this issue).

Investors are more confident that the Fed will lasso inflation and, therefore, are less worried about it than before the Fed committed last month to a specific course of action, the *FT* said.

Real yields on TIPS have risen more than those for ordinary treasury securities so far this year.

The rise in real yields heightens risk for prices of riskier assets, such as tech company shares or Bitcoin, a reversal of 2020's investment landscape when real yields collapsed and tech stocks and high-risk, high-yield assets such as cryptocurrencies soared.

Higher real yields on government bonds, which carry very low risk, make more chancy alternatives less interesting.

“Real yields are what is truly impactful for markets and seeing them rise will really test risk assets,” Seema Shah, Principal Global Assets’ chief strategist, said to the *FT*.

However, real yields also are likely to ultimately lead to higher corporate borrowing costs, analysts told the *FT*.

“Real yields tell you the true level of funding costs without hiding behind inflation, so we’re going to learn a lot about the genuine health of corporate balance sheets,” Shah said.

TREND FORECAST: *Loans will be popular investments, but businesses will be far more conservative in borrowing now that the U.S. Federal Reserve will be taking interest rates higher.*

Companies able to borrow will do so sooner instead of later, using loans to make purchases now before prices rise, then paying off their loans later with dollars that inflation has made cheaper.

INVESTORS FLOCK TO LOAN FUNDS



Last week, investors snapped up shares of funds that buy U.S. loans, expecting to profit when the U.S. Federal Reserve begins raising interest rates this spring, a move that will come sooner than many had expected until recently.

The funds collected \$1.9 billion in new money last week through 12 January, their largest haul since 2017, according to data service EPFR.

Futures markets have priced in three or four rate hikes this year, betting that the Fed will end the year with a 1-percent base rate.

“The question is no longer ‘if’ rates will go higher, but how soon and by how much,” Jeff Bakalar, head of leveraged credit at Voya Investment Management, said to the *Financial Times*.

“Every time this has happened, the loan market has become a safe harbor,” he pointed out.

Loans are seen as safer than corporate bonded debt as the Fed raises rates because investors’ returns on loans fluctuate with interest rates, while bonds have a fixed rate of return.

As interest rates rise, so do loan values; in contrast, bond prices tend to fall.

The total return for the Loan Syndications and Trading Association’s loan fund is up 0.5 percent this year as of 14 January, hiking the price of loans to 99 cents on the dollar, their highest in more than seven years, ICE Data Service reported.

In contrast, the S&P 500 has shed 2 percent this year and corporate junk bonds have cast off 0.6 percent, according to the *FT*.

Funds that focus on high-yield corporate bonds, rated as junk, watched investors extract \$1.6 billion from them last week, their first net outflow since 1 December.

“Loans provide two much-needed characteristics for investors in 2022—rate protection and relatively stable performance,” Citi analysts wrote in a new research report.

“If the first week of 2022 is a harbinger of persisting volatility, loans should be a compelling investment,” the report said.

TREND FORECAST: In [*“Risky Companies Snapping Up Cheap Loans”*](#) (23 Feb 2021), we said the junk bond and leveraged loan markets are gamblers’ games and many of their bets will come up craps when interest rates rise.

Those gamblers are now cashing out their chips.

Also, we maintain our forecast made in [“Will Junk Bonds Turn to Junk?”](#) (14 Dec 2021): now that the Fed seems ready to end its bond purchases and raise rates even sooner, junk bonds’ price slide will become steeper through the weeks ahead.

Junk bonds will be among the earliest casualties of the market reversal set off by higher interest rates and among the last to recover.

BANK STOCKS ROSE ON HIGH INTEREST RATES EXPECTATIONS: BUT SOME ARE GOING DOWN



During this year’s first five trading days, bank stocks jumped 5.4 percent, their best start to a year since 2010, while the Standard & Poor’s 500 index retreated 1.9 percent.

Share prices of Citizens Financial Group, M&T Bank Corp., and Regions Financial Corp. all shot up about 15 percent on the week.

The spike followed news that the U.S. Federal Reserve may raise interest rates as soon as March.

By the following Monday, 10 January, the 10-year Treasury note’s yield had strengthened to 1.779 percent, the most in two years.

Investors are betting that the U.S. Federal Reserve’s looming interest rate hikes will lift bank earnings and profits, giving those stocks the cachet that tech shares had during the height of the COVID War.

The KBW NASDAQ Bank Index jumped 10 percent during the first week of the year, its best weekly percentage gain since November 2020. In the same week, the tech-laden NASDAQ slumped 4.5 percent, its worst week since March 2020.

“The backdrop for financial stocks is very favorable,” Greg McBride, Bankrate.com’s chief financial analyst, said in a *Wall Street Journal* interview.

“Rising interest rates can boost bank margins and a strong economy can lead to increased borrowing,” he said.

Some Fed officials foresee three interest-rate increases this year, although Goldman Sachs and other observers expect four.

When the Fed raises its rates, banks also usually follow suit with rates on credit cards, variable-rate mortgages, and other loans.

Banks tend to raise interest rates they charge for loans before lifting the rates they pay on deposits, putting extra padding in their bottom lines. They also tend to raise rates for some commercial and real estate loans as long-term treasury yields rise.

“The spread between what you charge on loans relative to what you pay on deposits will begin to widen as rates rise,” banking analyst Jason Goldberg at Barclays told the *WSJ*.

TREND FORECAST: *This is only part of the bank story. As evidenced by declines in JP Morgan and Goldman Sachs stocks, the huge profits they made with all the Bigs Getting Bigger deals they made during the COVID War, are starting to ebb.*

And while banks will earn more from loans as interest rates rise, there will be a slowdown in real estate, consumer and business loans as the economy descends into Dragflation.

And, the higher interest rates go, and the slower the economy grows, there will be growing debt defaults which will also deflate bank's profitability.

Also, many banks, as we have noted, are heavily invested in commercial real estate sectors and also hold massive loans from commercial real estate investors. Thus, the deeper those sectors fall, so too will the banks sink deeper in debt.

Indeed, with office occupancy rates tanking, as we reported, the Banksters and private equity group gangs were among the first to push for their work-at-home employees to return to the office.

METaverse ENTHUSIASM BOOSTS APPLE SHARES



Apple may not have invented the metaverse, but investors are betting that the company's knack for cashing in on new technologies will make it a major player in the digital universe.

Earlier this month, Apple became the first company with a market cap above \$3 trillion during intraday trading. The boost came from investors' confidence that, later this year, the company will debut technologies that will allow customers to inhabit the metaverse and will create a new profit center for Apple.

Meta, the company formerly known as Facebook, invented the metaverse and has seen its share price climb 6.7 percent since late October when Facebook changed its name.

In comparison, Apple's shares are up 18 percent in value during the same period.

“In conversations with augmented-reality and virtual-reality companies, the consensus view is that the real catalyst for mass-market adoption will come when Apple enters the market,” Katy Huberty, Morgan Stanley’s Apple analyst, wrote last month in a note to clients.

Several analysts have set a \$200 price target for Apple shares, which closed at \$173.07 on 17 January.

Fearing Apple’s market clout in the new digital realm, Epic Games, which makes the popular “Fortnite” game, sued Apple last summer, claiming it held an improper monopoly on distributing software through its iPhone online store.

In September, a judge ruled largely in Apple’s favor but said the company could no longer forbid software designers from telling customers inside their apps about payment alternatives to Apple’s in-app purchasing system, which can claim as much as 30 percent of designers’ revenue.

Apple won a stay of the order, allowing it to continue business as usual for the foreseeable future.

TREND FORECAST: As we noted in [“More Companies Create, Inhabit Virtual Worlds”](#) (7 Dec 2021), the metaverse resembles the early days of the personal computer industry or the dot-com boom: scores of companies competing for funding, customers, and market share, and only a relative few will survive to turn a profit.

However, it remains too early to know which technologies and which companies will outlast these early days. Speculators will take flyers on companies with buzz; prudent investors will sit on their cash until clear trends emerge.

MIDDLE CLASS? FORGET ABOUT IT. AMERICANS NEED \$128,000 A YEAR TO FEEL FINANCIALLY SECURE



The average annual household income Americans would need to feel financially secure is \$128,000, according to a new survey of 2,000 adults by Personal Capital and the Harris Poll.

That figure is nearly double the median household income of \$67,521, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Almost half of poll respondents said their debts are “unmanageable”; 37 percent said a surprise \$100 expense would cause them anxiety.

In 2021’s fourth quarter, 34 percent of those responding said they felt financially healthy; a year earlier, 48 percent said they did.

Thirty percent agreed that “expenses are constantly piling on,” compared to 23 percent who felt that way a year before.

“With rising inflation eating up some of the reported wage gains from 2021, Americans also say that the top barriers to financial health are not getting paid enough and constantly increasing expenses,” the survey report said.

TRENDPOST: *The survey’s results reflect the study we reported in [“\\$100,000 Income. Chump Change? Can’t Afford ‘American Dream?’” \(11 Jan 2022\)](#), which questioned whether a \$100,000 annual income could support a house in the suburbs, a recent-model car, a child or two, and a college fund for the kids.*

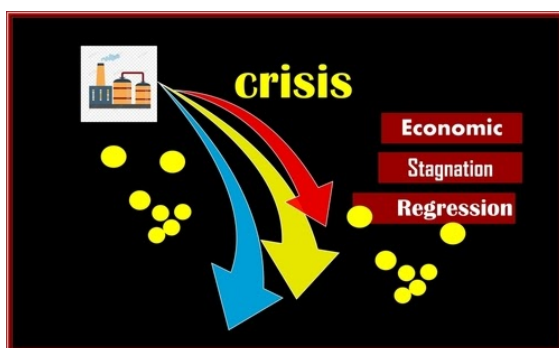
The study concluded that \$100,000 likely would not be adequate to support that lifestyle. The poll’s findings add evidence that the traditional American Dream is now out of reach for most of us.

TREND FORECAST: Although wages are rising in developed nations, as we have continued to detail inflation is rising faster.

As inflation outpaces income, societies will continue to pull apart into two groups, the well-off and those who struggle. The idea that most people will inhabit a comfortable middle class is rapidly becoming quaint.

As people—especially those with education beyond high school—fall further and further behind, pressures will grow for the government to fund items that have become necessities, such as child care and post-secondary education or training. This will be a foundation for new political movements.

RETAIL AND INDUSTRIAL SECTORS DOWN. WHAT'S NEXT?



U.S. retail sales edged down 1.9 percent in December, in tandem with a 0.3-percent decline in industrial production, its first slip since September, attributed to supply-chain problems, according to data from the U.S. Federal Reserve and commerce department

released 14 January.

Excluding autos, which still are selling briskly, consumer sales fell 2.3 percent, defying Dow Jones' expectation of a 0.3-percent rise.

Dow Jones had forecast only a 0.1-percent dip in consumer purchasing.

The dollar volume of sales is not adjusted for inflation, meaning that the real magnitude of the losses is greater than the figures indicate.

Also in December, the consumer price index added 0.5 percent, with wholesale prices up 9.7 percent for the month, the biggest one-month jump since at least 2010.

December's news, combined with bank earnings reports showing lower quarterly profits, sent the Dow down for the day, while the NASDAQ and S&P managed slight gains (see related story in this issue).

December's retail sales slipped, in part, because consumers had pushed holiday spending earlier in the calendar to ensure supplies, as we said would happen and noted in ["Black Friday Got Darker"](#) (7 Dec 2021).

Online sales sank by 8.7 percent, compared to the same period last year, electronics stores' sales shrank 2.9 percent, furniture and home store takes were off 5.5 percent, and restaurants collected 0.8 percent less.

TREND FORECAST: *The overall numbers will continue to move down as more draconian COVID War mandates are imposed in states, cities and by businesses. However, we maintain our forecast for a quick, but temporary, spike up in late March, mid-April, when the COVID War begins to wind-down.*

Despite December's retail slump, sales were up 16.9 percent year over year last month as the economy reopened and gained some momentum after the COVID-era shutdown.

Restaurants posted a 41.3-percent gain during 2021; gas station sales were up 41 percent over the past 12 months, but also took a December hit, sliding 0.7 percent.

TREND FORECAST: *However, the restaurant numbers, as we reported in this **Trends Journal**, are now in decline, and will continue to drift lower over the next three months. (See "OMICRON RESTRICTIONS SINK DECEMBER RESTAURANT SALES" in this issue.)*

And, as interest rates rise and Omicron fear continues, retail sales growth will grow at a slower pace this year.

Also, because of supply chain disruptions, many retailers received their holiday inventory deliveries too late, resulting in leftover merchandise that will be offered at discounts.

NOT A HAPPY NEW YEAR FOR RETAILERS?



The expanded child tax credits that were part of president Joe Biden's American Rescue Plan expired 30 December, canceling the \$300-per-child monthly stipend that, collectively, put an average of \$16 billion a month into the U.S. economy, according to J.P. Morgan.

That was more than twice what Americans spend on average each month on electronics and in appliance stores, noted *The Wall Street Journal*.

The credits gave families an advance on half the child credits they would normally claim when filing their income tax forms.

The payments extended families' buyer power after federal stimulus payments ended last spring. Plans to extend that credit are doomed, casting a pall over retailers' new year.

Retail sales slumped last year between April, when stimulus payments ended, and July, when the credits began arriving. In pre-COVID times, retail sales usually rose during that period as people spent for home and garden supplies, sports equipment, and other warm-weather pursuits.

From mid-July, when the credits began appearing in people's bank accounts, retail sales steadily rose through the year, the *WSJ* noted, especially for clothing and in department stores, according to Mastercard's SpendingPulse data.

At the same time, household savings rates, which had boomed during the lockdowns, have slid back toward pre-2020 COVID War levels.

The credits also helped buoy retailers' market values.

Lowe's and Home Depot outperformed the Standard & Poor's 500 index by about 30 percentage points in 2021; Dollar General, a haven for low-income shoppers, is trading at a multiple 28 percent above its five-year average, the *WSJ* noted.

That might not last: "shoppers might have a lot less to spend as 2022 kicks off," the *WSJ* cautioned. "The next six months...there will be a wave of bankruptcies," John Lincecum, co-founder of Boston's Turtle Swamp Brewery, predicted in a comment to the *WSJ*.

"The little guys can't keep it up," he said.

TREND FORECAST: *With government support payments ended, inflation rising faster than wages, supply chains remaining clogged... the retail shakeout will continue, especially in city centers where an estimated 40 percent or more of commuters will be working remotely at least two days a week.*

As well as retailers themselves, commercial property owners and landlords will face a shakeout of their own, with small holders selling out or going bust.

That, in turn, will drive down property values, robbing municipalities of property tax revenue and forcing them to cut services or to dun residents with higher tax rates.

MORTGAGE RATES CLIMB TO 22-MONTH HIGHS. CRASH ALERT?



U.S. mortgage rates rose last week for the third consecutive week to their highest since March 2020 when the COVID War began, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

The average rate for a 30-year, fixed-rate loan moved up to 3.45 percent on 13 January, compared to 3.22 percent the week before and 2.79 percent a year earlier, according to the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corp (Freddie Mac).

Strong demand for homes drove the median sale price to \$353,900 in November, up 13.9 percent in a year, according to the National Association of Realtors. The median December price jumped to \$382,900, the online brokerage Redfin said (see related story in this issue).

“Given the fast pace of home price growth, [higher rates] will likely dampen demand in the near future,” Freddie Mac’s chief economist Sam Khater told the *WSJ*.

Mortgage payments as a proportion of income have become less affordable than at any time since 2008 at the beginning of the Great Recession, according to a report by the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.

A year ago, Americans were devoting about 29 percent of household income to mortgage payments on a median-priced home; in October, the figure was 33 percent, the bank reported.

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our long-standing forecast that when the U.S. Federal Reserve raises interest rates to, and then beyond, 1.5 percent, housing sales will contract sharply.*

While real estate values will fall, minus a wild card event, we do not anticipate a real estate collapse.

However, on the commercial real estate front, with a sizable percentage of people disgusted with wasting much of their life commuting and demanding to work-at-home full or part time, this will put increasing downward pressure on the commercial real estate sector, particularly in the office occupancy sectors.

HOUSING MARKET TUMBLES. HOW LOW WILL IT GO?



The U.S. housing market has succumbed to its own excess: December booked 11 percent fewer sales than a year earlier, the lowest number since June 2020, because the number of homes on the market fell 19 percent, year on year, to the lowest on

record, according to online brokerage Redfin.

The largest declines were in Nassau County, New York, and New Brunswick, New Jersey, where sales were off 22 percent in both areas.

Sales were down in 79 of the 88 metro areas Redfin monitors, with the number of homes on the market declining everywhere except Detroit.

National demand remained strong, however, driving the median sale price last month to \$382,900, Redfin reported.

“There are plenty of home buyers on the hunt but there’s just nothing for sale,” Daryl Fairweather, Redfin’s chief economist, told Bloomberg.

“In January, I expect to see more buyers and sellers in the market,” he said, “but demand will increase more than supply, pushing prices higher.”

TREND FORECAST: *With interest rates poised to rise, many homeowners who were considering selling this year will put their houses on the market sooner, not later.*

The larger supply of available homes, coupled with rising rates, will moderate rising prices, but not greatly: there will still be too few homes to meet demand and those who can afford inflated prices will continue to pay top dollar for the right place.

MORE RATE INCREASES AHEAD THAN NOW EXPECTED, DIMON SAYS

The U.S. Federal Reserve will raise interest rates as many as six or seven times this year to fight inflation, not the three or four that the Fed has signaled, in the view of Jamie Dimon, CEO and executive chair of J.P. Morgan Chase, the U.S.'s biggest bank.

"I grew up in a world where Paul Volcker raised his rates 200 basis points on a Saturday night," Dimon said in a 14 January earnings call cited by Yahoo!News.

"This whole notion that it's somehow going to be sweet and gentle and no one's going to be surprised I think is a mistake, but that does not mean we won't have growth," he predicted.

"At this point, it's up to the Fed to thread the needle: slow inflation without stopping [economic] growth," Dimon said, adding that he "has a lot of faith" in Fed chair Jerome Powell.

If Dimon's forecast is accurate, short-term interest rates could leap to 2 percent by the end of this year, Hennessy Funds portfolio manager David Ellison told Yahoo!Finance Live.

J.P. Morgan's share price sank by as much as 5 percent on 14 January as the bank reported a 14-percent drop in fourth-quarter profits.

Trading revenue was down by 13 percent for the period. The bank's performance was rescued by a 28-percent gain in investment banking business during a stellar year for deals, as we reported in ["Investment Banking Fees Boost Revenue at Big Banks"](#) (20 Jul 2021).

For the quarter, the bank posted a \$10.4-billion profit, or \$3.33 per share.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: *As for Dimon's faith in Jerome Powell and the Fed, the central bank lost its last shreds of credibility as it insisted inflation was "temporary," then "transitory" for months, seconded by treasury secretary Janet Yellen, as prices steadily went up all around them. (See ["Fed Holds Firm to Policy Despite 5-Percent Inflation,"](#) 20 Jul 2021 and ["Spotlight: Inflation Spreading,"](#) 26 Oct 2021.)*

As we noted in ["The Powell Push: For Better or Worse"](#) (7 Dec 2021), the Fed's credibility has become another casualty of the COVID War.

TREND FORECAST: *Should the Fed raise interest rates "six or seven" times in a single year it will crash the equity, real estate and retails markets. However, four hikes this year seems more and more likely as inflation speeds along.*

As we have forecast, look for the Fed to sharply raise rates this year and next and then lower them before the presidential election in 2024. They did it before under Ronald Reagan when inflation was skyrocketing, and they will do it again.

We have made it clear that Washington is run by the Banksters. The former Fed Head, Janet Yellen, is now playing the role of U.S. Treasury Secretary, and she is a member of the Biden team which is a front for the money powers in charge.

Therefore, they will dramatically lower interest rates to pump up the economy prior to Election Day.

OMICRON RESTRICTIONS SINK DECEMBER RESTAURANT SALES



In December, sales slipped at 98 percent of U.S. restaurants, according to an Independent Restaurant Coalition (IRC) poll of 1,169 eateries around the country.

Fifty-eight percent of respondents said their sales had tanked by half, while 80 percent said that the Omicron surge had shortened their hours of operation.

The impact was worst among businesses that did not share in the \$28.6-billion Restaurant Revitalization Fund that was part of president Joe Biden's American Rescue Fund.

Four in five of those dining establishments said they are in danger of closing permanently this year, the IRC said.

Restaurants also juggled staffing shortages with the need to pay higher wages to attract and keep staff. About a third of businesses that received rescue fund grants still had to lay off workers and about 40 percent of those not receiving aid did.

TREND FORECAST: As we pointed out in [*"Covid War Killing Restaurants"*](#) (11 Jan 2022), the restaurant business is hard in the best of times and posts a higher failure rate than almost any other business sector.

Now, higher costs—especially to attract and keep able workers—and consumers pinching pennies in an era of inflation will end the life of even more eateries.

The future of the restaurant business will be dominated by large chains with deep pockets. There will be far fewer restaurants overall and far fewer employment opportunities for the industry's traditional workforce of moms,

young people, immigrants, and, increasingly, retirees looking to supplement their meager or absent pensions.

AUTO SALES WILL ADD 3.4 PERCENT THIS YEAR, DEALERS PREDICT



The U.S. auto market will grow 3.4 percent this year to 15.4 million cars and trucks, the 16,000-member National Automobile Dealers Association said, as the shortage of computer chips continues to impinge on production.

The chip shortage reduced dealers' inventories by 59 percent in December, compared to a year before, and will continue to cut the number of new cars produced at least until the second half of this year, the association said.

Until the COVID era, U.S. auto dealers sold more than 17 million vehicles each year for the previous five.

However, the chip shortage has slashed global production by 11.3 million vehicles so far, the dealer group said.

TREND FORECAST: *We forecast that higher interest rates will put the brakes on the two-year auto surge.*

And, the higher rates go, the deeper auto sales will fall. And, should interest rates rise too fast and too high, it will push auto sales down to Great Recession levels.

SPOTLIGHT: BIGS GET BIGGER



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

getting richer...

BIGS GET BIGGER: THE METAVERSE WORLD

Today, tech giant Microsoft will shovel out \$68.7 billion in-cash to gobble up video game giant Activision Blizzard.

Getting bigger and bigger and expanding into the meta and digital world, with a market cap of nearly \$3 trillion, Microsoft, paid \$7.5 billion for game maker Bethesda, last year, bought LinkedIn in 2016 for \$26.2 billion and Minecraft maker Mojang for \$2.5 billion in 2014.

Indeed, ["METAWORLD"](#) is one of our Top 10 Trends for 2022, a trend that will dominate much of the 21st century and beyond. And clearly Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella agrees who said: "When we think about our vision for what a metaverse can be, we believe there won't be a single, centralized metaverse."

TREND FORECAST: *The Metaverse Geeks will celebrate their overturn of the human experience. The generation now entering adulthood, is primed to engage these fast-evolving technologies across every aspect of their lives. Their AI/VR technologies will sweep industries, households and governments worldwide. More and more jobs will be replaced by robotics and AI programs will become, in effect, virtual human beings; they'll take tests, advance their knowledge base*

through trial and error, perform complex human functions and learn from their mistakes and failures.

TREND FORECAST: *This is the New ABnormal. Just as the Industrial Revolution sapped the creative uniqueness of individuals with mass production, the metaverse world will further sap the human spirit from the already hi-tech addicted global population.*

Upcoming generations will get degrees, honors and salutations along the way, and become motivated to become more “Meta” and less human.

PLANET FITNESS WILL BUY FRANCHISEE FOR \$800 MILLION



Gym chain Planet Fitness will buy Sunshine Fitness, its first franchisee, for \$800 million, including \$475 million in cash and the balance in debt.

Sunshine operates 114 Planet Fitness gyms across Alabama, Florida, Georgia,

and North and South Carolina.

The sale will give the corporation ownership of about 10 percent of its locations, the company said.

TRENDPOST: *Corporations buying their franchisees is just one more way for Bigs to get bigger, no different than a company buying back its own stock to raise its market value without producing any new products or benefits for its customers.*

TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT



2020 GLOBAL DEBT SET RECORD: WORST IS YET TO COME

By the end of 2020, global debt surged the most in a single year since World War Two and reached a record \$226 trillion, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported.

In 2020, global debt added 26 percentage points to reach 256 percent of the world's economic output, according to updated data from the IMF's Global Debt Database.

“Debt was already elevated going into the [COVID] crisis, but now governments must navigate a world of record-high public and private debt levels, new virus mutations, and rising inflation,” the IMF noted.

Government borrowing added slightly more than half the new debt, raising the total to 99 percent of global gross economic output; corporate and household

debt added most of the rest, again setting new records. (See [“Corporate Debt Load Threatens Long-Term Solvency.”](#) 12 Jan 2021).

Among advanced economies, government debt was about 70 percent of GDP in 2007 as the Great Recession began. In 2020, it reached 124 percent, the IMF calculated.

During the same period, private debt rose from 164 percent of GDP to 178.

Government borrowing now makes up about 40 percent of the world’s debt load, the most since the mid-1960s, thanks to the Great Recession and the response to the COVID crisis, the IMF said.

Developed economies, including China, accounted for about 90 percent of 2020’s debt spike, thanks to low interest rates imposed by central banks.

In 2020 among advanced economies, public debt rose 19 percentage points against GDP, mirroring the jump in 2008 and 2009 during the Great Recession.

However, private debt in 2020 rose by 14 percentage points, about twice as much as during the Great Recession.

The reason: in the COVID era, governments supported private-sector borrowing to keep businesses and households afloat. In contrast, during the recession 14 years ago, governments’ main effort was to curb damage from a private sector that had borrowed too much.

During the COVID War, developing economies added only \$1 trillion to \$1.2 trillion to public debt, largely because they were constrained in the amount of money they could borrow or generate.

Emerging markets’ debt set record highs, while low-income countries’ debt load reached levels not seen since the early 2000s, when such countries were receiving aid from international financial organizations such as the World Bank and IMF.

Now, as interest rates rise and central banks end their support programs, the cost of debt will increase and “fiscal policy will need to adjust, especially in countries with higher debt vulnerabilities,” the IMF said.

“The risks will be magnified if global interest rates rise faster than expected and growth falters,” the agency warned. “A significant tightening of financial conditions would heighten the pressure on the most highly indebted governments, households, and firms.

“If the public and private sectors are forced to deleverage simultaneously, growth prospects will suffer,” the report said.

TREND FORECAST: *Inflation, rising interest rates, and politicians’ and families’ inability to balance budgets will make it increasingly hard to cover interest and principal payments on debts, from households to national governments.*

As the global debt bomb explodes, a growing number of households, businesses, and nations will be unable to meet their payment obligations.

Among households, that will mean more bankruptcies, more damage to credit scores, and more people with less ability to buy, crimping economic growth.

The resulting crunch will be especially hard on emerging nations, which began the COVID War already heavily in debt. Now, however, developed countries will be less able or willing to give money to rescue them, leading a growing number of developing countries to default on their debts. This in turn will spark anti-establishment and “progressive” political movements.

TREND FORECAST: *We repeat the point we made in [“Global Economy Faces ‘Debt Tsunami’”](#) (1 Dec 2020): as debt levels rise and more countries default, prices of precious metals and Bitcoin will rise as people seek safe-haven assets.*

As economic conditions deteriorate in these failing nations, social unrest will escalate as people take to the streets to protest against rising crime, increased poverty, lower wages, government corruption, and violence.

GLOBAL GROWTH SLOWDOWN: GET READY



COVID's Omicron strain, supply-line chaos, labor shortages, and the end of government and central-bank stimulus programs will combine to slow global economic growth this year, the World Bank has predicted.

The world's economic output grew by 5.5 percent in 2021, the best post-recession performance in 80 years, the bank said in its semi-annual Global Economic Prospects Report, but this year will cool to a 4.1-percent expansion.

The pace of growth will slacken to 3.2 next year, the bank said.

“At a time when many developing economies lack the policy space to support activity if needed, new COVID-19 outbreaks, persistent supply-chain bottlenecks, inflationary pressures, and elevated financial vulnerabilities in large swaths of the world could increase the risk of a hard landing,” the report warned.

However, major economies also will not be spared.

The U.S. pace of growth will slow from 5.6 percent to 3.7 percent, the bank predicted, and China's will dive from 8 percent to 5.1.

In contrast, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam will increase their economic outputs this year, according to the bank.

In this year's second half, labor shortages and supply-chain disruptions will ease, the bank believes, helping inflation to slow and commodity prices to decline.

TREND FORECAST: *As interest rates rise across most of the globe, economies will decline much deeper than the World Bank estimates. In response to the lack of basic living standards, government corruption, crime and violence, masses will take to the streets in protests, civil unrest will escalate and governments will clamp down hard on demonstrators.*

Also, the deeper socioeconomic conditions decline, the stronger the migrant waves of people leaving their countries to find safe-haven nations.

GERMAN ECONOMY SHRINKING. DANGER AHEAD



Germany's economy contracted 0.5 to 1 percent during 2021's final three months, according to a 14 January announcement by the nation's statistics agency.

Supply-chain turmoil, surging prices for raw materials, and the economic weakness of China, Germany's largest trading partner, torpedoed the country's manufacturing sector, especially vehicle manufacturers, upon which Germany's economic performance depends significantly.

Crucially, COVID-related restrictions hobbled consumer spending, which slumped 3 percent during the period.

In December, Germany's inflation rate surged to 5.3 percent, a 30-year high.

In all of 2021, Germany's economy grew about 2.7 percent, the agency said, about 2 percentage points below 2019's performance.

Germany's economy accounts for about a third of the 19-country Eurozone's GDP.

Germany's weakness stems from its strong reliance on manufacturing for export, which accounts for a third of the country's jobs, about four times more than in the U.S.

Factories have been hampered by ongoing materials shortages, supply-chain disruptions, and rising costs, especially the skyrocketing price of energy.

China, dealing with its own economic troubles, cut imports of German products 4.2 percent in November.

One in seven German companies now fear for its continued existence, according to a 2022 poll by the country's Ifo Institute for Economic Research.

In contrast, the U.K.'s economy grew 0.9 percent from October through November, sending its GDP back above its pre-COVID level, Britain's statistics agency reported on 14 January, a benchmark the U.S. reached in mid-2021, Capital Economics said.

The Eurozone's overall growth is estimated at 5 percent last year and the U.S.'s at 5.8 percent, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

TREND FORECAST: *As goes Germany, so goes Europe. It should be noted that Germany was heading into recession at the end of 2019, just before the COVID War broke out. And although the European Central Bank says it will not raise interest rates, we forecast that as inflation keeps rising, interest rates will increase.*

*Therefore, the higher interest rates rise, the deeper economies will fall. Also, with new COVID restrictions being put in place across Germany, as we have detailed in this **Trends Journal**, the economy will further decline. See, "GERMAN'S HIT HARD WITH NEW COVID MANDATES. PROTESTS CONTINUE."*

TREND FORECAST: *Germany's weakness is having an outsized effect on the Eurozone's overall economic performance and will continue to do so until the vehicle manufacturing industry recovers, probably not until at least the second half of this year.*

More broadly, Germany's troubles are a microcosm of the problems facing Western economies generally, from inflation and materials shortages to trading partners' pullbacks.

"The German economy has emerged as a barometer for a number of global issues, including rising energy prices, the slowdown in China, and supply-chain disruptions," the WSJ noted.

*The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the coronavirus outbreak and the damage it has done to the German economy. (SEE: ["GERMANY SLIDING TOWARD RECESSION."](#) ["GERMANY'S FACTORY OUTPUT FALLS FOR THIRD STRAIGHT MONTH."](#) ["GERMANY: ECONOMY HITS THE BRAKES."](#))*

SPOTLIGHT: INFLATION



INFLATION IN OECD COUNTRIES TOUCHES 25-YEAR HIGH

Inflation across member nations of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which includes most of the world's 37 richest countries, ran at 5.8 percent in November, compared to 1.2 percent a year earlier, according to OECD figures released last week.

It was inflation's fastest annual pace among the group since May 1996.

Energy prices rose 28 percent through the year, up 3 percent from the month before, growing at the fastest clip since June 1980.

Food prices grew 5.5 percent in November, compared to October's pace of 4.6 percent.

The U.K.'s inflation rate in November was 5.1 percent. Early figures show the Eurozone's price rise for December was 5 percent; in the U.S., it was 7 percent (see related story in this issue).

"Citizens have considerably less money left in their wallets," Jaochim Nagel, the Bundesbank's new president and a member of the European Central Bank's (ECB's) governing group, said in a public statement.

"Is the very loose monetary policy still appropriate?," he asked. "If so, for how much longer?"

The U.S. Federal Reserve and the ECB have set 2 percent as their ideal rate of inflation, a number far out of reach at the moment.

However, several analysts continue to believe that price growth is peaking.

Inflation among developed nations "will fall sharply in 2022," Oxford Economics analyst Ben May told the *Financial Times*.

Inflation in the U.S. is topping out now, he added, and will do so in Canada and the U.K. in April.

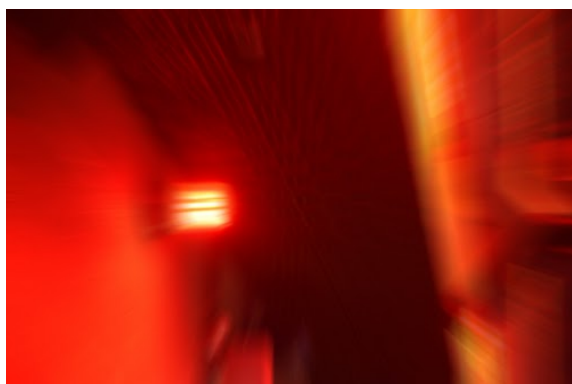
Inflation in the Eurozone peaked last month, according to Barclays economist Silvia Ardagna.

Still, November's figures "suggest that inflationary pressures may persist in coming months as companies may eventually pass the increase in production costs to consumers," she said to the *FT*.

TREND FORECAST: While some prices may be peaking, as with the rise in oil and gas prices, it is hitting the business and consumer segments very hard. And should military tensions increase in the Middle East and oil prices rise higher, it will take a heavy toll on all sectors of the economy.

Also, should the Ukraine crisis worsen and Russia cuts natural gas supplies to Europe, that too will drive inflation much higher.

INFLATION RANKS AS MAJOR CORPORATE THREAT



After barely registering on a Conference Board poll a year ago, inflation has rocketed close to the top of corporate threats, the group's annual survey of more than 1,600 executives, including 917 CEOs, has found.

More than half of executives surveyed, including 59 percent of U.S. CEOs, expect upward pressure on prices to remain uncomfortable through mid-2023.

"We have to be very careful about how [inflation] gets solved, because it's like driving your vehicle," Honeywell International Darius Adamczyk told *The Wall Street Journal*.

"If you slam on the brakes too hard, you could see the other side of inflation, which is recession," he warned.

Corporate leaders warned more and more strongly about inflation's dangers through last year while the U.S. Federal Reserve maintained that inflation was first "temporary," then "transitory," with Fed chair Jerome Powell only deeming it a "severe threat" last week during his Senate confirmation hearing to serve a second term as the central bank's chair.

U.S. inflation's annual rate ballooned to 7 percent in December, according to the labor department, its fastest clip in 40 years (see related story in this issue).

Europe's corporate leaders ranked inflation as their top-ranked worry, placing the COVID virus in 10th place, lower than regulatory interference.

Their counterparts in China and Japan still see the COVID virus as the main danger to business this year, the survey found.

Eighty-two percent of CEOs worldwide reported rising pressures on prices. In China, the pressures come strongly from higher costs for raw materials, while in Europe the chief forces driving prices are the prices of energy and food.

The U.S. economy is service-centered, meaning a large share of the workforce can labor at home. In contrast, China relies heavily on manufacturing; a bout of COVID can shutter factories and tank the nation's economy.

Globally, a third of CEOs, and 53 percent of those in the U.S., say that at least 40 percent of their employees will continue to work remotely at least three days a week.

TRENDPOST: *We have documented the Fed's intransigence about inflation and its insistence that it was "temporary" or "transitory" long after the facts were proving it wrong. See our ["U.S. Markets Overview"](#) (18 May 2021), ["Feds Send Mixed Signals on Policy Shift"](#) (29 Jun 2021), and ["When Will the Fed End Cheap Money Policy?"](#) (27 Jul 2021).*

U.S. INFLATION HIGHEST IN 40 YEARS



The U.S. 12-month inflation rate roared to 7 percent in December, edging past November's 6.8-percent pace to notch its highest mark since June 1982.

The core inflation rate, which sets aside food and energy costs, rose at 5.5 percent last month, also more than 4.9 percent the month before and the sixth time in nine months that the rate has gained more than 0.5 percent from one month to the next.

Hikes in lodging, home rental rates, and used vehicle prices drove the increase according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Prices for clothing, food, furnishings, and medical care all swelled.

Overall shelter costs, which comprise about a third of the price gauge, rose 0.4 percent from November and 4.1 percent year on year, their speediest rise since February 2007.

Used-car prices were up 3.5 percent compared to November and almost 40 percent on the year. The pump price of gasoline dropped 0.5 percent, fuel oil cost 2.4 percent less, and energy prices in general dipped 0.4 percent, their first decline in several months.

Food prices edged up 0.5 percent last month but 6.3 percent through all of 2021, their most sizable gain since October 2008.

Restaurant menu prices grew by 0.6 percent month to month and 6 percent over the preceding 12 months, also the biggest yearly gain since 1982.

In December, wages grew 0.6 percent from November, eking out gain above inflation of just 0.1 percent. However, pay grew only 2.4 percent through all of 2021, offsetting less than half of inflation's damage to prices.

"There is nothing in the details of the data that suggest inflation is fading in any meaningful way," Eric Winograd, fixed income economist at AllianceBernstein, told the *Financial Times*.

The BLS released its data a day after Jerome Powell, chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve, admitted inflation is a "severe threat" to the jobs market and confirmed that the Fed will stop buying bonds within weeks.

TREND FORECAST: *We forecast the Fed will raise interest rates at least four times this year and another three or four times in 2023. Again, as we have noted, they will slow down the economy to push down inflation and lower interest rates to boost the economy prior to the 2024 Presidential elections.*

As for the Fed's rapidly raising rates, while long denying it, now equity markets seem to agree; investors are pricing in a 50-percent chance the central bank will make four such increases this year and a 79-percent bet that the first will be set in May, according to CME's FedWatch Tool.

NICKEL PRICES JUMP TO 10-YEAR HIGH AS EV MARKET GROWS



The price of nickel, a common element used to make stainless steel and battery packs for electric vehicles (EVs), leapt up 4 percent on 11 January to reach its highest in a decade as stockpiles shrink and major automakers scale up their EV production, the *Financial Times* reported.

Supplies on hand have declined for more than 51 consecutive days, pushing the metal's price as high as \$22,745 a ton on the London Metal Exchange.

China has reported 4,859 tons on hand, near a record low.

China's growing domestic EV market and the nation's plan to become a global player in electric vehicles "micro and macro conditions are beginning to align, driving a repricing of metals toward scarcity," Goldman Sachs analyst Nicholas Snowden commented to the *FT*.

"We are starting to see consumers wake up and recognize the problems that exist" with nickel supplies, Jeremy Weir said in remarks to Saudi Arabia's Future Minerals Forum last week.

Tesla has signed an agreement to buy 75,000 tons of nickel from Minnesota's Tamarack project. BHP, the world's largest minerals miner, has announced its involvement in a major nickel venture in Tanzania.

"The recent plethora of announcements around nickel development projects is testament to the confidence in future market fundamentals on the engines of stainless steel and battery demand."

Demand for nickel will soar 19-fold if countries get serious about meeting their 2040 Paris climate commitments, the International Energy Agency noted in a recent report.

TREND FORECAST: *Nickel is only one of a range of commodities that will remain in short supply for the indefinite future, as we reported in ["Commodities Supercycle Underway?"](#) (11 May 2021).*

Key minerals such as cobalt, copper, and nickel will remain short of demand for at least the next two years, as demand for electronics and all-electric vehicles rises and new mineral mines face lag times of at least two years before being ready to deliver commercial quantities.

Companies that depend on steady supplies of these minerals, as well as OnTrendpreneurs™, will see reclaiming and recycling these materials as a critical new industry.

EUROPE'S GAS PRICES JUMP AFTER RUSSIA TALKS BREAK DOWN



Natural gas prices in Europe jumped almost 25 percent on 13 and 14 January to the equivalent of €90 per megawatt-hour after talks among the U.S., NATO, and Russia about tensions over Ukraine deadlocked.

The breakdown heightened fears of military conflict and a shutoff of Russian gas into Europe at a time when the continent's gas storage levels are at record lows for this time of year.

Last fall, gas prices in the region shot up after Russia curtailed the usual spot-market sales and restricted deliveries only to those called for under long-term contracts.

Russia cut its year-over-year gas exports to Europe 25 percent in 2021's fourth quarter, according to the International Energy Agency.

Russia used the tactic as leverage in its demand that NATO add no more member nations along Russia's border, the agency alleged.

TRENDPOST: *Russia denied the claim but has said it wants European customers to commit to more long-term contracts and has linked higher exports to Germany's approval of its new Nord Stream 2 pipeline.*

The line would bypass Ukraine, which could weaken the country economically.

Under continuing pressure from the United States, Germany has balked at the project, citing environmental concerns.

On 13 January, the European Union's commissioner for competition said the union may open a formal probe into the behavior of Gazprom, Russia's state-owned gas company.

SPOTLIGHT: CHINA



AS WE FORECAST: CHINA'S ECONOMY GROWS 8.1 PERCENT IN 2021

While much of the world was downgrading China's GDP growth estimates for 2021, the **Trends Journal** had forecast it would grow by 8 percent. We were 0.1 percent off:

China's economy grew 8.1 percent overall in 2021 on the strength of its exports to a COVID-plagued world.

And, we had stayed with that 8-percent growth forecast for 2021 as analysts pared back their outlook for China's performance amid its real estate slowdown and tech-sector crackdown.

China's GDP expanded by 4 percent in 2021's fourth quarter alone, better than Reuters' projection of 3.6 percent, with industrial production adding 4.3 percent to offset a modest slump in consumer spending.

In December, auto production gained for the first time since April, growing by 3.4 percent, year on year, helping the country's industrial output for the month add 4.3 percent compared to the same month a year earlier.

However, retail sales grew by a disappointing 1.7 last month, less than half the 3.7-percent year-on-year expansion expected by analysts Reuters had surveyed.

“We must be aware that the external environment is more complicated and uncertain, and the domestic economy is under the triple pressure of demand contraction, supply shock, and weakening expectations,” the National Bureau of Statistics said in a statement announcing the results.

For all of 2021, investment in fixed assets was up 4.9 percent, in real estate 4.4 percent, and in manufacturing 13.5 percent.

For this year, the outlook for China’s economy is less optimistic.

“The better-than-expected GDP data doesn’t change the big picture: China’s economy is under multiple headwinds for now and a policy easing cycle is underway,” Larry Hu, chief China economist at Macquarie, wrote in a recent research note.

Because of China’s latest draconian measures against the COVID virus, Goldman Sachs has cut its 2022 growth estimate for the country from 4.8 percent to 4.3, noting that domestic consumer spending will suffer.

“We think China has the option to ease COVID restrictions, which could boost consumption and market confidence; but it would be highly unlikely for it to abandon the no-tolerance approach before the Beijing Winter Olympics and the annual parliamentary meeting in March,” Bruce Pang, China Renaissance’s research chief, said in a statement cited by CNBC.

TREND FORECAST: *If China does not ease COVID restrictions, while its exports will stay solid, there will be a continued decline in consumer spending, which is an essential element of its dual circulation policy for driving economic growth.*

Therefore, we do forecast that China, which has lowered interest rates this week, will also lower its grip on the general population and begin to wind-down the

COVID War that began in Wuhan on Chinese Lunar New Year 2020...the Year of the Rat.

CHINA TRADE SURPLUS SETS RECORD



China's global trade surplus totaled \$676 billion in 2021, 26 percent more than in 2020 and a new record.

Chinese exports grew by 30 percent last year to \$3.36 trillion, with each month showing double-digit gains over the same

month a year before.

December's \$94.5-billion overage set a new monthly record, beating the old one of \$84.5 billion set in October.

About half of China's trade surplus came from the U.S.

After recovering quickly from the COVID infestation in early 2020, China became "manufacturer to the world" as other nations shut down their economies amid the COVID War.

China's ability to supply the world's needs from toys to surgical masks persisted even through materials shortages and supply-line chaos.

"China's supply chain capacity has held up much better than the rest of the world," Larry Hu, Macquarie's chief China economist, told the *Financial Times*, "so it gets a larger share of the pie."

China has focused on importing mainly raw materials, keeping better-paid manufacturing jobs at home. It also has created targeted supports and incentives that helped its businesses become more competitive abroad.

At the same time, the country has worked to stimulate its consumer economy without providing generous subsidies or stimulus money to households, as many western nations have.

Much of the funds disbursed by governments to U.S. and European households has been used to buy goods from China, *The New York Times* noted.

TRENDPOST: *The balance between maintaining a strong manufacturing economy for exports and developing a thriving domestic consumer economy has been the foundation of China’s “dual circulation” economic policy, which we have detailed extensively in articles such as [“China Announces Dual Circulation Economic Policy”](#) (9 Sep 2020), [“In China, Domestic Brands Outpace Western Icons”](#) (29 Jun 2021), and [“Foreign Investors Pour Another \\$120 Billion Into Chinese Markets”](#) (16 Nov 2021).*

China’s dual circulation economy is the leading example of our [Top 2022 Trend](#) of nations, businesses, and households striving for self-sufficiency.

No Trade War

In January 2020, the Trump administration inked the “Phase One” trade deal with China, which required the nation to buy an additional \$200 billion of U.S. goods and services in 2021.

China dramatically failed to meet that requirement of the treaty, claiming that the COVID infestation had hampered its ability to live up to its commitment, as we reported in [“China Fails to Purchase Promised Amounts of U.S. Goods and Services”](#) (11 Jan 2022).

“Estimates by western economists indicate that the widening trade surplus is now the main engine keeping China’s economy going, as real estate and other sectors falter,” the *NYT* reported.

TRENDPOST: We noted almost a year ago in [“Trade War? U.S. Lost It”](#) (9 Feb 2021) that Trump’s trade deal with China would fail to produce the results that it promised.

“The Trump administration never had a feasible plan for reducing the trade deficit,” Mary Lovely, senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics, told Politico then. “The 2017 tax cut ensured that the U.S... would continue to spend more than it produced, hence the... deficit.”

Regardless of the trade deal’s intentions, the COVID economy’s shutdown around the world de facto guaranteed that the U.S., like other nations, would ramp up purchases from China to make up for goods we were no longer making at home.

TREND FORECAST: The world will continue to depend on Chinese factories, although to a lesser extent than it has. Inflation will force more households to curtail their purchases and our [Top 2022 Trend](#) toward greater self-sufficiency among businesses and households will cause nations to gradually slow the rate of increase in their imports.

CHINA CUTS KEY INTEREST RATE



For the first time since April 2020, the People’s Bank of China (PBOC) has trimmed the interest rate on its benchmark one-year policy loans, paring 10 basis points and dropping the rate to 2.85 percent.

The bank also reduced the rate on its seven-day repurchase loans and loosed 200 billion yuan, equivalent to about \$31.5 billion, into the country’s financial markets.

“The move suggests China’s economy is weak and it will trigger a significant slide in borrowing costs,” Yewei Yang, an analyst at Guosheng Securities, said to Bloomberg.

With the change, the 10-year government yield fell two basis points to 2.78 percent, while the overnight repo rate slid six basis points.

The bank’s policy shift follows the real estate market’s instability brought on by over borrowing, a regulatory crackdown that has hobbled key tech companies, and an overall slowdown forced by China’s zero-tolerance policy for COVID cases, exemplified by a recent incident in which a single case of the virus was diagnosed in an office building and authorities quarantined the building with the workers still inside.

The bank is likely to lower its prime loan rate on 20 January, Larry Hu, chief China economist at Macquarie Bank, has predicted.

TREND FORECAST: *Think about it! The PBOC is perking up China’s economy by lowering interest rates at a time when other central banks are pulling out of the stimulus business and raising interest rates.*

The U.S. Federal Reserve will end its \$120-billion monthly bond purchases in March and is expected to raise interest rates quickly thereafter; the European Central Bank is ending its €185-trillion bond-buying program this month or next. And we forecast they too will be forced to raise rates.

Therefore, the bottom line is that as much of the world’s economies decline, China, while losing some of its export market because of declining demand, will gain economic strength with its dual circulation policy that will allow businesses and consumers to borrow more for less.

EVs DRIVE CHINA'S AUTO MARKET BACK TO GROWTH



After declining for three consecutive years, China's domestic auto market grew 4.4 percent last year to 20.1 million vehicle sales, thanks to growing acceptance of electric vehicles.

Sales of full-electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles rose 4.4 percent in 2021 to about 2.99 million, making up about 15 percent of new-car sales, while gas buggies sales slipped by about 4 percent, the China Passenger Car Association reported.

EV sales were boosted by government subsidies, which have been steadily reduced. Stipends now average around \$2,000 and will end entirely late this year.

This year's sales will add another 5 percent, the association predicted, with EVs making up about a quarter of the market.

Other analysts also expect the market to grow but at a slower pace than the association foresees, *The Wall Street Journal* said. The analysts see growth in 2022 coming again from EVs, with sales of gas-powered vehicles remaining flat or slipping again slightly.

However, all might not go smoothly.

"A continued contraction in demand caused by the overall economic slowdown and [lockdown measures], coupled with the recovery of production as the chip shortage eases, would shift China's car market from an over-demand last year to an oversupply," Paul Gong, UBS's analyst of China's car market, told the *WSJ*.

EV manufacturers also are facing looming shortages and subsequent price hikes for key minerals such as cobalt and nickel (see related story in this issue).

In 2021's last quarter, China's car sales slid 11 percent compared to the same period in 2020.

The ongoing shortage of computer chips cost Volkswagen, the biggest foreign auto seller in China, 14 percent in sales, the company estimated, with Nissan Motor Co. giving up 5.2 percent and Nissan Motor 4 percent.

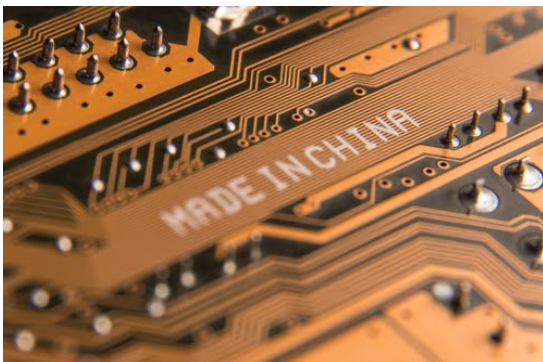
In contrast, China's domestic makers set records, with BYD selling almost 600,000 electric cars last year; Li Auto, NIO, and Xpeng each delivered about 90,000 EVs.

Tesla's Shanghai factory turned out about 475,000 cars in 2021, selling roughly 315,000 of them in China, according to the *WSJ*.

TREND FORECAST: *Despite growing demand, due in part to tax credits for buyers, the EV market may well slow in 2022 as a scarcity of chips and other materials raises prices and reduces production.*

However, China's command economy has the option of continuing to subsidize EV purchases as part of its plan to meet its Paris climate commitments. If it does, EV sales will continue to gain a greater percentage of the auto market.

CHINA SEES SURGE IN INVESTMENT IN 'HARD TECH,' WHICH SHOULD DELIGHT BEIJING



Investors are flooding the Chinese tech scene and investing in companies that are finding innovative ways to improve the country's so-called "hard tech," which has

been a key ambition of the Chinese Communist Party.

The Wall Street Journal reported that there has been a clear shift in investments away from e-commerce giants in the country to companies that produce semiconductors, biotechnology, and information technology. This all fits quite nicely in Beijing's new five-year plan that calls certain technologies vital to its national security.

The paper reported that these “hard tech” companies have raised \$129 billion in capital in 2021. Besides the outside investments, Beijing also announced a 7 percent increase in annual spending earmarked for some of these companies, which marks a bigger jump in spending than for its military. (See [“WAR CRIME GANG GETS RICHER”](#) and [“CHINA CHALLENGING U.S. HI-TECH DOMINANCE.”](#)) The goal is that China will be able to rely far less on other countries to provide technologies in the artificial intelligence and quantum computing space.

The investors seem to be undeterred by President Xi Jinping's willingness to inject the government in the tech marketplace. Didi, the rideshare app, was yanked from all mobile-app stores and Jack Ma, the billionaire founder for e-commerce site Alibaba, faced a major regulatory crackdown after he criticized Beijing's financial regulators.

Dan Wang, a Beijing-based tech researcher, wrote in *Foreign Affairs* that Xi's push to technological self-sufficiency was sparked by former U.S. President Trump's trade war.

“Trump's gambit accomplished what the Chinese government never could: aligning private companies' incentives with the state's goal of economic self-sufficiency,” he said.

TREND FORECAST: *These news items out of China underscore the growing success of its dual circulation economic policy, designed to make the country less dependent on exports by building a strong domestic consumer economy.*

Together, these developments also reflect our [Top 2022 Trend](#) of companies and countries boosting self-sufficiency in both production and consumption.

And as for China looking at America for fashion, style and upbeat consumer trends... it is a time gone by. Thus, “Made-in-China” will be their entertainment and pop-culture future.

FEATURED ARTICLES BY GUEST WRITERS



TRANSCENDING THE DELUSIONS OF INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL

By *Richard Gale* and *Gary Null PhD*, [Progressive Radio Network](#)

In his 1938 song “Scottsboro Boys,” blues artist Lead Belly warned us to remain alert, “stay woke,” as we pass through unfriendly and prejudiced lands and territories. “I advise everybody to be a little careful,” Lead Belly sang, “stay woke, keep your eyes open.”

We need to become streetwise by critically evaluating everything. However the present woke generations appear to have entered a coma.

The most recent incarnation of wokeness is not an awakening of either consciousness or conscientiousness that respects the sacredness of life, other humans, and the animal and plant kingdoms. It has steered away from its early origins within the Black community when it was used to refer to a social and political awareness for racial and social injustices.

The first modern use of the term “woke” goes back to a 1962 *New York Times* article by the Black author, William Melvin Kelly, in referring to being “well informed, up to date.” To be woke requires critical thought and discernment. It has more in common with an innate metacognitive knowing, to distinguish between rightness and fraud.

Now the term has been adopted by two entire generations, regardless of race, and politicized with almost an ontological unease to conquer and divide. Hence to be woke is to be anti-woke.

Throughout human history hierarchical power has been abused to control those who are subject and dependent upon that power, such as the rule of kings, emperors and authoritarian tyrants. In addition, to meet our daily needs and to secure financial ease there are landowners, merchants and bankers. In all of these power relationships, equity is always on the side of those who hold power.

At this moment our nation has reached an impasse where only a tiny group of individuals control and govern the lives of the many.

The Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan wrote, “In a culture like ours, long accustomed to splitting and dividing all things as a means of control, it is sometimes a bit of a shock to be reminded that, in operational and practical fact, the medium is the message.”

McLuhan is suggesting that the masses have the tendency to focus on what is most obvious and consequently miss or ignore the deeper and more subtle changes unfolding over a period of time. In other words, what may seem to be correct and just on the surface may eventually bring forth deleterious or “unintended” consequences.

McLuhan wrote long before the internet. Today, presidential campaigns and federal laws, public health policies, the mainstream media and corporate entertainment are the conduits for how we define ourselves. They also define and set the boundaries for the dogmatic beliefs we ultimately identify with.

But all of these narratives are controlled by a handful of power players, including the social media platforms such as Google, Facebook, YouTube and Wikipedia.

Succumbing to the siren's call of this illusion is being woke with closed eyes.

There is a saying that if you do not know the product being advertised you are the product; and this is certainly true for how millions of Americans are persuaded to purchase junk they have no need for.

Our personal realities thereby are reduced to millions of bits of algorithmic data that know more about us than we know about ourselves. We are sold on the promises of 5G technology despite the media never mentioning its serious dangers to human health and the environment.

The risks of genetically modified foods and vaccination are censored from public discourse. Federal agencies that begin small and are believed to be temporary, such as Homeland Security, become permanent and unstoppable leviathans that encroach into every corner of our lives.

At this moment, we are being instructed that our sole attention should be to get a Covid-19 vaccine and boosters so life can return to normal. This may sound reasonable. However, hidden beneath this message's surface has been a sophisticated effort to bypass and trash essential regulatory protective measures to assure the safety of these genetic products.

Now that all world governments' health policies have utterly failed to contain the spread of SARS-CoV-2 variants, such as Delta and Omicron, more and more doctors and medical experts around the world are coming forth to say we have been deceptively misled by the Ministry of Truth's Anthony Fauci-s and Bill Gates-s of the world.

Yet their voices are being canceled and censored by Silicon Valley and social media as are professors speaking against student demands for personal entitlement and the anti-woke White Fragility diatribe that condemns genetic

whiteness as racist. Students would prefer college to be sanitized of critical thought, a pleasant, non-intrusive and safe environment filled with teddy bears and psychologists next door to drug their episodes of existential angst and purposelessness in life.

As the pandemic hijacks our attention, global warming increases. Over twenty percent of Americans will go to sleep hungry tonight. Those with cancer, heart disease, diabetes and dementia are told to just hang on a bit longer; a blockbuster pharmaceutical cure is just around the corner. But for decades, this carrot has been dangled before us and has yet to come to fruition.

Everything today is its opposite. The blue and red pills have been pulverized together. Only a purple pill laced with the strychnine of lies and half-truths is offered by an unduly legislative system run by technocrats and their private financial handlers.

Woke and anti-woke are indistinguishable since both are born from similarly delusional worldviews divorced from reality, neither being capable of observing the preciousness and fragility of human life. It is only the rare authentic progressive who has transcended this divide and can observe wisely the battlefields orchestrated by politically motivated ideologues, aristocrats and the media.

As the U.S. spins further into a controlled dystopia, it is difficult to imagine that this trajectory towards social decay can be easily reversed. Arthur Miller said, “an era can be said to end when its basic illusions are exhausted.” Therefore, we still have a long way to go and it may require a full system-failure at all economic and social levels before a viable and realistic effort can restore what has been lost from the ethical wasteland left in its wake.

It took Rome several centuries to collapse but we are on course to accomplish this feat within a decade. To remain optimistic, therefore, requires a rejection of the dominant Social Darwinism and the specter of what Thomas Huxley called the “Church Scientific” that now informs both parties and that have shackled us in a fatalist purgatory or worse Dante’s hells of lust, gluttony and greed.

The evangelical Christian Right—science’s counterrevolutionary reactive response—is equally a contributor to the dumbing down of the nation’s sanity with fairy tales and superstition.

Our indoctrination into scientific materialism, our surrendering our autonomy and divine freedoms to political and corporate regimes, and the clashes over political correctness, that disempower us from believing we can change our conditions, has created a sense of hopelessness in life and growing existential despair.

The consequences, particularly for the younger generations, have been an outburst of psychological maladies, ADD and ADHD, depression and anxiety, and rising suicide rates. It is also contributing to the unbridled frenzy of hatred across the internet.

Ideological beliefs become dogmas based upon mental afflictions, which in turn drive our emotions, fears and hatreds and reactions. No wonder pessimism is on the rise and optimism is in decline.

Only a personal encounter with a deeper purpose and meaning in life, which cuts through the tyranny of our false sense of the self or ego, can ultimately guide us to rise above the turmoil and crises facing us. This does not imply a detached disinterest, an ascetic renunciation, from the plights of our neighbors and humanity. But it does demand an introspective inquiry into ourselves to discover authentic kindness, compassion and a deeper connection with others so authentic well-being and genuine happiness can emerge.

It is a commitment to finding our interconnection, in fact our interdependence, with others in the spirit of selflessness and service.

So if modern American society relies solely upon mental and emotional distraction to survive, clearly there is no hope for constructive solutions to emerge to confront the roots of climate change, racism, identity politics, inequality, etc. Nor will society evolve beyond that of primates if we can only function from our reptilian and limbic brains.

Obviously not everyone will discover the same purpose in his or her quest for life's meaning. It is an individual quest that is largely entwined with each of our unique gifts, skills, passions and talents that we have brought into this incarnation. Those who disagree that one can discover meaning in life are the dogmatists of materialism and should be shunned.

Logic and reason alone will not satisfy this discovery; although developing skills in critical thought and discernment is more often than not necessary. It is only the rare person who has immediate intuitive knowledge about herself and the world around her.

For the remainder of us, we need to educate ourselves to have a roadmap, develop a discerning eye, and engage in deep introspection into ourselves to find the purpose of our lives. It is an individual journey that begins deep within ourselves and ends by embracing others in community despite the differences.

However this is not an exercise in reason, but a direct experience within the depths of ourselves. When we touch on that place that can only be reached by subjective introspection new horizons of opportunities and possibilities open up. Then we can understand the words of the great jazz artist John Coltrane,

“I know that there are bad forces, forces that bring suffering to others and misery to the world, but I want to be the opposite force. I want to be the force which is truly for good.”

In that honoring of our inherent goodness, genuine well-being and happiness is found and only then can our illusions and dogmatic beliefs be surrendered.

TRENDS IN THE MARKETS



MARKETS: EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED, AND MORE.

By *Gregory Mannarino* TradersChoice.net

Let us look at the current situation. We are currently smack in the middle of a global economic meltdown, with round after round of bad economic news hitting the airways daily. Debts and deficits are surging out of control and rising inflation is sparking talks about price controls.

Just last week the economic news here in the U.S. was so bad, with retail sales missing the mark by nearly 100%, that there is now talk that a Fed rate hike may even be off the table—*make no mistake, a Fed rate hike will happen this time, moreover, the stock market will rally off of it.*

Surging global debt, regardless of anything else, will continue to fuel the current stock market hyper-bubble. Moreover, artificially suppressed rates will also continue to manifest price distortions across the spectrum of asset classes. Understand, the Federal Reserve is determined to continue to inflate, and ANY rate hike moving forward will do NOTHING whatsoever to slow the current rising rate of inflation.

THE POWER OF ANY CENTRAL BANK EXISTS IN THEIR ABILITY TO ISSUE DEBT.

The Grand Deception.

The current narrative coming from the Federal Reserve is this, “by raising rates the Fed will slow the current pace of rising inflation.” Allow me to let you in on a little secret—with the Fed raising rates, inflation will continue to rise.

The Federal Reserve is desperately trying to convince people, with a message being pushed directly by the Propaganda Ministry/MSM, that by raising rates inflation will abate. First off, the Federal Reserve has NO INTEREST at all in slowing the current pace of rising inflation, in fact, they will continue to inflate and the market knows it.

Right now the stock market is pricing in an upcoming rate hike, and with that, we have seen the entire yield curve/yields move higher. The current rising yield environment has caused increased volatility in the stock market especially in the rate sensitive tech sector.

It is my belief, and this is the most likely scenario, that when the Fed actually does raise rates the stock market will gain.

The bottom line for the market is this: the debt hyper-bubble will continue to inflate globally, and this in turn will fuel global stock markets higher. To put this another way, central bank easy money will continue to fuel what is now the most expansive stock market bubble of all time.

Expect the stock market to do the opposite of what most people are being led to believe that it will do.

Generally, when it comes to the market, invariably the crowd is always wrong.

TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM



PRACTICE. PRACTICE. PRACTICE!

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

In any art, martial art, visual art, performing art, art of clothing design, art of building weapons, houses, or vehicles, etc. or the art of persuasion or argument, doing, once the mechanics have been learned, remains the only path to perfecting, and to truly expert, masterful performance.

Because the techniques of close combat and self-defense are simple, some people believe that serious practice and hard work is not necessary (as, they believe, it is in the classical Asian arts, which tend to be elaborate and complex). Wrong.

Due to what is at stake when combative skills are brought into practical application, one might argue that deadly serious, regular and intensive practice is MORE important for the student of actual, real world combat methodology than it is for the person participating in a strict classical art, or in a competitive sport. We know very well that plenty of hard, serious practice is necessary in any form of martial art one cares to study.

We would say that there is a great deal more at stake in training in self-defense and close combat than there is in either traditional methods or contest skills. You are not training for fun or for recreation—although combat training certainly can be enjoyable. You are training in order to prepare for and stay prepared for the unfortunate situation of being confronted by violent attack.

This violent attack may be against you or against a family member or close friend. In any case, being defeated is not an acceptable option. And in order to avoid losing, in order to prevail, you need to have the skills that you are learning driven into your motor nerves and embedded there!

That means practicing. It means practicing often and regularly. And nothing can take its place.

We stress this with our personal students. We emphasize it for those who train with our DVD Home Study Course. Occasional, sporadic effort does not produce mastery. Intense, regular, serious effort does.

Too many martial arts students constantly seek out “new techniques.” They strive to build extensive repertoires of skills. In so doing they neglect to settle down to the process of mastering those skills that work, and that work especially well for themselves. American Combato teaches the skills that work. But every student must, over time, discover those techniques that work particularly well for himself.

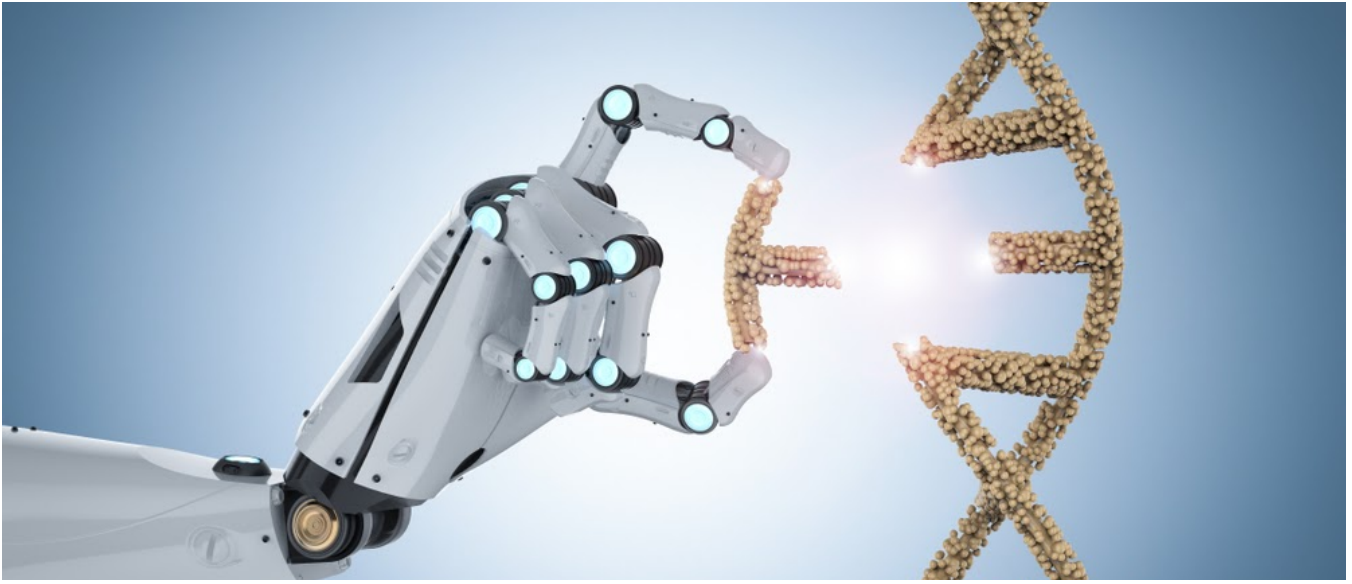
And then perfecting those techniques becomes the order of the day. No one needs a vast array of techniques. One needs those quality techniques that suit him best. When you discover those blows, combinations, counterattacks, weapons, and tactics that fit you like a glove, then set yourself to practicing them endlessly.

That is what will ensure that they will be “there and ready to serve” when and if the worst ever happens. We all hope it never will . . . but if that awful, catastrophic moment comes to you where there is no option but to destroy a

dangerous felon before he destroys you, you want to be ready and able to neutralize him speedily and well—and at minimum injury to yourself.

Attitude and mindset also need “practice” of a sort. Repetitious review, reminding, constant referral in thinking about how to apply, and always remembering why training is so important and thereby staying motivated and enthused. Heed these words which come from a lifetime of training, study, research, practice, teaching, and—thank God to a lesser degree—some personal experience in application.

TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY



By *Joe Doran*

GENETIC MODIFICATIONS BEING PREPPED TO “SOLVE” EVERYTHING

The rate at which scientists are gaining the ability to map and manipulate the human genome, as well as the genome of virtually every living thing, is accelerating.

And there’s virtually no doubt that as technocrats gain the powers to alter life, they will come up with dire imperatives as to why genomic changes must be made.

It will be for the good of humanity, the good of the environment, to improve “equity,” reduce “racism,” counter “extremist predispositions,” combat “selfishness,” and practically anything else where scientists can connect a genomic factor to a trait that is seen as undesirable.

A Supreme Court ruling last week staved off the quest of the Federal government to dictate genome level mandates within human bodies.

But the U.S. government, and governments around the world, will not be easily dissuaded from what this column has coined as “genetic legislation.”

The temptation to legislate human beings from the inside—where laws written in genomic code cannot be broken, and must be obeyed as part of a technocrat directed “evolving” human nature—will be too great to resist.

The only question is whether people now confronting the issue of COVID vaccines and mandates will understand the wider implications of where things are headed, and oppose the radical dangers and loss of individual natural autonomy and humanness, before it’s too late.

Supercomputers Hacking the Human Genome at Oak Ridge

Oak Ridge National Laboratory has announced that a supercomputer named “Summit” is predicting the structures and roles of thousands of proteins in the human body whose functions have been previously unknown.

These cutting-edge computational methods represent a major step in tackling a major biological obstacle: translating genetic information into useful functions.

Proteins are an important part of the equation.

The laboratory’s press release posits the potentials of making use of the information:

“They are also central to resolving many scientific questions about the health of humans, ecosystems and the planet. As the workhorses of the cell, proteins drive nearly every process necessary for life—from metabolism to immune defense to communication between cells.”

Understanding the structure and function of proteins based on the long strings of nucleotides—the letters A, C, T, and G that make up DNA—has long been a bottleneck in the life sciences, with researchers relying on educated guesses and time-consuming laboratory experiments to validate structures.

Scientists have only determined the structures for around 170,000 of those proteins due to the significant experimental labor required to identify three-dimensional structures. This is a huge disparity.

But the Oak Ridge Lab project is aiming to vastly speed up the function mapping of proteins. According to ORNL researcher Ada Sedova:

“We’re now dealing with the amount of data that astrophysicists deal with, all because of the genome sequencing revolution. We want to be able to use high-performance computing to take that sequencing data and come up with useful inferences to narrow the field for experiments. We want to quickly answer questions such as ‘what does this protein do, and how does it affect the cell? How can we harness proteins to achieve goals such as making needed chemicals, medicines and sustainable fuels, or to engineer organisms that can help mitigate the effects of climate change?’”

How can the human genome relate to mitigating the effects of climate change, and making needed chemicals and sustainable fuels?

Sedova spelled it out in a statement enthusing about the abilities of the Summit supercomputer to leverage deep learning enabled by sophisticated AI software, terabytes of data and massive amounts of processing power:

“With these kinds of tools in our tool belt that are both structure-based and deep learning-based, this resource can help give us information about these proteins of unknown function—sequences that have no matches to other sequences in the entire repository of known proteins. This unlocks a lot of new knowledge and potential to address national priorities through bioengineering. For instance, there are potentially many enzymes with useful functions that have not yet been discovered.”

It’s important to understand that the U.S. government, via the DOE’s Office of Science and through an award from the DOE Office of Advanced Scientific

Computing Research's Leadership Computing Challenge, is funding this research in order to use it in exactly the sorts of ways Sedova is telegraphing.

“Operation Warp Speed” will seem like a bioengineering turtle left in the dust compared to what's coming in the near future.

Dangerously Unbounded “Research”

There is no necessary relationship between technological advances and human advancement, as the 20th century showed. At the same time technology was enabling unprecedented potential to improve the human condition, it was used for massive intentional destruction.

It's not an exaggeration to say that the 20th century saw the intentional killing of humans on a greater scale than any previous time in human history.

The bloody ravages were fueled not only by hard technology, but by hubristic “scientific” ideologies, whereby some believed they possessed special knowledge to direct the lives of others and the course of history.

The scale of the travesties have been documented in many histories, including notable examples like *Reflections on a Ravaged Century* by Robert Conquest, and *Death By Government* by R.J. Rummel.

Perhaps the biblical story of Adam and Eve eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is so compelling, because it is the idea that humans can possess such knowledge to make God-like sweeping judgements and decisions over others, that is always at the root of the most devastating evils of history.

J.R.R. Tolkein brilliantly encapsulated the idea in the “Ring of Power.” In the movie *The Lord Of The Rings: The Fellowship of The Ring*, the wizard Gandalf says of trying to wield it to do good:

“Don't tempt me Frodo. Understand that I would use this Ring from a desire to do good. But through me... it would wield a power too great and terrible to imagine.”

With news this week that the Pentagon clearly believes that COVID-19 was a human created spawn, born out of a web of deceit between American scientists and Chinese researches in a Wuhan bioweapons lab, there is now evidence that the 21st century is following the track record of the 20th to a disturbing degree.

The hubris of technocratic masters, if left unchecked, will spell further disasters.

In the sphere of bio-pharma, left to the devices and imaginations of scientists unbounded by virtually any limits to how they may experiment and advocate for invasions and changes to the human genome, and the genetics of virtually any life form on earth, the “possibilities” may seem limitless.

But they are in fact quite limited by age-old propensities of humans.

“Limitless power” is definitely not a good thing, from the perspective of anyone who believes that no one should have the power to alter natural genetics, let alone dictate alterations within a “genetic legislation” legal framework.

Mandated COVID gene therapies have set the stage. The coming genetic battles will be much more widespread and potentially transformative not only to societies, but to human nature and the natural world itself.

The **Trends Journal** has been extensively covering dangerous technocratic designs for the future. Some touchstone articles include:

- [“BIO-PHARMA” PROFITING OFF A TRANSHUMAN FUTURE](#) (27 Jul 2021)
- [“ARE HUMANS ALREADY BEING GENETICALLY LEGISLATED?”](#) (8 Jun 2021)
- [“CRISPR CREATOR SAYS GENE EDITING JUST GETTING STARTED”](#) (Jun 22 2021)

- [“THE ‘PROGRESS’ OF LEAVING HUMANS BEHIND”](#) (1 Jun 2021)
- [“TECHNO EUGENICS: SUPERIOR BABIES JUST A POLYGENIC RISK SCORE AWAY”](#) (12 Oct 2021)

LOOKING FOR COLLUSION? TRY GOOGLE AND FACEBOOK



Another week, another revelation of mega corporations engaging in illegal practices to hurt consumers and undercut competition.

This time the news is about two of the largest current controllers of online advertising, Google and Facebook (now Meta), conspiring together to swallow the pie and keep challengers out.

Specifically, according to newly revealed papers of a state antitrust complaint, the companies worked together to distort internet advertising sales, and CEOs at both firms were aware of the agreement and approved it.

The agreement reportedly set prices on advertising to avoid bidding wars between the two online ad giants.

The case was filed in December 2021, led by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton and was joined by the attorneys general of Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, South Dakota and Utah.

But new unredacted versions of case documents, reported on by the AP, *The Guardian*, and other outlets, contains more detailed information on Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai and Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg's roles in the deal's approval.

In a 2018 email exchange discussing the deal, Facebook's chief operating officer, Sheryl Sandberg, was "clear that 'this is a huge deal strategically,'" according to the complaint.

The complaint claims that once the two parties worked out the parameters of the agreement, "the team wrote an email addressed directly to CEO" Zuckerberg.

"We're nearly ready to sign and need your approval to move forward," the email read, according to the complaint. Zuckerberg wanted to meet with Sandberg and his other executives before making a decision, the complaint states.

Google even used a secret code name, "Jedi Blue," to refer to the 2018 agreement internally.

Unsurprisingly, spokespeople for both companies are denying wrongdoing. One even spun the agreement as an effort to increase "fairness" to advertisers.

"These business relationships enable Meta to deliver more value to advertisers while fairly compensating publishers, resulting in better outcomes for all," Meta's Chris Sgro asserted.

The **Trends Journal** has been extensively reporting on anti-competitive and other abuses and illegal activities of corporations. For further reading, check out:

- ["HOW BIG TECH MAINTAINS ITS MONOPOLY"](#) (17 Aug 2021)
- ["HOW BIG TECH MAINTAINS ITS MONOPOLY: A FOLLOW-UP"](#) (24 Aug 2021)
- ["AMAZON CAUGHT ILLEGALLY UNDERCUTTING COMPETITION"](#) (19 Oct 2021)
- ["AMAZON USING DIGITAL BOOK DOMINANCE TO CENSOR"](#) (16 Mar 2021)
- ["TECHNOCRATS WIDEN WEALTH GAP THANKS TO PANDEMIC"](#) (13 Apr 2021)

- [“TECH GIANTS AND NATION STATES: WHO CONTROLS WHO?”](#) (2 Feb 2021)

THIS WEEK IN SURVEILLANCE



BIG TECH'S GREAT WALL AROUND CHINESE UYGHUR GENOCIDE

NBA Warriors team owner Chhatu Palihapitiya has walked back controversial comments that he and other American CEO's could give a rat's ass about the

Chinese carrying out a genocide against the minority Uyghurs within their borders.

“When I listened to this week’s podcast again, I noticed a lack of empathy.” Tweeted by Palihapitiya.. “I fully admit it.

In the original podcast, the Warriors owner, part of a league that has consistently censored criticism of Communist China to maintain and develop its market there, said:

“I care [empty shelves at grocery stores].. I am concerned about the fact that if China invades Taiwan, our economy could be at stake. I care about that, “said Palihapitiya. “I’m interested in climate change. I’m interested in America’s devastating and dilapidated medical infrastructure.

“But if you’re asking me, do I care about some of the people in some class in other countries? Until we can take care of them, I give them priority over us. I think a lot of people believe it, but I’m sorry it’s a hard-to-hear truth. But every time I say I care about Uyghurs, I If I don’t really care, I’m just really lying.”

To his credit, basketball player Boston Celtic Enes Kanter, a consistent, practically lone critic of China in the ranks of the league, reacted to the Warrior owner's remarks:

“When @NBA says we stand for justice, don't forget there are those who sell their soul for money & business like @chamath the owner of @warriors who says ‘Nobody cares about what's happening to the Uyghurs’ When genocides happen, it is people like this that let it happen Shame!”

But the money and propaganda ties run much wider and deeper than just one American institution.

And a *New Lines Magazine* expose adds info to the puzzle.

Over the last five years, nearly \$65 million has filtered through various entities connected with people who have defended the Chinese government and downplayed or denied documented human rights violations committed by Beijing against the Uyghur and Turkic Muslim minorities, according to a months-long investigation by the magazine.

To summarize some of the extensive article's salient points:

This money has flowed via a convoluted web of primarily tax-deductible investment funds and charities, all of which are tied to one guy, 67-year-old American computer billionaire Neville Roy Singham, through their governance structures.

Singham served as a strategic technical consultant for Chinese tech giant Huawei from 2001 until 2008, according to a biographical note on the Chinese employment site Boss Zhipin.

"China is teaching the West that the world is better off with a dual system of both free-market adjustments and long-term planning," he told *Fortune* magazine's senior editor David Kirkpatrick in 2008.

Singham founded Thoughtworks, a consulting firm for equipment-leasing companies out of a basement in Chicago. Over time he expanded its focus to incorporate what Singham calls “Agile” software development, which involves adaptive management, decentralized systems, and close collaboration between developers and users.

But Thoughtworks has also been a conduit for funding pro-communist China viewpoints and propaganda. Via donations to wide-ranging groups.

It operates in 17 countries, taking on commercial customers while also doing pro bono work for progressive media outlets like Democracy Now! and the Grameen Foundation, a well-known NGO that focuses on microloans for the world's impoverished.

Thoughtworks was just listed on the Nasdaq stock market for the first time in September 2021, with a value of about \$9 billion.

The Narrative Behind the Chinese Propaganda

Positing an irredeemable United States against an innocent and persecuted China has been a narrative cornerstone among North America's anti-imperialist left. This school of thought is ostensibly based on intellectual commitment, but it is also quite well funded.

The People's Support Foundation (PSF), one of the main channels for these contributions, was co-founded by Jodie Evans, and she is listed as its president in records.

Evans, one of the founders of Code Pink, is in an apparent relationship with Singham. In 2019, Evans posted photos on Facebook of the couple celebrating their anniversary and referred to Singham as her husband.

Though the PSF looks superficially innocent, striving to do good in the world, with a stated purpose to empower people through education, research, and

community, its operations have a consistent bias in favor of the Chinese government.

Overlapping personnel and large disbursements of funding going to interlinked organizations remains a constant in all the tax and financial data that *New Lines* analyzed, as does the pro-China bias of the recipients of tens of millions in largesse.

While PSF has no public profile, funding recipient Code Pink has generated its fair share of controversy in the intervening period for being sympathetic to authoritarian governments considered hostile to the U.S.

In 2020, Code Pink launched the "China Is Not Our Enemy" campaign, in which the group argues for the United States to have a more conciliatory attitude to China. It encourages fans to contact members of Congress, as well as hosting podcasts and webinars that promote the same message.

Code Pink's states in a FAQ section on the Uyghurs:

"Our concern is that it is being used as a tool to drive the U.S.'s hybrid war on China, instead of a human rights issue that needs to be addressed as such."

The page provides links to "helpful resources" on the topic, which appear to treat the plight of the Uyghurs as a human rights nonissue. For example, a video featuring Evans and British academic John Ross shows the latter characterizing the Uyghur genocide allegation as "farcical" and a "total lie."

More on the *New Lines Magazine* investigation can be read [here](#).

The **Trends Journal** has been onto the infiltration of Chinese communist influence in every area of American life and the corridors of political and domestic power. This *New Lines* piece adds to the info already known.

Some touchstone articles include:

- ["AMAZON HELPED XI SOLIDIFY GRIP ON CHINA"](#) (21 Dec 2021)
- ["AMERICA DRIFTS TOWARD CHINA'S 'TECHNO-AUTOCRACY'"](#) (9 Feb 2021)
- ["APPLE BETRAYS CHINESE USERS FOR PROFIT"](#) (1 Jun 2021)
- ["CHINA CHALLENGING U.S. HI-TECH DOMINANCE"](#) (13 Jul 2021)
- ["U.S. MEDIA PUSHED NARRATIVE OF CHINA LOCKDOWN "SUCCESS" IN EARLY 2020"](#) (27 Jul 2021)
- ["CHINA BUSINESS ESPIONAGE NETS \\$500 BILLION A YEAR"](#) (29 Jun 2021)
- ["HOW THE CCP WENT VIRAL ON THE WINGS OF COVID"](#) (5 Oct 2021)
- ["U.S. FIRMS BOOST CHINA'S BID FOR GLOBAL DOMINANCE"](#) (16 Nov 2021)
- ["CHINA 'TALENT PROGRAM' GIFTED AT STEALING AMERICAN IP"](#) (26 Oct 2021)
- ["UNIVERSITIES HIDING CCP CONFUCIUS INSTITUTES"](#) (12 Oct 2021)
- ["COMMISSION WARNS WHITE HOUSE OF COMMERCIAL TIES WITH BEIJING"](#) (23 Nov 2021)
- ["1984 TO 2021: HOW APPLE LEARNED TO LOVE BIG BROTHER"](#) (17 Aug 2021)

TRENDS IN CRYPTOS



WHY BITCOIN MAXIMALISM GETS IT WRONG

God bless Michael Saylor and his recognition that the sound, technologically innovative store of value engineered in Bitcoin is highly valuable in an age of massively corrosive money debasement.

The Microstrategy CEO made a decision earlier than most to move his investment firm's assets into the king of cryptos, and despite wide fluctuations and volatility, he has no reason so far to regret his decision.

But Saylor, like Max Keiser, friend of Gerald Celente and another crypto seer admired by Trends In Cryptos, do tend to see Bitcoin as the only (or maybe, by far the most) sound and legitimate crypto network.

So what might they be missing in their assessment?

To use an apt analogy, different cryptocurrencies and the networks and ecosystems can be seen as addressing various problems and offering innovative solutions.

In other words, cryptos are very much like software companies of the 1980's and 90's. Just as there was room for accounting software, word processing, creativity applications and computer games, the “Crypto Techno Revolution” (see [“THE CRYPTO ‘AGE OF UTILITY’ HAS JUST BEGUN.”](#) 12 Oct 2021) is touching countless areas and offering disruptive solutions.

The solutions are disruptive because cryptos notably automate processes via their networks, including delivering services, executing and running software, and handling the distribution of tokenized rewards for investors and network operators.

Mark Cuban is an example of an investor who sees a bigger picture with cryptos.

Speaking recently about the potential of DAOs (Decentralized Autonomous Organizations) to displace the traditional “company and stockholder” organization of businesses, he noted:

“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”

Cuban has also voiced enthusiasm for crypto smart contract technology, which automate processes and token and other asset distributions in DAOs, DeFi (Decentralized Finance) and NFTs (Non-Fungible Tokens).

According to [ambcrypto.com](#), Cuban holds NFT collectibles built on Ethereum, Polygon, and Solana.

So: would a savvy investor of the 90's choose just one software product or company to invest in, seeing others as “fake” or “scams?”

Of course not. Which isn't to say that software clinkers and fly-by-night companies didn't pop up in those days, or that the wild dot.com bust of the late 90's didn't underscore the wisdom of the phrase "Caveat Emptor."

The truth is, the vast majority of current crypto projects will lose money for the vast majority of those who plunk their fiat them.

But that's a far way from asserting that Bitcoin is the only crypto that has utility, integrity, and opportunity.

As always, doing specific research into what a crypto project does (ie. what problems it seeks to solve and "innovation" it represents), is the only rational way to approach assessing potential value and investment opportunity.

But one thing about cryptos is certain: Bitcoin maximalism isn't the future. The fast evolving technology is already doing far more than store value in an efficient and sound way, though that by itself is certainly revolutionary, and can never be taken away from the "King of Cryptos."

SOLANA AN ETHEREUM KILLER?



Talk of Ethereum surpassing Bitcoin in market cap has been a thing for a long time now (at least in "crypto" years).

But Bank of America is making news for a prediction that Ethereum may be eclipsed by more speedier and most cost effective

blockchain networks.

They specifically mentioned Solana as a contender.

After hosting Solana Foundation member Lily Liu, Bank of America informed clients in a research note that the Solana blockchain might become the "Visa of the digital asset ecosystem" since it focuses on scalability, cheap transaction costs, and simplicity of use.

The news about Bank of America's assessment was reported by [coindesk.com](https://www.coindesk.com).

Analyst Alkesh Shah wrote in a note published Tuesday that since Solana launched in 2020, it has settled over 50 billion transactions (Visa, the global payments giant, processed 164.7 billion transactions in the year ended Sept. 30), has more than \$11 billion in total value locked, and has been used to mint more than 5.7 million non-fungible tokens (NFTs).

Solana is designed for consumer use cases like micropayments and gaming, according to the bank.

Solana has also seen an astronomical rise in the value of its token. In 2021, it went from around two dollars to a high of over 240 dollars, before an end of the year sell-off that has characterized cryptos and stocks as well.

The Solana network sell-off also may have had something to do with several outages that showed the project still has work to do when it comes to bullet-proof reliability.

Some other blockchains, including Fantom and Hedera, also are boasting transaction volumes that are far outpacing Ethereum.

Hedera, used by more enterprise-class companies than any other DLT (Distributed Ledger Technology), has earned growing interest as one of the most environmentally friendly, cost-effective and reliable networks in use.

The coindesk story can be read [here](#).

CRYPTO NO LONGER A GOOD INVESTMENT HEDGE, IMF SAYS



Bitcoin and other digital currencies are increasingly moving in tandem with other financial markets and, therefore, are no longer as good a hedge for other investments, an analysis by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has found.

“The correlation of crypto assets with traditional holdings like stocks has increased significantly, which limits their perceived risk diversification benefits and raises the risk of contagion across financial markets,” the IMF’s blog noted last week.

Crypto served as a better hedge before the COVID era, Politico wrote in detailing the IMF’s findings, but the new report quashes crypto fans’ continuing claims that digital currencies still make a good alternative to gold as a store of wealth in uncertain times. (See [“Hedge Funds Going Long on Crypto.”](#) 22 Jun 2021).

The growing correlation between digital currencies and conventional financial markets, as well as the anonymity of crypto trades and assets, makes regulation and supervision of digital assets even more urgent, the IMF noted.

The Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, an international supervisory group, has suggested regulators set stiff capital reserve requirements for financial institutions dealing in crypto, as we reported in [“Regulators Urge Tightest Rules for Crypto”](#) (15 Jun 2021).

The European Commission has said it will consider adopting the recommendation.

TRENDPOST: *The IMF’s warning about crypto as a hedge underscores the forecast we made in [“Regulators Urge Tightest Rules for Crypto”](#) (15 Jun 2021) and elsewhere that as governments introduce stablecoins—digital coins whose*

value is tied to national currencies—investors will gravitate to their stability, while speculators will continue to gamble on less restricted cryptos.

The regulated market will give legitimacy to cryptocurrencies, while the less-regulated market will give play to thrill-seekers and remain the territory of innovation.

TURKS DUMP LIRA TO BUY CRYPTO



The lira, Turkey's national currency, has become such a risky store of value that Turks are placing their faith in cryptocurrencies.

Despite a government ban on using crypto as a form of payment, ads touting crypto have been plastered on buses and billboards and popped up in the airport at Istanbul; crypto shops have opened along Istanbul's Grand Bazaar.

Through 2021, the lira's value has cratered as the country's central bank has cut interest rates in the face of inflation raging at as much as 40 percent, as we have detailed in [“Turkey's Central Bank Governor Fired After Rate Hike”](#) (23 Mar 2021), [“Turkey: Another Day, Another Central Bankster Fired”](#) (1 Jun 2021), and [“Turkey's Economy Continues to Implode”](#) (14 Dec 2021).

In the last three months of 2021, Turks made an average of \$1.8 billion crypto trades a day involving lira, according to data service Chainalysis, more in any of the preceding five quarters but far below 2019's average of \$71 billion daily.

Since September, the lira has lost 40 percent of its value against the dollar while Bitcoin gained almost the same amount against the buck. (Bitcoin's value has since declined slightly.)

Trading in tether, a stablecoin tied to the U.S. dollar, has drawn more lira than either the dollar or euro, according to CryptoCompare, an analytics firm.

Turks are used to protecting their wealth and purchasing power by stashing them in dollars, euros, or gold; but the lure of crypto has overpowered traditional investment vehicles, despite the digital currencies' notorious volatility.

Seeing the crypto ban ignored, the government has said it will propose a new crypto law to parliament but has released no details of the measure.

Cryptocurrencies have become especially popular in countries with weak, failing, or volatile currencies. In June, El Salvador became the first nation to recognize Bitcoin as legal tender ([“El Salvador Recognizes Bitcoin as Cash.”](#) 15 Jun 2021).

TREND FORECAST: Turkey's president Recep Erdogan has tied his sinking credibility to the notion that low interest rates lower inflation. The fact that the population is grabbing cryptocurrencies despite a government ban is a sign that Turks have given up on their own currency and feel free to ignore their government's economic dictates.

As we pointed out in [“Turkey's Markets Crash, Currency Crisis”](#) (21 Dec 2021), 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 himself as a warrior against high interest rates and shadowy forces that threaten Turkey's economy in hopes of unifying the nation behind him.

It's not working: Erdogan's popularity keeps sliding along with stock values and the lira.

Erdogan will not acknowledge the abysmal failure of his policies. He also is unlikely to surrender power, whatever the result of the next election, which is slated to occur no later than June 2023: his 2018 re-election was marked by widespread claims by opponents and independent observers of ballot-stuffing and other forms of corruption.

BLOCKCHAIN BATTLES



TOMORROW'S STREAMERS WILL DEMAND CRYPTO INNOVATIONS, SAYS HULU. Does the future of Hulu's entertainment streaming service involve cryptos and the metaverse?

If its latest job search is any indication, the answer is yes.

The American streaming platform, a rival to Netflix, is looking for expertise aimed towards "tomorrow's streamers."

A "Brand Culture Marketing Manager" would establish a team and concentrate on how the company may expand beyond conventional streaming, via things like the metaverse and NFTs, and perhaps integrating crypto payments.

The job post read:

"The Brand Marketing Manager will be focused on new areas and verticals of opportunity for the Hulu brand that can reach the streamers of the tomorrow and younger audiences that are consuming content in less traditional ways"

The news was reported by cryptosrus.com and other outlets.

Hulu's plans are in line with parent company Disney, which recently established a web3 strategy.

Disney made its first move into the crypto/metaverse realm last November when it released their first NFT collection. Their "Golden Moments" NFT collection, marketed on VeVe, includes intellectual property from Pixar, Marvel, and Star

Wars films. Another recent Disney Parks job offering is looking for someone to "lead Disney's efforts in the NFT area."

Disney and Hulu are among a limited number of top streaming services with rights to hundreds of historic and current films. Their entry into the metaverse and use of NFTs will be taken as another sign of upside in the future of crypto technology.

CRYPTO IN RIO. Rio de Janeiro Mayor Eduardo Paes announced late last week that he intends to designate 1% of the city's treasury reserves to cryptocurrencies.

Though not nearly as aggressive as crypto moves by other Latin American countries including El Salvador, which under President Nayib Bukele made Bitcoin legal tender this past September, the Rio move is significant.

Cities and localities around the world, including American powerhouse urban hubs like Miami, and even New York, have all made news for crypto adoption efforts and strategies.

Rio's mayor said Rio's investment of treasury reserves was part of a larger aim to convert the city into a cryptocurrency center, according to news outlet Globo.

"We are going to launch Crypto Rio and invest 1% of the treasury in cryptocurrency. The government has a role to play," Paes said, adding that the state is considering tax breaks for the business.

Paes announced his intentions speaking on a panel of a crypto technology focused event.

Major Brazilian authorities were present on the panel, including municipal finance secretary Pedro Paulo, who said that his government is exploring a 10% reduction on property tax in Brazil for Bitcoin payments.

“Let's study the legal framework to do this. You take the single quota discount of 7%, it would make 10% if you pay in bitcoin,” Paulo reasoned.

Brazil has recently softened its attitude on Bitcoin and the cryptocurrency business, with federal deputy Luiz Goulart presenting a measure to legalize crypto as a payment mechanism for public and private sector employees in November, according to CoinTelegraph. MercadoPago, a leading crypto payment company in Brazil, permitted Brazilian citizens to purchase, trade, and hold major cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin and Ether in December.

Miami Mayor Francis Suarez, also present, talked about the obstacles of developing towns into technology centers. Saurez revealed intentions to invest a part of Miami's money in bitcoin this past February.

As reported by Zerotrade, the news follows a report by the American firm Fidelity Investments, which said game theory might offer clues about the future course of Bitcoin and government adoption.

According to the firm:

“There is very high stakes game theory at play here, whereby if bitcoin adoption increases, the countries that secure some bitcoin today will be better off competitively than their peers. Therefore, even if other countries do not believe in the investment thesis or adoption of bitcoin, they will be forced to acquire some as a form of insurance. In other words, a small cost can be paid today as a hedge compared to a potentially much larger cost years in the future.”

The Fidelity report concluded by saying other nations besides El Salvador might acquire bitcoin in 2022, and even a central bank might be tempted to make an acquisition.

The **Trends Journal** has been covering crypto adoption in stories including:

- [“EL SALVADOR RATTLES IMF WITH BITCOIN PASSAGE”](#) (15 Jun 2021)

- [“EURO THREATS NOT STOPPING CRYPTO MOVES”](#) (22 Jun 2021)
- [“EL SALVADOR CRYPTO WALLETS READY IN SEPTEMBER”](#) (24 Aug 2021)
- [“THE GEOPOLITICS OF BITCOIN”](#) (27 Jul 2021)
- [“ONLY CRYPTOPLORABLES HAVE USE FOR BITCOIN, SAYS NATIONAL REVIEW”](#) (Oct 19 2021)
- [“SINGAPORE ANGLES TO BECOME ASIA’S CRYPTO HUB”](#) (12 Oct 2021)
- [“NEW YORK’S NEW MAYOR TAKES PAY IN BITCOIN, CHALLENGES MIAMI”](#) (9 Nov 2021)

A WALMART METAVERSE. NFT collectibles, and a Walmart token? The giant retailer is reportedly making moves to enter the crypto space, which is certainly significant news.

One of the questions surrounding the news is what crypto networks might stand to benefit from a Walmart initiative.

Ethereum and a layer two protocol? Solana? The cryptosphere buzzed early this week with speculation. There was talk of a significant uptick on Hedera’s network, for example, and the possibilities of Walmart partnering with the enterprise leading DLT.

But speculation aside, Walmart is making moves.

Late this month, the big-box retailer filed numerous new trademarks indicating its intention to manufacture and sell virtual items, such as electronics, home décor, toys, sports goods, and personal care products, according to CNBC.

In a second filing, the business said that it will provide customers with both a virtual currency and NFTs.

Walmart submitted the applications on December 30th, according to the US Patent and Trademark Office.

Trademark attorney Josh Gerben noted:

"There's a lot of language in these, which shows that there's a lot of planning going on behind the scenes about how they're going to address cryptocurrency, how they're going to address the metaverse and the virtual world that appears to be coming or that's already here."

TRENDS IN THE COVID WAR



NEW "AMERICAN PLAN": KEEP GETTING TESTED FOR COVID

In support of Pres. Biden's intention to keep schools open, his administration has announced plans to begin shipping 5 million rapid COVID-19 tests each month to both public and private K-12 schools. This is in addition to the \$10 billion previously allocated to schools for testing.

The Wall Street Journal reported, on 12 January, that the rapid tests for schools will be in addition to the 500 million rapid tests the administration plans to distribute to the general public over the next several weeks. All such tests will be supplied "free of charge."

TRENDPOST: "Get tested! It's free!" Not it's not "free," but the politicians say it and the mindless mainstream media repeats it.

The cost of the "free" test kits will be covered by higher taxes paid by adults, their children and grandchildren.

The administration also announced expanded capabilities for processing the 5

million additional PCR tests that will be supplied to schools each month. The PCR test takes longer than the rapid tests to yield results but is thought to be more reliable.

TRENDPOST: *Not everyone would agree; see ["ITS DAMAGE DONE, FLAWED PCR TEST IS WITHDRAWN"](#) (11 Jan 2022) and ["COVID TESTS BULLSHIT? FDA RECALLS 2.2 MILLION?"](#) (16 Nov 2021).*

TREND FORECAST: *All these tests being made available will serve their purpose, that of keeping the fires of COVID fear burning, especially among those statistically at the lowest risk; see ["ACTUAL COVID RISKS DON'T IMPACT VAX NARRATIVE"](#) (19 Oct 2021) and ["VAX KIDS? THE COVID RISK IS 'TINY'"](#) (13 Jul 2021).*

EMPTY OFFICE PHENOMENON WORSENS: BOUNCE-BACK COMING?



Who in the world would have believed that two years ago February, colleges would send students home and offices, beginning with “Big-Tech,” would close down and tell their employees to work from home as fears of the coronavirus spread from China?

And back then, when politicians jumped on board to fight the COVID War, they issued unscientific mandates that the plantation workers of Slavelandia must lockdown in their homes to “flatten the curve”... a curve that mind-twisted politicians and their bureaucrats ordered that was never flattened.

Yet, regardless of the pure stupidity of these orders, they are long forgotten and no one is held accountable for their gross failures and the financial and mental damage inflicted upon society.

More Dumbing Down

Then, despite their draconian mandates that failed, those in charge of what used to be called “democracies” issued, and continued to issue, more made-up bullshit to beat the coronavirus. With the majority of the population following orders, as they always do, the word on both Wall Street and Main Street was that “normalcy” would soon return: “It’ll come back” was the refrain from the brainwashed.

The popular narrative was that the coronavirus would disappear, life would pick up to where it was before the virus appeared and people would be going back to the office by early September 2020.

It did not happen.

A year later, with the rate of office occupancy below 40 percent in America, the line being sold was that office workers would be back by early September 2021.

That didn’t happen.

With COVID Fear & Hysteria the major mainstream media narrative and power hungry politicians issuing more mandates, the work-at-home trend solidified.

Then, heading into 2022, following the spread of the Delta variant and then Omicron COVID, the “hope” that workers would return to the office by early September, then January 2022, again faded.

The Future

We had been forecasting since the early stages of the COVID War that one of its far-reaching impacts would be a big-time shakeup in the very nature of workers "going to the office," and that would bring extensive and unwelcome changes to the commercial real estate sectors. However, despite the reality of empty office space and office occupancy rates more than 60 percent below their 2019 pre-COVID War levels, commercial real estate prices have not plummeted.

In ["AS FORECAST: NYC COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE CRISIS WORSENS"](#) (Aug 24 2021), we noted that, when we had forecast a sinking commercial real estate market back in March 2020, Wall St. denied it and mainstream media refused to publish our forecasts. But time is proving our forecasts correct. And while we take no great joy in seeing our dire forecasts vindicated, neither does that diminish their accuracy.

An article in *The Wall Street Journal*, on 13 January, reports that companies are rethinking the idea of predicting when their offices would fully reopen and office workers would return. They are realizing that a return to normalcy is anything but "just around the corner," and that COVID-19 and its impacts are going to be with us for a long time.

Whether it's the new variants popping up to scuttle projected schedules for bringing workers back to their office, or the realization that, like it or not, the longer people work from home, the harder it is for them to overcome that inertia and return to the office—see ["ONE-THIRD U.S. WORKERS WILL QUIT IF FORCED TO RETURN TO OFFICE"](#) (9 Mar 2021)—companies are concentrating more on alternatives to fully repopulated office spaces.

Among them, they will be bringing groups of workers in to address specific projects and then, upon completion, having them return to working remotely, or determining how many workers should return to offices based on up-to-the-minute infection rates.

Thus, companies do their best to maintain and take advantage of flexibility in their office work strategies. But there's little flexibility for office landlords who see anything but a rosy future in the fact that an average of only 28 percent of the workforce returned to the office last week in ten major cities.

TREND FORECAST: *Office occupancy rates will not return to pre-COVID War levels, and work-at-home-part-time will become part of 21st century life. Tenants will cut their losses by offering to sublet their unused space, putting them in*

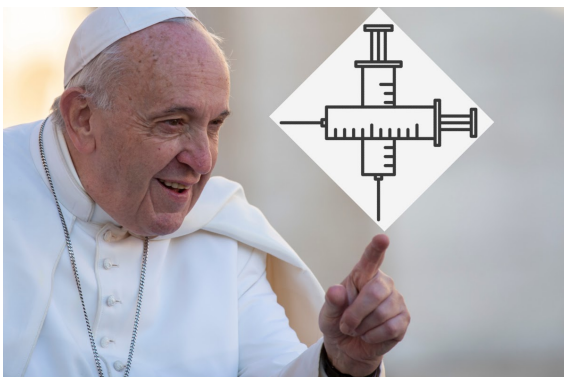
competition with their own landlords. Also, office spaces will be retrofitted as apartment buildings.

This drives down prices and forces smaller commercial landlords out of business, letting the "big" buy up property at fire sale prices and get even bigger, but not before impacting cities' tax revenues; see ["OFFICE WORKERS' SLOW RETURN ENDANGERS LANDLORDS, CITY FINANCES"](#) (9 Mar 2021). Rising interest rates don't help, either.

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast that the COVID War will begin to wind-down late March, mid-April. Thus, there will be a strong bounce-back to office occupancy rates. However, there will still be more building supply than office demand. And, until, or if, vaccine passport requirements are lifted, there will be continued downward economic pressure on office occupancy rates and the businesses that profit from high commuter traffic.*

Indeed, confirming our trend forecast made nearly two years ago, according to Ladders Quarterly Remote Work Report, as of the last quarter of 2021, 17 million professional jobs, or 18 percent of the professional workforce in the U.S., are now permanently remote. Just 3 million jobs were remote prior to the start of the COVID War back in 2019.

POPE GOES VAX & DRUGS. NATURAL HEALING A SIN?



As reported by *The Wall Street Journal* on 13 January, Pope Francis, on 10 January, gave his annual address to the assembled ambassadors of the Vatican's diplomatic corps; the Vatican maintains diplomatic relations with the E.U. and with 183 sovereign nations.

In keeping with the mainstream narrative, Pope Francis called for greater diplomatic efforts to address areas of concern including climate change, immigration issues and, of course, COVID-19.

He spoke in favor of what he called fundamental values, including "the right to life, from conception to its natural end, and the right to religious freedom." He railed against "ideological colonization," his term for the way rich nations promote "progressive" concepts like contraception, same-sex marriage and gender mutability in developing nations.

He repeated his earlier calls for greater access to vaccines and drugs as part of a coordinated global effort to fight COVID-19 (with zero mention of any natural healing strategies). Among the things he lamented were COVID-related school closures, which were driving children into virtual reality realms that isolated them from normal human interactions. And he lamented the politicization of the vaccine debate.

TRENDPOST: *The Pope called on individuals who had not yet done so to get vaccinated, not just for themselves but out of respect for the health of those around them, saying that the unvaccinated were allowing themselves to be "influenced by the ideology of the moment, often bolstered by baseless information or poorly documented facts."*

He railed against "cancel culture" while using cancel culture's rhetoric to vilify and shame anyone who dared challenge or resist the vaccine narrative.

So the Pope's respect for religious freedom, and his condemnation of cancel culture, doesn't extend to the right to refuse to be vaccinated.

He said just as much when he not only gave the vaccine his blessing, but said that "morally everyone must take the vaccine"; see ["HEALTH CARE WORKERS CHALLENGE VAX ON RELIGIOUS GROUNDS, POPE INDICATES THEY DON'T HAVE A PRAYER"](#) (12 Oct 2021). See also ["CATHOLICS PUSH BACK ON VACCINE 'PAGEANT'"](#) (26 Jan 2021).

One could probably make the case that the very notion of the Vatican's diplomatic corps maintaining relations with 183 "sovereign nations" smacks of hypocrisy as well.

One of the factors that defines a "sovereign nation" is its ability to preserve the integrity of its borders, and yet it was Pope Francis who, in 2019, remarked on Pres. Trump's plan for a border wall, "I don't know what's happening with this new culture of defending territories by building walls.

We already knew one, that (one) in Berlin, which brought so many headaches and so much suffering," he said.

THE CANNABIS COVID CURE



Researchers at Oregon State University have released findings from a study which indicate that certain compounds found in marijuana may help prevent the COVID-19 virus from entering human cells.

As reported by Study Finds.org on 12 January, the compounds, a pair of cannabinoid acids, target and bind to the same Coronavirus spike proteins that are targeted and bound to by COVID-19 vaccines and antibody therapies. In so doing, they inhibit the spike protein from binding with the ACE2 enzyme, which is abundant on the surface of cells in the lungs and other organs, and which is the avenue for the virus to infect human cells.

The researchers point out that virus receptor blocking compounds (unrelated to marijuana, however) have been useful in fighting HIV-1 and hepatitis.

The cannabinoid acids appear equally effective against the variants of COVID-19 that are currently known.

So, it may turn out that these compounds, which are abundant in hemp and many hemp extracts, have a profile of safe use in humans and which are unrelated to THC, the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana, may do just what the COVID-19 vaccines do—stop the virus from infecting human cells and replicating—except that they can be taken orally.

The researchers are, so far, not proposing the cannabinoid acids as an alternative to COVID-19 vaccines, but in addition to the vaccines.

The researchers have been looking into other natural, botanical substances that may have similar virus receptor blocking capabilities; one of them is licorice. But further research is dependent on additional funding.

TRENDPOST: *We have long maintained that research into marijuana's enormous potential for medical benefits has, thus far, barely scratched the surface; see ["AS FORECAST, POT IS ON FIRE WORLDWIDE"](#) (31 Jan 2019), ["GET HIGH. GET HEALTHY"](#) (11 Dec 2018), and ["IS POT GOOD MEDICINE?"](#) (17 Jan 2017).*

And there's great appeal in the notion that natural remedies are out there, just waiting to be discovered. But that was then and this is now. Prior to the COVID War, plenty of people believed in natural healing as a viable alternative to the products of the pharmaceutical industry. The hippies and other natural-healing advocates loved to say "Plants feed us; they can also heal us"; see ["REEFER MONEY MADNESS"](#) (27 Feb 2017).

But now merely suggesting that there may be alternatives—natural or otherwise—to the COVID-19 vaccinations is fraught with peril.

Look what happened to those who dared to put forth the notion that ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine might be used to fight COVID-19: such people were vilified as "science deniers"—by the same people who used to say "Question Authority"—and mercilessly ridiculed by the full force of the Ministry of Propaganda; they might as well have been pilloried in the town square and pelted with rotten vegetables.

Imagine the field day the late-night comics will have at the expense of anyone putting credence in cannabinoids as a tool against COVID-19!

FULLY-VAXXED, FULL OF COVID, FULL OF CRAP



Lori Lightfoot, the Democrat mayor of Chicago, is fully vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19. But that didn't keep her from testing positive for the virus, as she announced on 11 January, according to reporting the same day by *The Hill*.

The mayor said she was experiencing cold-like symptoms, but otherwise feels "fine." She will continue to work from home while following CDC guidelines for isolation. She not only credits having been vaccinated and boosted for the relative mildness of her symptoms, but says that the case serves as "an urgent reminder" for folks to get vaccinated and boosted, "as it's the only way to beat this pandemic."

Doubling down on the get vaxxed, get COVID and selling the bullshit that the vaccines, which were sold to the public as having a 96 percent efficacy rate, work, America's political idol, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who is fully vaxxed and boosted made the "news" with her declaration:

"Welp, so it happened. Got COVID, probably omicron. As of today I am thankfully recovered and wrapping up quarantine, but COVID was no joke. For a while I've noted the term "mild" is misleading when the bar is hospitalization and death. Even "mild" cases can result in long COVID, which includes a range of conditions like cognitive impairment, POTS, & chronic fatigue."

Again, like Lightfoot, she too spews out the line of the importance of getting vaxxed, even though the vaxxed are getting the virus. And she says she “probably” got Omicron. Probably? How about “probably” the vaccine is useless and you got COVID-19? Yet, the media sells this stupidity and the public buys it.

TRENDPOST: *Are you following this? The fact that the mayor and congresswoman tested positive despite being fully vaxxed and boosted can't be permitted to undermine the official narrative that all those jabs are the only way to protect ourselves from the virus.*

And, rather than admitting the jab does not work, they say without it they would have been sicker, they tell the public how effective the vaxxes are and blame those who are not jabbed for spreading the virus and endangering others.

TREND UPDATE: *Included in the list of pro-vax champions who got fully vaxxed and boosted but still got the virus, was Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, which we noted in last week's **Trends Journal**.*

Keeping that military spirit of “you must get vaxxed or resign because the vax is so great, yesterday it was reported that fully jabbed and boosted General Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also got the virus. The Pentagon said another member of the Joint Chiefs who got two shots and a booster also got the virus, but they refused to tell We the People of Slavlandia who it is.

Jerking Off in Public

In another rather high-profile case of a breakthrough infection in a person fully vaxxed and boosted, *The Wall Street Journal* reports, on 13 January, that Jim Justice, the Republican governor of West Virginia, has not only tested positive but is suffering from symptoms that, unlike Mayor Lightfoot's, can hardly be described as “mild.”

The 70-year-old governor woke up on 11 January with congestion and a cough, which worsened by that afternoon to include a high fever, headache, elevated blood pressure and heart rate. The governor describes himself as feeling

"extremely unwell," and in addition to isolating he started receiving monoclonal antibody treatment on Tuesday night.

TRENDPOST: *While such treatments are neither new nor unheard of—see ["REGENERON TOUTS EFFECTIVENESS OF 'PASSIVE VACCINE' ANTIBODY COCKTAIL"](#) (2 Feb 2021)—they are neither highly publicized nor promoted, nor are they easy to come by. Once again, the premise that there are treatments that may be viable alternatives to the vax and booster program we've been sold is almost tantamount to heresy.*

But, when one has the resources available to a governor, you can bet that this particular patient is telling his doctors, "I want you to throw everything at this that you can get your hands on, and be quick about it!"

One of the governor's doctors, however, has stated that he expects the governor to recover quickly, saying that "without the immunity afforded by those vaccines, his outcome could be much worse."

So, do you see how this works? No matter how serious are the symptoms the governor is experiencing, if he hadn't had the shots, it would be even worse. And the governor's recovery will be credited not to any other treatments, but to the vaccines and boosters.

Gov. Justice has been, like Mayor Lightfoot, a big promoter of vaccinations, and has been critical of those whom he said have spread "misinformation" about COVID-19 vaccines. He even sent a letter to Pres. Biden last week requesting that the president direct the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to authorize a fourth shot for some West Virginians.

TRENDPOST: *But what if all these breakthrough infections were occurring not in spite of people having been vaccinated and boosted, but because they had been vaccinated and boosted? See ["VACCINATED MORE LIKELY TO BECOME INFECTED WITH COVID VARIANTS, SAYS NEW STUDY"](#) (5 Oct 2021)—or is that just "misinformation"?*

GERMANS HIT HARD WITH NEW COVID MANDATES. PROTESTS CONTINUE



German restaurants and hotels are bracing for new challenges after the government approved stricter COVID-19 guidelines that require booster shots for individuals who would have previously qualified to enter these venues in the country.

“The situation is once again dramatic for many of our members,” Ingrid Hartges, the director of DEHOGA, Germany’s Hotel and Restaurant Association, told DW.com.

Hartges was referring to the country’s new “2G-plus rule,” which means those who have been vaccinated or have recovered from the virus must now prove they’ve received a booster shot to enter certain venues in the country.

Hartges said the science does not support the move and pointed to data from the Robert Koch Institute that indicated that the country’s hospitality industry was not a driving force in spreading infections. The subsequent lockdowns have devastated the hospitality industry, stripping 42 percent in sales compared to 2019, the report said.

About 71 percent of Germans have received the first two jabs and 41 percent have taken a booster. Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who recently told voters that "anyone who orders leadership from me will get it," has recently supported a vaccine mandate in the country, which sparked protests on Saturday in Hamburg and Düsseldorf. Thousands lashed out against the possibility of forced vaccinations.

TRENDPOST: *Such protests are nothing new, even though most of the mainstream media tends to ignore, downplay or trivialize them; the protests are*

*hardly ever framed in the context of protesting authoritarianism and resisting governments that want to dictate what their people should think and decide. Not so **Trends Journal**; see ["VAX WAR: THE SHOT HEARD AROUND THE WORLD"](#) (23 Nov 2021) and ["ANTI-LOCKDOWN FIGHTERS GRAB SEATS IN AUSTRIA'S REGIONAL PARLIAMENT, AS PREDICTED BY TRENDS JOURNAL"](#) (5 Oct 2021).*

TREND FORECAST: *As we have long forecast, the stricter the government mandates, the stronger the growth of anti-vax/anti-establishment populist movements.*

Moreover, these protests from citizens who say it is their freedom to inject into their bodies what they wish rather than doing what the government is forcing them to do will gain in strength as economic conditions deteriorate.

*Indeed, the **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the coronavirus outbreak and the damage it has done to the German economy. (See ["GERMANY SLIDING TOWARD RECESSION,"](#) ["GERMANY'S FACTORY OUTPUT FALLS FOR THIRD STRAIGHT MONTH,"](#) ["GERMANY: ECONOMY HITS THE BRAKES,"](#) and ["NEW GERMAN CHANCELLOR: ANOTHER POLITICIAN WHO LIED HIS WAY INTO OFFICE."](#))*

Getting Worse

The U.K.'s Express newspaper reported that a recent study found that 14 percent of German firms polled said they feared for their existence due to the coronavirus outbreak. Munich-based Ifo Institute for Economic Research surveyed 9,100 companies in December across all sectors. Last month, 17.1 percent of firms in the retail sector expressed fears over their future, the paper said.

Thomas Mertens, the chairman of Germany's Standing Committee on Vaccination (STIKO), spoke out against a vaccination mandate, Politico reported.

"This divides society, too much pressure is built up," he said.

Scholz has now been criticized for not being assertive enough to push for the vaccine mandate.

Jürgen Falter, a professor of political science at Mainz University, told Politico that the new chancellor seemed to have underestimated the resistance from lawmakers in the country when he first mentioned the mandate.

"He cannot be sure that the coalition will follow him and thus does not want to look like a weak chancellor," Falter said. "He is renouncing leadership as the chancellor of all Germans because coalition peace is more important to him in the current situation."

TREND FORECAST: *The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on economy-killing lockdowns and protests that attract thousands in an attempt to reclaim their freedom and right to earn a living for their families.*

*Governments and media have tried to marginalize anyone opposed to these dictates as right-wing extremists. Or if they were in the United States, as detailed in this **Trends Journal** article ["BIDEN HOSPITAL VAX MANDATE LOSING SUPPORT."](#) Donald Trump supporters. Also see: ["ITALIANS PROTESTING VACCINE MANDATES DENOUNCED AS FASCISTS."](#) and ["ITALIANS TAKE TO THE STREETS TO RAIL AGAINST WORKPLACE 'GREEN PASS.'"](#))*

Again, we maintain our forecast for strong anti-vax, anti-establishment, anti-immigration political movements to sweep across the continent. And, the faster economies decline the faster these movements will rise.

*And as for Germany, as we have noted in our **Trends Journal**, the nation is teetering on Recession. Thus, the deeper economies decline, the faster, higher and stronger these anti-establishment movements will rise.*

PROTESTERS TAKE TO THE STREETS IN BEIRUT



Several hundred people gathered in downtown Beirut on Saturday to voice their opposition against new measures aimed at the unvaccinated in Lebanon, including unvaccinated civil servants being forced to take frequent PCR tests that many cannot afford.

The Guardian reported that the country of six million has recorded more than 760,000 cases and 9,250 deaths since the start of the outbreak. The protesters took to Martyrs Square to criticize the government for implementing the vaccine-or-test model for public sector workers.

“People can inject themselves with whatever chemicals they want until the end of time, but I don't want to,” one 35-year-old woman told Al Jazeera.

The report pointed out that Beirut has not mandated the vaccine. Only 37 percent of the population has taken two doses of the vaccine.

“They want to force the vaccine, but which vaccine?” Roland Adwan, the vice president of a syndicate of workers’ unions that organized the protest, told the news outlet. “There was a first dose, then second dose, now third dose, and what’s next? A fifth dose?”

The country’s health minister told Al Jazeera that she was encouraged by the relatively small numbers of protesters compared to the 30,000 who arrived at health clinics to take a jab on the same day.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have been reporting, Lebanon is in deep socioeconomic and political decline. See [“LEBANON’S CURRENCY FALLS TO RECORD LOW, SPARKING UNREST,”](#) 9 Mar 2021.*

Inflation, hitting triple digits, is soaring, Gross Domestic Product plunged 37 percent last year, and an estimated three quarters of Lebanese live below the poverty line. EP reported that The World Bank said Lebanon's economic and financial crisis may even hit the top three most severe crises globally since the 1850s.

Therefore, while some are playing down the significance of how many are protesting the vaccine mandates, the Lebanese crisis is far greater than COVID War implications. Indeed, considering its instability, it may well become a Middle East flashpoint for a military war... possibly with Israel. (See ["ISRAEL BLAMES ROCKET ATTACK ON HEZBOLLAH, RESPONDS."](#) 10 Aug 2021.)

PROTESTERS FLOCK TO STREETS OF ITALY. LASH OUT AT NEW RESTRICTIONS TARGETING THE UNVAXXED.



Demonstrators took to the streets in major Italian cities on Saturday to criticize the government—namely Italian President Sergio Mattarella and Prime Minister Mario Draghi—over new restrictions for the unvaccinated in the country in the form of a “Super Green Pass.”

Under the new guidelines, a negative COVID-19 test will no longer allow citizens to enter indoor venues like bars and restaurants. Draghi has been a vocal critic of those who have refused the jab, saying “most of the problems” the country is experiencing are due to the “fact that there are unvaccinated people.”

He said these individuals are putting a strain on hospitals and are more likely to develop serious forms of the disease. (See [“DRAGHI: BANKSTER CONTROL OF ITALIA.”](#) [“ITALY: POPULIST MOVEMENT DEAD, PART II”](#) and [“ITALIANS TAKE TO THE STREETS TO RAIL AGAINST WORKPLACE ‘GREENPASS.’”](#))

About 86 percent of Italians over 12 years old have been vaccinated. The country has required all those over 50 years old to be fully vaccinated or face a fine.

Protesters gathered in Rome for a sit-in, according to the website Wanted in Rome. Enrico Montesano, an actor, addressed the crowd and told them, “People like us never give up.”

Luc Montagnier, 89, a virologist who won the Nobel Prize in 2008, attended the rally, saying vaccines “do not protect but facilitate other infections. He said the unvaccinated “will save humanity,” the website reported.

In Milan, protesters listened to a video message from Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò who said, “It is the Lord who saves you, not an experimental serum...Your children will thank you for what you do.”

Wanted in Rome reported that the Italian government has described the so-called Super Green Pass as a “reinforced” version of the earlier one.

The only difference is that this pass cannot be obtained by someone who is not vaccinated. The pass is expected to take full effect on 1 February. The unvaccinated will still be allowed to enter supermarkets and pharmacies.

TREND FORECAST: As we continue to note, there will be growing anti-vax, anti-establishment, anti-immigration, anti-Eurozone movements spreading throughout Europe. This trend will greatly accelerate as economies decline, civil unrest grows and the refugee crisis worsens.

TRENDPOST: Prime Minister Mario Draghi said “not getting vaccinated is an appeal to die.” Is it?

Not for young people and those under 60 years of age. As of 21 July according to [statista](#), of the 128,000 virus deaths in Italy over the last year and a half, some 108,000 were 70 years of age and older... and just 315 people under 40 years of age died from the coronavirus.

And, as with all these statistics, there is no reference as to what, if any, pre-existing chronic conditions those who died from the virus were suffering from.

We again note these facts that the media, politicians and “health experts” continually ignore to illustrate how all over the world, nations have imposed strict mandates and rules on entire populations despite only a small demographic dying from the virus.

And there is never a mention nor are their mandates being imposed to address and assist those most vulnerable to COVID 19 and the variants.

Also totally absent in the Presstitutes reporting and the politician’s dictates, are the calls for natural healing...for people to build their immune systems to help fight off disease, infections, viruses, etc.

PROTESTS ERUPT IN FRANCE OVER NEW, TIGHTER RESTRICTIONS FOR VACCINE PASS



Protesters gathered in the long shadow of the Eiffel Tower on Saturday to rail against the government’s new requirements to obtain a vaccination health pass, which now requires a third COVID-19 vaccine jab.

The government deactivated the so-called “health pass” for up to half a million French people who previously qualified. The pass allows citizens to enter bars and restaurants across the country and resume some semblance of normal life. (See [“PROTESTS BREAK OUT IN FRANCE OVER HEALTH PASS MANDATE.”](#) [“FRANCE: NO VACCINE PASSPORT, NO TRAVEL”](#) and [“NO COVID PASS, NO EIFFEL TOWER.”](#))

We reported last week, in an article titled, [“LITTLE TYRANT MACRON: THE PISS OFF BOY.”](#) that the French president admitted that he hopes to make life as unpleasant as he possibly can for the unvaccinated in his country.

“The unvaccinated, I really want to piss them off,” he told *Le Parisien* newspaper. “And so we will continue to do so, to the bitter end. That’s the strategy. When my freedom comes to threaten that of our people, I become irresponsible. An irresponsible person is no longer a citizen.”

France 24 reported that many of the protesters used Novak Djokovic’s treatment in Australia as a rallying cry. They chanted “no to the vaccine” and “freedom for Djokovic.”

Other protesters waved the French flag and held banners that read, “It’s not the virus they want to control, it’s you.”

One protester, identified only as a woman in her 60s, told the outlet, “It’s Nazism, it’s apartheid. I haven’t been jabbed and I’m against vaccines in general.”

Protests also materialized in Lyon, Nantes, Bordeaux, and Marseille, drawing about 1,000 people in each location, the report said.

About 91 percent of adults in the country have received two vaccine jabs, but France has seen about 300,000 new cases a day over the past week.

Reports said up to 76 percent of the country’s ICU beds were occupied by COVID-19 patients as of Sunday. The country of 67 million is losing about 200 patients a day to the virus.

Despite the surge in cases and new restrictions, a court ruled that the government cannot require face coverings outdoors in the city.

"I think it's good news," Julie Petrucci, a marketing professional who lives in Paris, told EuroNews. "I thought it was a bit absurd that we had to walk in the street with the mask on, so it's great. Finally, we can breathe! In fact, we never wore it that much, and I don't know how long the rule was in force for, but it's great."

France's National Assembly on Sunday—in a 215-58 vote—approved a law that will bar those who are unvaccinated from all restaurants and other venues, according to The Associated Press.

The report said French citizens had been able to enter these establishments if they could provide a recent negative COVID-19 test.

TREND FORECAST: *It should be noted that these massive demonstrations that are barely reported by the mainstream media, are just the beginning of a major march to Freedom.*

These new draconian COVID War measures will further drag down economic growth while escalating populist anti-vax, anti-establishment movements.

Ignoring the facts of broad-based citizen outrage against draconian measures being imposed upon them by politicians and bureaucrats, the media will continue to moronically label those fighting for freedom as right-wing conspiracy theorists... just as they label those opposed to the COVID mandates in America as Trump supporters.

DUTCH PROTESTERS TAKE TO STREETS IN AMSTERDAM OVER COVID-19 VACCINATION CAMPAIGN



Thousands of protesters in the Netherlands took to the streets to voice their opposition to COVID-19 mandates and the government's vaccination campaign while the country experiences its highest daily average of cases since the onset of the outbreak.

Reuters reported that the protests broke out across the country, including Amsterdam, where farmers parked tractors in the city's center to block traffic.

The report said protesters chanted anti-government slogans and marched with banners and yellow umbrellas. These protesters were met with police officers with stop-and-search powers and riot police also patrolled neighborhoods.

Step Vassen, a reporter for Al Jazeera, reported that the protesters were "heated" but said they were peaceful.

"There's a wide range of people against government measures and a general distrust of politics," she said. "A lot of people are now not obeying the rules and are violating many of the rules that are still in place."

The report pointed out that the government in Amsterdam has put into place one of the toughest lockdowns in Europe. Mark Rutte, the prime minister who was just sworn in for his fourth term, announced on Friday the easing of the lockdown despite the record number of infections.

"We are taking a big step and that also means we're taking a big risk," he said, according to Reuters. Under the new rules, beauty salons, hairdressers, and other non-essential stores will be allowed to open—with a 5 p.m. curfew. They've been closed since mid-December. Restaurants and bars will be closed

until 25 January. The report pointed out that some restaurants have reopened on their own due to popular support.

Ernst Kuipers, the health minister, said the government understands the challenges these businesses face and decided to take a “calculated risk because we have to.”

“Lockdowns are very hard on everyone and keeping everything closed is also bad for our health,” he said.

TREND FORECASTS: *We continue to note these protests to illustrate the growing anti-establishment movements that are forming, the negative socioeconomic and mental implications resulting from the draconian COVID War mandates that are ignored by the mainstream media and the politicians and bureaucrats that impose them... and how one word “Freedom,” is the dominant theme in the call to action.*

BULGARIA PROTESTERS STORM THE CAPITAL



Anti-vaccine mandate protesters clashed with police in Bulgaria’s capital on Wednesday and tried to gain entry into the country’s parliament building to express their dismay over health passes to prove vaccination or recent infection with COVID-19.

“The aim of the protest is to remove the restrictive measures and especially, first of all, so unconstitutional green certificate,” Kostadin Kostadinov, the leader of the nationalist Vazrazhdane (Revival) party, told The Associated Press. Euractiv reported that the siege on the parliament building lasted about two hours.

Bulgarians are obligated to wear masks while inside and while using public transportation. They are also required to have a so-called health pass to prove their vaccination status prior to entering restaurants and other venues.

The Vazrazhdane party garnered enough support for the first time to get a seat in Parliament last November for its anti-vaccine and anti-vaccine pass support.

The party holds 13 seats in Parliament's 240-seat chamber, the AP reported. The **Trends Journal** has reported on the backlash that governments have faced for trying to enforce these health passes in the name of public safety. (See ["ITALIANS TAKE TO THE STREETS TO RAIL AGAINST WORKPLACE 'GREEN PASS,'"](#) ["UPDATE: EURO 'DIGITAL GREEN PASS' GAINING SPEED"](#) and ["ITALY: NO GREEN PASS, NO FREEDOM."](#))

Reports said that the protesters managed to push through a police line but were stopped at their stairs of parliament. They demanded that the country put a stop to the mask rules and ditch its green vaccine pass campaign.

The AP reported that the country has the lowest vaccination rate in the E.U. with only a third of its population fully vaccinated. Radio Free Europe reported that the government dangled \$43.59 for its pensioners to get vaccinated.

The country of 6,867,685 had a total of 31,922 COVID related deaths, according to the World Health Organization. Thus, despite all the fear being spread of how the cases are rising and how low the vax rate is, their COVID death rate is 0.469 percent... and over the course of 24 months the grand total is 0.01956 percent of Bulgarians per month that have died of the virus.

TREND FORECAST: *As we continue to note, there will be growing anti-vax, anti-establishment, anti-immigration, anti-Eurozone movements spreading throughout Europe.*

This trend will greatly accelerate as economies decline, civil unrest grows and the refugee crisis worsens. And, what the Bulgarian's are doing in their protest is most important.

Rather than just taking to the streets and marching, they are attacking the attackers... the primary self-defense movement.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: *Most of the so-called Western democracies (warmongering nations that invade foreign countries to steal their resources under the guise of bringing freedom and democracy) have robbed their citizens of their Constitutional Rights of freedom and democracy by imposing dictatorial COVID War lockdown orders.*

PROTESTS BREAK OUT IN VIENNA OVER VACCINE MANDATE



Protesters chanting “the government must go” took to the streets in Vienna on Saturday demanding that leaders rescind their plan to enforce mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations in the country.

A day after the protest, the government announced that it would increase the age of those impacted by the vaccine mandate from 14 to 18 years old, The Associated Press reported.

The **Trends Journal** reported on the proposal when it was announced in November, in an article titled, [“AUSTRIA: ‘NO VAX, NO FREEDOM.’”](#)

We reported that under the mandate, citizens who cannot produce a COVID-19 vaccine passport will be fined up to €3,600 (\$4000). The country’s parliament plans to vote on the plan on Thursday and could be adopted into law by as soon as February.

The AP reported that there will be some exceptions, including pregnant women and those who cannot be vaccinated due to medical reasons. About 73.5 percent of the population is fully vaccinated.

“Without obligatory vaccination, we will always lag behind,” Wolfgang Mueckstein, Austria’s health minister, said, according to the AP. He said “all experts believe that we will need high overall immunity in the population next fall as well.”

Karl Nehammer, the chancellor, framed the issue for citizens on Sunday that this is not a fight between the vaccinated and the unvaccinated, but said “vaccination is the best guarantee for us to live together in freedom.”

Politico reported that residents in the country could be fined up to four times a year for being in violation of the mandate.

TREND FORECAST: As we have detailed to great extent in this and previous ***Trends Journals***, getting the vax does not eliminate getting the virus.

*In fact, again, as noted in this and previous **Trends Journals**, the Operation Warp Speed jab which was sold to the public as having an 96 percent efficacy rate, was downgraded to 39 percent by the Israeli Health Ministry.*

And now, the same ministers of Israeli health reported that the 4th dose booster shot is ‘not good enough’ against the Omicron variant. Therefore, we forecast new versions of the gene therapy inoculation will be coming to market and yearly shots will be required/enforced by governments and institutions.

VAXXED-UP SPAIN COVID CASES SURGING



Despite over 80 percent of the country being fully vaccinated against COVID-19, Spain continues to see record numbers of cases and has blown past eight million infections since the start of the outbreak.

Reuters reported that the country of 47 million has been recording over 100,000 new cases per day. The report said infections have been climbing “without interruption” since November, but hospitalizations have not increased as drastically. About 90,000 people have died from the virus.

Hospital workers have also stressed that many of their current patients have COVID-19 but are hospitalized with another ailment. Julio Mayol, the medical director at the Hospital Clínico in Madrid, told *El País* that about a third of those admitted into the hospital with COVID are there “for other reasons.”

Madrid said all European Union and Schengen Area countries will continue to be part of its risk list for an additional week. Schengen Visa Info reported that travelers from the countries on the list will be “required to meet certain rules in order to be permitted entry to the country.”

TRENDPOST: *These facts of how so many people are getting the virus despite the percentage of those vaxxed are deep into what was sold as “herd immunity,” is totally ignored by politicians, their bureaucratic flunkies called “health experts,” and the mainstream media that sold the propaganda.*

Remember, America’s anointed # 1 infectious disease expert, Anthony “Fraud” Fauci told the people of the world that the herd would reach immunity when 70 percent got the jab. (See, [“FAUCI THE FAKE: THE ROOT OF ALL PANDEMIC LIES.”](#) 2 Mar 2021.)

Instead, they keep selling the bullshit that if those who were not vaxxed caught the virus they would have died, and those that have been vaxxed are only moderately suffering from the virus.

And yet, despite these overt failures, new vaccine mandates are being imposed upon populations to fight the COVID War.

Indeed, as of yesterday, Greek citizens over the age of 60 that are not fully jabbed will have to pay a €50 fine in January, rising to €100 in February.

EMBATTLED BORIS JOHNSON AIMS TO LIFT U.K.'S SELF-ISOLATING LAW



British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is planning to announce that he will end the United Kingdom's self-isolating rules after a COVID-19 diagnosis as the country begins to emerge from a wave of Omicron infections.

The Telegraph first reported on Johnson's plans and said the guidance will remain in place, but those who disregard the rules will not be penalized.

The move comes after England reduced self-isolating guidelines from seven days to five after a negative lateral flow test. The BBC reported that the U.K. reported 109,133 cases on Thursday which marked the lowest figure since late December.

The planned announcement followed the release of data from the U.K. Health Security Agency showed that about two-thirds of positive cases were no longer contagious by the fifth day.

Johnson has been under fire over a leaked video that showed aides last year mocking the previous mandates. (See [“COVID WAR CRACKDOWNS AND PROTESTS.”](#))

Since then, he has faced new calls to resign over allegations of even more parties at 10 Downing Street while the rest of the U.K. was under lockdown.

Johnson apologized last week and admitted that he attended a “bring your own booze” party. (See [“ANOTHER COVID FRAUDSTER CAUGHT.”](#))

Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, accused Johnson of lying about his “industrial-scale partying” during the lockdowns. The BBC reported that six members of Johnson’s Tory party have called for his resignation over the matter.

“I think he broke the law,” Starmer said. “I think he’s as good as admitted that he broke the law.”

TRENDPOST: *It is a freak show in front of everyone’s eyes. Those who get caught lying come up with the line that they “apologize.” There is no true apology. The only thing they are sorry about is that they got caught.*

Indeed, we have been reporting on how the cartoon character Boris Johnson has, like other politicians we have documented, imposed strict COVID mandates for the citizens as they do what they wish. See [“U.K., FU: COVID RULES FOR THEE, BUT NOT FOR ME.”](#) 14 Dec 2021.

TRENDPOST: *There are a number of reasons why so many are hesitant to get the COVID Jab. One is that they were rushed along under a project called “Operation Warp Speed.”*

Another is the fact that the disease is entirely survivable by most of the people it infects, and those who die from it are suffering from pre-existing comorbidities and/or the elderly, who are suffering from illnesses.

Indeed, as reported by the Associated Press:

“According to data from Johns Hopkins University. That means the case fatality ratio—or the portion of known cases that result in death in the country—is 1.8%. In other words, on average, 98.2% of known COVID-19 patients in the U.S. survive.”

SUPREME COURT PARTIALLY BLOCKS BIDEN VAX MANDATE



For those who had tuned into the Celente & The Judge podcast on 5 January, the U.S. Supreme Court's rejection of the Biden administration's mandate that gave the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's the power to force private businesses that employ more than 100

employees to mandate their workers get the COVID Jabs, comes as no surprise.

In that [podcast](#), a week before the Supreme Court's decision, Judge Andrew Napolitano accurately had forecast that the Supreme Court would reject the Biden mandate.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: *Again to further illustrate how those in power are making COVID War rules up, just as they did with the "Flatten the Curve" crap that flattened nothing... How did the Biden administration arrive at the number 100 employees? Why not 99 or 107?*

Why? Because moronic freaks called politicians are in control of a nation, state and city near you. Facts, data and science matter not in the new world of the power-hungry.

The court's majority, which voted 6-3 in favor, wrote that the Biden administration's vaccine-or-test requirements for these businesses were no "everyday exercise of federal power."

"It is instead a significant encroachment into the lives—and health—of vast number [sic] of employees. We can't expect Congress to speak clearly when authorizing an agency to exercise powers of vast economic and political significance. There can be little doubt that OSHA's mandate qualifies as an exercise of such authority."

The majority wrote that OSHA does not have a mandate from Congress to “regulate public health” for 84 million Americans “simply because they work for employers with more than 100 employees.”

The court's majority said OSHA's mandate is to concern itself with "work-related dangers." But the justices pointed out that COVID-19 is not something that becomes a threat by simply going to work. The virus has become a hazard of "daily life."

Eugene Scalia, the son of former Justice Antonin Scalia who served as the U.S. labor secretary, wrote in *The Wall Street Journal* that the court’s ruling “spells trouble for the administration’s plans more generally to exploit ambiguous statutory language to implement big economic or political change—like using financial regulation to curb climate change.”

The court also ruled in a 5-4 decision to allow medical facilities that accept Medicare and Medicaid dollars to enforce a vaccine mandate for employees.

The minority, Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, Neil Gorsuch, and Amy Coney Barrett, criticized the ruling, saying that it is not their opinion that the “Federal Government is likely to be able to show that Congress has authorized the unprecedented step of compelling over 10 million health care workers to be vaccinated on pain of being fired.” (See [“MAJORITY OF AMERICANS WOULD QUIT THEIR JOBS THAN TAKE THE JAB. WILL THEY BACK DOWN?,” “COURT BLOCKS BIDEN VACCINE MANDATE”](#) and [“BIDEN HOSPITAL VAX MANDATE LOSING SUPPORT.”](#))

The Biden administration has suffered legal setbacks tied to its coronavirus actions. In August, the White House admitted that it lacked the legal authority to extend the federal eviction moratorium after it expired in July. (See [“RENTERS BEWARE: COVID EVICTION MORATORIUM ENDING.”](#))

The Supreme Court also ruled in August that the Biden administration’s attempt to end the Trump-era “Remain in Mexico” policy violated federal law.

TRENDPOST: Biden is seen as going further than any past American president to force vaccinations and he is basing his effort on protecting “vaccinated workers from the unvaccinated,” which naturally raises the question of the vaccines’ effectiveness.

Again, totally absent from the mainstream narrative, is that the public was sold the lie by the drug lords back in November of 2020, that if one gets the COVID Jabs, the odds are 96 percent in their favor never to get the virus.

But of course, that is not true, since the efficacy rate, according to the Israeli Health Ministry, is 39 percent. See [“THE DARK SIDES OF THE VAX,”](#) 24 Aug 2021.

TRENDPOST: The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the Biden administration’s efforts to get millions of Americans vaccinated. It is the White House’s position that the only way the country will emerge from the outbreak will be through mask compliance and vaccines. (See [“MAJORITY OF AMERICANS WOULD QUIT THEIR JOBS THAN TAKE THE JAB. WILL THEY BACK DOWN?”](#) and [“BIDEN VAX MANDATE CONTESTED.”](#))

Again, unquestioned by the media is the illogic of the President’s and others claim that the unvaccinated are threatening the vaccinated. Thus, if a person is vaccinated they are supposedly safe from catching the virus. So how can the unvaccinated give them the virus?

SUPREME COURT, SUPREME MORON?



Pick up Sunday’s *New York Times* which self-proclaims itself as the “Paper of Record.”

Newspapers across America have fired some 26 percent of their reporters since

2008. In trying to make their papers look thicker despite dramatically shrinking content, pages that once had news related articles are now filled up with huge, useless meaningless photos.

Also, the *NYT* has the arrogance to declare that they, and only they, know what people should read because they publish “All the News That’s Fit to Print.”

An example of their “Fit to Print,” agenda driven content is exemplified in this Sunday’s *THE MORNING* article, titled, “Maskless and Inaccurate on the Bench,” by David Leonhardt. He begins the article by ranting how Justice Neil Gorsuch did not wear a mask in the courtroom recently.

This is news?

Then, as far as the “Inaccurate on the Bench,” this part of the article which should have been front page headline news, was noted at the end of his piece.

Leonhardt noted that in deciding the legality of President Biden’s vaccine mandates, Justice Sonia Sotomayor was ‘wildly incorrect’ in her statement that COVID cases were surging, hospitals were near capacity and “We have over 100,000 children, which we’ve never had before, in serious condition and many on ventilators.”

The Facts

He goes on to accurately note that “Fewer than 5,000 U.S. children were in the hospital with COVID last week, and many fewer were in “serious condition” or on ventilators. Some of the hospitalized children probably had incidental cases of the virus, meaning they had been hospitalized for other reasons and tested positive while there.”

Leonhardt also noted that even among unvaxxed children COVID symptoms are “overwhelmingly mild” and those with underlying health problems are most at risk... data which we have been reporting for nearly two years.

He said that according to the CDC, about 870 children were admitted to hospitals over the past week with COVID, “compared to more than 5,000 children who visit emergency rooms each week for sports injuries.

More than 1,000 are hospitalized for bronchiolitis during a typical January week.”

He goes on to say that according to epidemiologist Katelyn Jetelina, “the risk of Covid hospitalization for children—even in recent weeks—has been much lower than the risk from the respiratory virus known as R.S.V.”

TRENDPOST: Yet, despite these hard facts and data, schools are forcing young people to get injected with the Operation Warp Speed gene therapy jab and nations, cities and states are demanding that only the jabbed, except for very young children, must be inoculated to enter restaurants, cinema, gyms etc.

TRENDPOST: Also, which should be “big” news but is further buried in the article, Leonhardt says “Vaccinated elderly people are at much more risk of severe COVID illness than unvaccinated children.”

Once again, if the vaccinated are at risk after getting vaccinated, why get the jab and why attack those who refuse to get inoculated?

And, we note this article to exemplify the Supreme ignorance of the Supreme Court Justice who has voted on a key issue that impacts both the lives and livelihoods of millions of individuals based on totally inaccurate information.

In addition, as we illustrate, this should have been a headline story, instead it was buried in the back pages of the “Paper of Record.”

“CAN’T SEE YOUR CHILD,” JUDGE TELLS UN-VAXXED DAD



A Canadian judge told a father that his visitations with his 12-year-old child were temporarily suspended because he was not vaccinated—even though the child has received both jabs.

Judge J. Sébastien Vaillancourt, who is in Quebec province, decided at the end of last month that it is not in the child’s “best interest” to meet with the father given the number of cases in the province.

The legal problems reportedly started when the unidentified father sought to increase his visitation time with the child during the holidays.

The BBC reported that the child’s mother informed the court about the man’s vaccine status and alerted the court to posts he made on social media that were in opposition to vaccines.

Vaillancourt reportedly took into account that the 12-year-old lives with two younger siblings who are not eligible to receive the vaccines. He also pointed out that the vaccines do not seem to be as effective in stopping the spread of the Omicron variant.

He said it is “not in the best interests of any of the three children that [the father] can exercise access to [his 12-year-old child] at this time.”

Vaillancourt is not the first judge to consider vaccination status and parental visitation rights. A judge in Los Angeles County Superior Court mentioned that a father could lose his visitation rights over his vaccination status.

A divorced couple in Pasadena was in the middle of a bitter fight about whether their young son should take the COVID-19 vaccine.

The unvaccinated father was opposed.

The Los Angeles Times, which read the transcripts from the hearing, reported that Judge Harvey A. Silberman told the couple that the boy “absolutely” needs to be vaccinated.

He asked the parents if they were vaccinated and when the father said no, Silberman said, “Sir, you better get vaccinated, or you could very well lose time with your child unless you have a medical reason not to.”

The comment led to a debate in the legal community. John F. Banzhaf III, professor emeritus of public interest law at George Washington University Law School, told the paper that there is a precedent in court about limiting visitation over a parents’ behavior and pointed to how parents who were smokers were once treated.

He said family courts have ordered parents who smoked to put their cigarettes down for up to 48 hours before their child visits to keep the child safe from second-hand smoke.

Lloyd C. Rosen, a lawyer representing a New York father in a similar position, said even if the father got vaccinated, it will not eliminate the risk of the child coming down with the virus.

“There’s just so many different ways this child could be exposed to COVID that to single out the father and make his access conditional upon his vaccination status is not only inappropriate but well beyond any kind of reasonable determination in the best interest of the child,” he said.

The court ruling stays in effect until February until the court re-evaluates the conditions in the province.

TRENDPOST: *Once again, as we note in this week’s SUPREME COURT, SUPREME MORON article, jerks playing judges are making decisions that are contrary to hard data and scientific fact.*

No different in Canada. According to statista.com, to date, of 38,246,108 Canadians, the grand total of 14 children under the age of 12 have died of COVID over the past two years.

Yet, the Canadian clown playing “judge” ignores the facts or is too stupid to understand them and deprives a father from seeing his children because he fears the kids—who are not dying from the virus, as we have continually detailed, at worst, may suffer minor symptoms—will die of COVID.

TRENDPOST: *To further illustrate the judge’s stupidity, in both Canada and the U.S., children are not dying from the virus. And since they are not, why are they being inoculated with the Operation Warp Speed gene therapy jab?*

As we have long been reporting but they are now finally admitting, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that less than 0.2 percent of Covid-19 deaths in the United States have been among children.

Since the COVID War broke out in January 2020 to 6 January 2022, the CDC reports the grand total of 694 children aged 17 or younger that died of COVID... out of a population of some 74 million. And, 61 percent of those hospitalized were obese. There are 14.4 million obese children in the U.S., according to CDC estimates.

Again, confirming what we have been reporting for nearly two years, the people that should be taken care of the most are the elderly and those suffering from pre-existing comorbidities. Over 75 percent of COVID deaths have been among seniors, and over 25 percent, some 200,000, of those COVID deaths were people aged 85 and older.

Again, despite the fact that the virus is killing mostly those who are unhealthy, not a word about people getting in better health to fight the virus. Instead, all they do is sell the COVID Jab...which has greatly enriched the drug lords.

TRENDPOST: The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the efforts of governments from around the globe to try and achieve 100 percent vaccination.

Health officials insist that two jabs are no longer considered as effective in preventing illness and call on a third shot to be considered vaccinated.

But vaccine critics point to a historic number of cases amid the most recent Omicron wave and record number of hospitalizations—even in the world's most vaccinated cities. (See [“PLAY SCRAMBLE: DOES OMICRON= MORONIC?”](#) [“OMICRON: WE DON’T KNOW IF VACCINES ARE EFFECTIVE, BUT YOU MUST TAKE THE JAB”](#) and [“VAXXED OR NOT, OMICRON’S GONNA GET YA!”](#))

APPLE: ONLY FULLY JABBED CAN COME TO WORK



Apple, the tech giant in Cupertino, Calif., announced in a leaked memo to employees last week that they will need to prove they've received a COVID-19 booster shot or submit to a test if they want to enter a work facility, according to a report.

“Due to waning efficacy of the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines and the emergence of highly transmissible variants such as Omicron, a booster shot is now part of staying up to date with your COVID-19 vaccination to protect against severe disease,” the memo, which was obtained by The Verge, read.

The report said it was not clear if the new guidelines impact all employees or only those who work inside stores, but the rule is set to go into effect on 24 January. Reuters reported that Meta Platforms, the parent of Facebook, also recently announced that booster shots will be mandated for employees returning to offices. ([“WORK-FROM-HOME: 21st CENTURY MEGA-TREND.”](#))

Governments have used tech companies to be their censors when it comes to the coronavirus outbreak, and these companies have benefited financially during the outbreak and subsequent lockdowns. (See [“TRUST OUR TWITTER ALGORITHM, NOT YOUR LYING EYES.”](#) [“BIG TECH HELPING BIG PHARMA PUSH VACCINES.”](#) [“CONGRESS PRESSURES BIG TECH TO CENSOR EVEN MORE”](#) and [“TECH GIANTS AND NATION STATES: WHO CONTROLS WHO?”](#))

The claim from health officials has been that the Omicron variant is less deadly but more contagious than previous virus variants. They insist that the best way to protect yourself from serious illness or death is by taking a third jab of the vaccine. (See [“VAX EFFECTIVENESS WANES EQUALLY FOR OLD AND YOUNG: 4th JAB COMING.”](#))

Apple has not announced a firm date where corporate employees will have to return to the office. Tim Cook, the CEO, sent a memo last month that said offices are still open and some employees have been returning to work. The company seemed to dig in for a longer stretch of remote working and announced a \$1,000 bonus for employees to make working from home easier.

TREND FORECAST: *While there is a push going on among employers such as Apple, banks, investment firms, etc. to insist employees become fully vaxxed, as the COVID War begin to wind-down by late March, mid-April as we forecast, these forced-vax-mandates will lessen.*

In addition, with a work shortage continuing and the difficulty of finding qualified employees—plus more reports of low vaccine efficacy rates—the “No Jab, No Job” requirements will ease.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SINKS. CASHING IN ON THE OMICRON SURGE



Public schools across the U.S. have seen a dramatic drop in attendance during the latest surge in COVID-19 cases, which has been blamed on the number of cases among students and parents concerned about exposure.

“There’s never been anything like this,” Arthur Goldstein, a teacher at Francis Lewis High School in Queens, N.Y., told *The Wall Street Journal*.

The paper pointed out that Goldstein has been a teacher for nearly four decades and experienced the 2001 terror attacks and superstorm Sandy in 2012.

New York City’s attendance rate fell below 70 percent after the winter holidays. Attendance issues are not limited to New York.

The Los Angeles Unified School District reported a 66.8 percent absentee rate, and Boston Public Schools has seen attendance at around 70 percent since school resumed after winter break, the *WSJ* reported.

Hundreds of students in Chicago staged a walkout on Friday over the city’s decision to resume in-person learning.

“We need to be remote,” a high school student said. “I need online school because I don’t want to die.”

The Journal’s report said thousands of public schools have temporarily moved back to remote learning.

Mark Racine, the Boston district’s chief information officer, told the paper that the virus seemed to hit staffers as hard as it hit students and online learning allows students to communicate with tutors at any hour of the day.

TREND FORECAST: *As they go online for less expensive education, fewer and fewer students will be attending college in person.*

And, the homeschooling trend will grow as more parents work from home, are out of work and at home and/or they want to homeschool their children rather than have them indoctrinated in the woke new world of “public education.”

Thus, the “Interactive-U” online learning megatrend first forecast by Gerald Celente in his book, [Trends 2000](#) (Warner Books, 1997), will sharply accelerate.

The current education model was invented by the Prussians at the onset of the Industrial Revolution to teach workers in mass production facilities how to read, write, do math... and follow orders.

With interactive education, students will be able to access the best and most accomplished experts in selected fields of study rather than the one-size-fits-all, outdated educational programming that is now the norm.

Trends are born, they grow, mature, reach old age, and die. The Industrial Age education model is dying, and the Interactive-U model is still in its infancy.

Thus, the Ontrendpreneur® opportunities that seize on its growth will provide great rewards.

PFIZER CEO CONFIRMS CELENTE FORECAST: RETURN TO NORMAL LIFE BY SPRING



In Gerald Celente’s letter to subscribers last week, he had forecast “... as businesses sink deeper in debt and economies decline as interest rates and inflation rise, we

forecast the COVID War will begin to wind-down late March, mid-April.

Picking up where Celente left off, yesterday, the CEO of Pfizer said he sees a return to “normal life” in the spring.

His reason is that “We will soon be able to go back to a normal life,” because new treatments will help prevent severe illness.

He called Paxlovid, his company’s antiviral drug, a “game-changer.” Paxlovid and Merck’s Molnupiravir are intended to be used after someone becomes infected.

Paxlovid was authorized by U.S. health regulators last month and saw a 90 percent reduction of hospitalizations and deaths among patients most likely to come down with a severe illness.

The news is welcome given that a study which we note in this **Trends Journal** that the fourth booster shot being injected into Israelis did little to prevent Omicron infection.

Gili Regev-Yochay, the director of Israel’s Sheba Medical Center’s Infectious Diseases Unit, said the fourth Pfizer dose led to more antibodies—even more than produced in the third booster—but it is probably not enough for the Omicron variant.

Her comment is striking because health officials have been telling the public that only a third jab provides protection against the Omicron variant. (See [“BIDEN’S BOOSTER PLAN: VAX YOU.”](#), [“SELLING BOOSTER SHOTS, CDC’S WALENSKY SAYS ‘FU’ TO AGENCY ADVISERS.”](#), [“THE VAX/BOOSTER MARKET: DRUG DEALER ON PARADE”](#) and [“NEW YORK DICTATOR: NO BOOSTER SHOT, NO JOB.”](#))

Stéphane Bancel, the CEO of Moderna, told reporters on Monday that his company plans to market a COVID-19/influenza vaccine by fall 2023.

“Our goal is to be able to have a single annual booster so that we don’t have compliance issues where people don’t want to get two to three shots a winter,” he told a panel at the World Economic Forum, according to Politico. “The best-case scenario would be the fall of 2023.”

TREND FORECAST: *New vax drugs or not, we forecast the COVID War will begin winding-down late March, mid-April.*

The protests raging across Europe, the January 23rd mass-march targeting Washington DC, the loss of businesses and the destruction of hundreds of millions—if not billions—of lives and livelihoods that have been sacrificed to fight the COVID War, has reached its pivot point.

TRENDS IN GEOPOLITICS



U.S. CONTINUES TO RAMP UP COLD WAR 2 RHETORIC

The Cold War propaganda never stops. From having kids hiding under desks in case the Russians dropped an atom bomb on them at the end of World War II, to the lie—since not a shred of proof has been attained and those who promoted it have been discredited—that the Russians sabotaged Hillary Clinton’s campaign so Donald Trump would get elected President of the United States in 2016... for the past several months, the big news has been Russia will invade Ukraine.

Keeping the invasion fear spreading, without providing any evidence, the Biden administration accused the Kremlin of putting saboteurs in Ukraine to carry out a “false flag” operation to better justify an invasion—a charge that Moscow has denied.

“Russia is laying the groundwork to have the option of fabricating a pretext for invasion,” Jen Psaki, the White House press secretary, told reporters.

She said these acts could include “sabotage activities and information operations, by accusing Ukraine of preparing an imminent attack against Russian forces in eastern Ukraine,” according to *The New York Times*.

Dmitri S. Peskov, a spokesman for Russian President Vladimir Putin, called the U.S. claims “unfounded” and pointed out that they have “not been confirmed by anything.”

The paper said the U.S. was taking a risk by going public with the information given that it did not provide any evidence. John F. Kirby, the spokesman for the Pentagon, called the intelligence “very credible.” The paper spoke to two U.S. officials who said the intelligence was based on intercepts and movements on the ground.

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

As we have reported in recent issues, one of the main points of contention for Putin is what he sees as NATO’s reach into his backyard.

Putin has raised concerns about weapons systems being placed near Russia's borders and called these moves “red lines.” He has said a Tomahawk missile could hit Moscow in minutes.

In response, Sergei Ryabkov, Russia's deputy foreign minister, said Moscow could send “military infrastructure” to Cuba or Venezuela if tensions with the U.S. continued.

“I don't want to confirm anything, I will not rule out anything...Depends on the actions of our American colleagues,” he said in a recent interview in Russia.

Jake Sullivan, President Biden's national security adviser, told reporters that he would not respond to Ryabkov's "bluster" but if the Kremlin "were to move in that direction, we would deal with it decisively."

The *NYT* reported that the U.S. warned Russia that an invasion of Ukraine could result in tough sanctions and the prospect of Washington providing Ukrainian fighters with weapons so they could draw out the conflict with their more powerful adversary.

Biden has not hidden his feelings towards his Russian counterpart. He once called Putin a killer during an interview and his rhetoric during the 2020 campaign sparked the Russian leader to speak out on the subject. (See ["PUTIN ACKNOWLEDGES BIDEN'S ANTI-RUSSIAN RHETORIC."](#))

The U.S. president needs a foreign policy victory, but despite the tough talk, he is not going to get into a war that he cannot win against Russia. (See ["BIDEN ON AFGHANISTAN: FUCK THAT."](#))

Sullivan said that Russia has amassed about 100,000 troops on Ukraine's border but indicated that it is not certain that an invasion is inevitable.

John Bolton, the former national security adviser for President Trump, wrote in *The Washington Post* on Sunday that the West's consensus is that Putin is preparing to invade, "finishing what he started in 2014 with Crimea, this time annexing all of Ukraine."

Bolton, who never saw a conflict he didn't like, said the U.S. and NATO should "surge shipment of lethal military assistance to Ukraine" and "redeploy substantial additional forces there—not to fight, but to train and exercise with Ukrainian counterparts."

He wrote that "Russian generals should look through their field glasses and see American flags in Ukraine and wonder what it means."

“If we fail Kyiv (again), thereby endangering nearby NATO members, Putin will have perfected a road map to further erode NATO’s deterrence and its entire collective defense rationale. He not only has a strategy, which the West doesn’t, he has also proven himself an adroit tactician. Today, he is still calling the shots. That needs to change,” he wrote.

TREND FORECAST: *Gerald Celente has said that the U.S. —despite having the largest and most expensive military in history—has not won a war since World War II and cannot even win against third-world nations, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, etc.*

The U.S.’s disastrous withdrawal from Kabul has further negated America’s military’s reputation. By their deeds you shall know them, and considering the U.S. unbroken line of military defeats, Beijing and Moscow see the U.S. as a fading power.

However, despite these deadly and costly failures, once again both political parties in Washington awarded the military industrial complex a record breaking defense budget. As a Christmas gift, on 27 December President Biden signed a nearly \$770 billion defense bill.

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, Kosovo War, Afghan War, Iraq War... to its military interventions in Somalia, Libya, etc., 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 lies sold to them by their governments over the centuries. "Remember the Main"?

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, 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.

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: *As we have reported, completely absent in the American media reports of the current U.S. stand with Ukraine is the role Washington and Victoria Nuland 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.

TRENDS-EYE VIEW



U.S.S.A. IF YOU DON'T OBEY THE GOVERNMENT, YOU ARE A DOMESTIC TERRORIST

A top national security official informed a Senate committee last week that the Justice Department will create a new unit that will focus on the threat of domestic terrorism.

“We have seen a growing threat from those who are motivated by racial animus, as well as those who ascribe to extremist anti-government and anti-authority ideologies,” Matthew Olsen, the assistant attorney general, said in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

(See [“FBI: THE POLITICIZED POLICE UNDERMINING AMERICA.”](#) [“FBI: HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?”](#) and [“BIDEN DOJ ON BLUE STATE NURSING HOME DEATHS: NEVERMIND.”](#))

Olsen heads up the DOJ’s National Security Division, which already oversees a counterterrorism unit, The Associated Press reported. He said the new unit will

be tasked with containing the growing threat of domestic terrorism, which he said more than doubled since the spring of 2020.

The unit was announced days after the anniversary of the 6 January attack on the Capitol. He said the raid is “being investigated as an act of domestic terrorism.”

Reports have pointed out that the issue is politically divisive. CNBC reported that the FBI considers white supremacist extremists and anti-government extremists, “specifically anti-government militias, to be the most lethal threats.”

Attorney General Merrick Garland was criticized late last year over a memo where he told the FBI and DOJ to “launch a series of additional efforts in the coming days designed to address the rise in criminal conduct directed toward school personnel.”

Sen. Chuck Grassley, the top Republican on the Judiciary Committee, told Garland he should rescind the memo that he called “extremely divisive.”

Garland, who appeared in front of the House Judiciary Committee, told representatives that the DOJ “supports and defends the First Amendment right of parents to complain as vociferously as they wish about the education of their children, about the curriculum taught in the schools.”

Republicans have also accused Democrats of using the attack on the Capitol for their political ambitions.

Sen. Ted Cruz, at a recent Senate hearing, asked a senior FBI official if agents or confidential informants played a role in the riot at the Capitol.

"How many FBI agents or confidential informants actively participated in the events of Jan. 6?" Cruz asked.

Jill Sanborn, executive assistant director for the FBI's national security branch, told Cruz that she cannot answer the question.

Olsen said the new unit will “augment” the department’s “existing approach” and ensure that cases involving domestic terrorism allegations are “properly handled and effectively coordinated.”

TRENDPOST: *In America, any citizen who complains that the crime syndicate called the government—people who start wars based on lies, and give trillions of the public’s money to the “Too-big-to-fail” banksters—and speaks out against these actions... is now denigrated as someone who has “extremist anti-government and anti-authority ideologies.”*

TRENDPOST: *This is hardly the first instance of the FBI invoking the threat of "domestic terrorism" to target American citizens based on their politics; see ["FBI USES 'DOMESTIC TERRORISM' LABEL TO TARGET POLITICAL DISSENT"](#) (4 May 2021), ["THIS WEEK IN SURVEILLANCE"](#) (9 Mar 2021), and ["FBI ENCOURAGES SNITCHING ON 'EXTREMIST' FAMILY MEMBERS"](#) (13 Jul 2021).*

And those are only recent examples; the patently unconstitutional weaponization of the FBI against American citizens has been going on for quite some time. But any reports of the FBI contemplating changing its name to "Stasi" are, so far, unfounded.

[There's an old joke from the Soviet Union in which an old man is awakened in the dead of night by an insistent pounding on his door. With great trepidation he calls out, "Who is it?" A voice from the other side of the door replies, "It's Death!" "Oh, thank God!" says the old man, greatly relieved, as he unlocks the door. "I was afraid it was the Secret Police!"]

TREND FORECAST: *As the U.S. economy declines and the rich get richer and the middle class continues to shrink, new anti-establishment, anti-immigration, anti-tax movements will be targeted as being anti-American domestic terrorist organizations.*

TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE



By *Ben Daviss*

HERE'S WHERE ALL THAT EXTRA LITHIUM WILL COME FROM

We've said it before: lithium is the currency of the digital economy, the key battery ingredient that brings to life everything from smartphones to electric cars.

But the metal has begun this year with a 13-percent price spike and renewed fears of short- and long-term shortages, thanks to kinks ranging from China's closing of processing plants for regular maintenance to the country's pause for the Lunar New Year and Winter Olympics next month to chronic labor shortages in Australia.

Demand is estimated to be at least 300,000 tons this year, with 120 "megafactories" building EV batteries already operating or under construction, and another 80 planned by the end of this decade, according to data gathered by the Visual Capitalist website.

With at least a three-year lead time to bring a new mine into production, where will all that new lithium come from?

In part, it might come from two research projects just unveiled by Stanford University and startup British Lithium.

For what seems to be the first time, British Lithium has demonstrated a commercially viable way to extract lithium carbonate—the refined version of lithium that makes batteries work—from mica taken from granite.

Lepidolite, one of the mica family of minerals, is the mineral that most commonly includes lithium.

The company's pilot project is producing five kilograms, or about 11 pounds, of lithium carbonate a day while final kinks are worked out of the process and scaling for commercial production is being planned.

British Lithium expects ultimately to produce 21,000 metric tons of the metal annually for the British vehicle industry that, the company says, will be making only electric vehicles by 2030.

Meanwhile, scientists at Stanford, working with colleagues at the U.S. energy department's SLAC Accelerator Laboratory have figured out how to squeeze an extra 30 percent life from EV batteries on their last legs.

As they charge and discharge, lithium batteries form little isolated pockets of the metal that take part in creating a current. For practical purposes, those pockets are coffins of dead lithium.

The engineers found that if they added lithium metal at one electrode and dissolved some at the other, they could goose the isolated pockets and get them to inch, like worms, toward the battery's anode, the terminal where current comes in.

The secret: they added a short, sharp discharging step just as the battery finishes charging, which brought the isolated nuggets of lithium back into action, slowing the battery's degradation and lengthening its usable life by about a third.

TRENDPOST: *Lithium's availability will lag demand through at least 2025.*

However, around the middle of this decade, new mines, simple recycling, and innovations such as those from Stanford and British Lithium will begin to close the gap.

Reclaiming and reprocessing not only lithium, but also cobalt and a range of key minerals needed in batteries and electronics, will be a booming industry before this decade ends.

BUILDINGS THAT HEAT AND COOL THEMSELVES WITH SUN POWER



Engineers at the Fraunhofer Institute, Germany's renewable energy skunkworks, have developed an elegantly simple exterior covering for buildings that heat and cool the rooms inside, slashing energy use and boosting efficiency.

The cladding is made of up solar panels that can be as large as roughly four feet by 12 inches.

Each panel can power a small heat pump inside the room that the cladding fronts. The heat pump yields three or four units of heat for every unit of electricity the exterior panel delivers.

In hot weather, the sun-powered pump uses coils filled with refrigerant to extract the heat from the room and transfer it outside.

The pumps can be connected to a building's electric-grid system or building-scale battery storage bank so they work just as effectively when the sky is dark.

Fraunhofer designed the panels to easily retrofit onto most office buildings built since the 1950s, when glass and steel exteriors began to replace brick. They say that the work could be completed without anyone having to leave their offices.

According to the group's calculations, if 30 percent of Germany's office buildings built between 1950 and 1990 were outfitted with the new panels and pumps, the amount of electricity used to heat and cool them would shrink from 3,200 gigawatt hours per year to 600, a savings of better than 80 percent.

TRENDPOST: Renewable energy technologies and grid-scale battery storage will be decentralizing energy grids in developed nations by 2030.

OLD MACDONALD HAS A DRIVERLESS TRACTOR



Deere & Co. has introduced a fully autonomous farm tractor.

Weeders, drones, and other automated farm tools have been around for a while (see [“Automation on the Farm.”](#) 15 May 2018 and [“Robots Take the Farm Field.”](#) 4

May 2021), but a driverless tractor has waited until now.

Not a moment too soon: farmers can spend anywhere from six to 16 hours a day in the fields during the height of plowing, planting, weeding, and harvesting seasons and virtually all complain of the difficulty of finding competent hired help, especially for seasonal work.

Deere's self-driving tractor to the rescue: its software has been trained on more than 50 million images, helping it learn the visual difference between dry and moist soil and smooth and clodded ground, for example, and what it shouldn't try to drive across—a tree branch fallen across its path, for example.

When its six pairs of stereo cameras see something ahead that it's leery of, it alerts the farmer, sends a photo, and awaits instructions or the farmer's arrival to move the obstacle.

The tractor also can signal the farmer that it's low on fuel, that a tire is leaking air, or various other operating considerations.

Through the phone, the farmer also can monitor those kinds of data as well as control the tractor, telling it to speed up, stop, or change course, among other things.

The self-driving rig guides itself around a field by GPS after it's been fed coordinates that establish the geographic boundaries within which it will work.

Once a human gives it a command, the tractor can even drive itself to the field it's been assigned to till, plant, weed, or spray.

Even better, the tractor can work 24 hours a day during the height of a busy season while the farmer uses the time saved to feed livestock, repair equipment, or tend to other chores.

Although the tractor will be available to farmers this fall, Deere is still working out a retail price and business model. Because the autonomous tractor will be far more expensive than conventional ones, farmers also will be able to lease it, Deere says.

Also, the autonomous components and modules can be retrofitted onto some recent conventional Deere models.

TRENDPOST: The average age of a U.S. farmer is 55; in Europe, a third of farmers are 65 or older and only 11 percent are younger than 40.

With fewer farmers expected to feed a growing population, both at home and abroad, farm automation will quickly become not only essential, but also urgent.

Because of that urgency to keep farms productive with fewer workers, manufacturers, banks, and others involved will quickly find innovative ways to make self-operating equipment affordable while also improving the machines' capabilities.



Deere & Co.'s autonomous tractor hard at work.

Credit: Deere & Co.