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| FORECASTING SINCE 1980

| 22 FEBRUARY 2022

THE TRENDS JOURNAL[®]

HISTORY BEFORE IT HAPPENS[®]

FROM COVID WAR
TO UKRAINE WAR



TO WORLD WAR

TALK OF PEACE IS FORBIDDEN.

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22 February 2022

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TALK OF PEACE FORBIDDEN

Welcome to this
week's [Trends
Journal](#): FROM
COVID WAR TO
UKRAINE WAR TO

WORLD WAR. TALK OF PEACE IS
FORBIDDEN.

And here we are, war-talk reigns supreme
and not a peep about Peace, it's forbidden.
In fact, if a different narrative is told than
the one being peddled by Washington and
its NATO allies, it is condemned as
"treason."

Nothing New!

Remember arrogant Ari Fleisher, the
clown playing mouthpiece for President
George W. Bush – the war mongering
murderer, who, along with his band of
comrades, lied us into the Iraq War?

Fleisher warned those of us who were
exposing the Bush team's lies that "There
are reminders to all Americans that they
need to watch what they say, watch what
they do."

We are again being led on the war path of
lies and distortions. It is thoroughly
documented in our Special Ukraine
Report and guest articles by Dr. Paul Craig
Roberts and Philip Giraldi.

And as for the equity markets unwinding
because of the Ukraine conflict, there is
much more behind the coming meltdown
than is being reported by the mainstream

news which we detail in the [Trends
Journal](#).

We cover the world and tell it like it is.
Our true agenda is the truth in trends. We
had warned you in our [25 January Trends
Journal edition](#), as the cover by Anthony
Freda illustrates, "DOW
PLUMMETS—WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS
THEY TAKE YOU TO WAR."

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

Pace e Amore,

*Gerald Celente and the Trends Journal
Team*

COMMENTS

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY ZERO
FASAB Statement 56 was promulgated in
August of 2019 to hide government
spending with no push back by anyone!
Dark money has been made "legal" by this.

The Treasury has been taken over by
outside forces. Congress has ceded it's
responsibility without a peep. The
financial system has experienced a coup
and no one seems to have noticed or
cared.

Mary Beth Frampton

BALANCE WE COULD LIVE WITHOUT
War with Russia will be inflationary. Lots
of people dying from the Covid jabs will be
deflationary. Maybe we will have both.

Adam Thompson

SHAME ON U.S. FOR HELPING CANADA CRACKDOWN

Today, as I watch the trampling of Canadian Citizen who are participating in a peaceful protest against the Globalistic Tyrant Trudeau by RCMP THUGS ON HORSEBACK because the citizens would not yield to the continued oppressive GOVERNMENT TOADIES in Ottawa's Parliament and Province Politicians at government locations and border crossings across Canada I am sorely irritated.

What is most disturbing is that the US GOVERNMENT (local, state and federal) are sanctioning (supporting) the oppression of the Canadians and are planning to also use the identical tyrannical methods to disrupt the US TRUCKERS convoy when it assembles this month to travel from California to Washington. DC to protest the same issues the Canadians are protesting.

I doubt the Americans will fight as strenuously as the Canadians and people all around the world who are trying to stop the destruction of citizen's individual rights and freedoms to assemble and protest without government intimidation and ruthless assault by the government mercenaries and jackbooted police!!!!
"TRUDEAU MUST GO"

harlow53

WHAT JUSTICE REQUIRES

These public "officials" are now hoping we will just forget what they did to us while "trying to protect us". The sad fact is that recent history gives credence to the people doing just that. Oh God I pray that is not so this time. There must be not only

justice, but retribution for the crimes of psychological abuse, early deaths, suicides, vaccine injured youths, tyrannical arrests, destroyed businesses and forever changed lives that did not need to be.

a1achiropractic

SNAKES HEAD REVISITED

British Royals keeping the criminals inside America doing their bidding, criminals inside America keeping the politicians in line. Politicians keeping the sheeple in line and submissive. The head of the snake must be severed to save humanity.

richard Smiouskas

ANSWERING TO KLAUS

Sadly, Klaus Schwab has actually boasted about having the majority of the Canadian cabinet as graduates of his leadership program. So, it doesn't feel too hopeful for Canada. Chrystia Freeland is the poster gal for Schwab—and I kind of doubt that she is really the second in command.

Trudeau will be a good little tyrant just as he is ordered by his master to be. I fear there will be violence, and it won't be initiated by any of the truckers. I guess the bouncy castles must have created a great deal of fear and tipped Trudeau over the edge – only terrorists bring bouncy castles to protests.

Kellie Auld

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TRENDS ON THE U.S. ECONOMIC FRONT



MARKET OVERVIEW

UKRAINE WORRIES SINK STOCKS. REALLY?

It's been the mainstream narrative. Equities across the globe have been sinking as concerns mounted over Russia's pending war with Ukraine... a fear that has intensified as Russia moves troops into the Russian separatist eastern Ukraine.

Why is this happening, what does it mean and what's next has been detailed in previous **Trends Journal** and in this week's "SPECIAL UKRAINE REPORT." And unlike the mainstream media that parrots government lies (remember Saddam Hussein and the weapons of mass destruction propaganda?), we tell it like it is.

Yes, while tensions have destabilized equities, and now with more sanctions being imposed on Russia, such as Germany's cancelling the certification process of the Russia-backed Nord Stream 2 pipeline project as the standoff

between Russia and Ukraine over the Donbass regions intensifies, it will drive up natural gas prices in Europe.

“German Chancellor Olaf Scholz ordered to stop the certification of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. Well, welcome to the new world, in which Europeans will soon pay €2,000 per thousand cubic meters of gas!”, tweeted Dmitry Medvedev, the former Russian president and now deputy chairman of the Security Council.

Inflation and Interest Rates

“It’s the economy, stupid,” not just the Russian/Ukraine/U.S./NATO conflict... which will drive up natural gas prices.

And with new sanctions now being threatened to be imposed by the EU and U.S. on Russia, it will increase and prolong inflation: Russia is a major exporter of oil, natural gas, and wheat, as well as aluminum and other metals, thus there will be shrinking global supplies of essential minerals and materials.

There has been the growing fear that the higher inflation rises, the faster and higher interest rates will rise, and the money junkies won’t get all the cheap monetary methadone that the central banksters have pumped into equities and economies to keep them high since the COVID War began two years ago.

Look at the facts. U.S. equities were sharply falling most of January because of one fear, and one fear only... and it was not because “The Russians are coming, the Russians are coming.” It was about the fear of rising interest rates which we have greatly detailed in previous **Trends Journals**.

In this year’s first week of trading, the Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 0.3 percent, the Standard & Poor’s 500 Index gave up 1.9 percent, and the NASDAQ shed 4.5 percent, its worst week since February 2020 and its worst entry to a new year since 2015... it had nothing to do with the Russians!

The S&P 500 fell 5.3 percent in January, its biggest monthly drop since the COVID War began to rage in March 2020. The tech-heavy Nasdaq fell nearly 9

percent, while the small-cap Russell 2000 slumped 20 percent from its November record high, falling into bear territory... and it had zip to do with the Russian Bear.

“It’s the economy, stupid.” It’s all about the beginning of the end of the cheap money flow.

Again, remember the decade-long U.S. and EU Banksters bullshit that when inflation hit above 2 percent, that would signal the need to raise interest rates?

With America’s consumer price index hitting 7 percent in 2021, the largest 12-month gain since 1982, and the EU Euro area annual inflation up to 5.0 percent... neither have pushed up rates – not one rate hike – and they get away with it. And in the U.S., inflation sped unchecked to 7.5 percent in January, a 40-year record clip.

But again, the Fed Head crap that inflation was temporary and then transitory is also not in the news... all that’s making the headline is Ukraine/Russia.

Last Week

The three major U.S. stock indexes ended last week lower. The Dow Jones Industrial Average retreated 1.9 percent, the NASDAQ 1.8 percent, and the Standard and Poor’s 500 1.6 percent, running up the S&P’s loss this year to 8.8 percent, nearing the 10-percent decline that would signal a correction is under way.

Ten of the S&P’s 11 sectors sank on Friday. Tech shares fell hardest, down 1.1 percent. Only consumer staples companies gained, eking out a 0.1-percent gain.

Also, the U.S. Federal Reserve’s pace of looming interest rate hikes remains unclear as inflation sped unchecked to 7.5 percent in January, a 40-year record clip.

Abroad, Europe's Stoxx 600 lost 0.8 percent Friday and the Nikkei 225 dropped 0.4 percent.

China's Shanghai Composite index added 0.7 percent, while the Hang Seng index in Hong Kong gave up 1.9 percent, pushed down by Meituan's 15-percent plunge after China's government said food delivery services should reduce fees they charge merchants.

U.S. markets were closed for President's Day.

Today

Equities fell across Asia today, with the Hang Seng slumping 2.96 percent over fears of Ukraine tensions worsening, and of course the bottom line... rising oil prices.

In the U.S., the Dow fell for its fourth straight session, falling 482 points, while the S&P 500 and Nasdaq fell 1 percent and 1.2 percent respectively.

Again, according to the business media, the equity declines are not about the expectation of rising interest rates and the ending of the cheap money flow... it's only about Russia.

Yet, as the headline in today's *Wall Street Journal* tells it; "Fed Official Open to Half-Point Rise"

The *WSJ* goes on to note that yesterday that Federal Reserve governor Michelle Bowman was open in her belief that Feds should push interest rates up a half-percentage-point at their meeting in March.

They said "Ms. Bowman expects "uncomfortably high inflation" will persist through the middle of this year and there is a risk that high inflation would continue to persist.

Up or Down?

Last week, some Federal officials dismissed speculation that the central bank will raise its key interest rate by half a percentage point when it meets next month.

“There’s really no kind of compelling argument that you have to be faster right in the beginning” of a cycle of rate increases, John Williams, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and a close advisor to Fed chair Jerome Powell, said in an 18 February press briefing.

“There’s no need to do something ‘extra’ at the beginning of the process,” he added. “We can steadily move up interest rates and reassess,” although he did acknowledge that inflation is “far too high.”

In recent days, several Fed officials have voiced the view that the bank will raise interest rates by the usual quarter point but may bump the rates more often, perhaps even between their bimonthly meetings.

“With today’s strong economy and inflation that is well above our 2-percent longer-run goal, it is time to begin the process of steadily moving [interest rates] back to more normal levels,” Williams said last week at an event at New Jersey City University.

Speculation about a half-point rate hike was triggered earlier this month when James Bullard, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, suggested in a Bloomberg interview that the Fed could move rates by that much next month ([“Interest Rate Hikes Coming, the Worst is Yet to Come,”](#) 15 Feb 2022).

“We are going to have to be far more nimble and far more reactive to data,” Bullard said.

Bullard also called for the Fed’s key interest rate to be one full point higher by July, a view he repeated at a 17 February event at New York University, and said

that interest rates might have to rise above 2 percent if rate pressures are to slow inflation to the Fed's 2-percent target rate.

"We're not in a position to do that right now, but we have to get into a position to do that" if inflation fails to moderate as hoped, he said.

Bullard's colleagues on the Fed's rate-setting Open Market Committee have set 2.5 percent as the target interest rate in the long term, according to their median projections at December's meeting.

Loretta Mester, president of the Cleveland Fed, said she would support raising rates faster, perhaps beginning this summer, if inflation does not ease as rates rise.

She spoke to a gathering at New York University's Stern Center for Global Economy and Business.

The Fed also faces a decision about when and how quickly to sell its \$9 trillion in bonds in a way that does not tank bond prices, the *WSJ* noted.

The central bank should start "steadily and predictably" selling its bond holdings later this year, Williams said, while Bullard advocates starting to pare back the Fed's holdings in the second quarter.

Fed officials are debating whether to sell the bank's portfolio of mortgage-backed securities outright or only to stop reinvesting returns into new purchases.

The Fed has predicted that U.S. inflation will average 2.6 percent this year.

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our long-standing forecast that when the Fed raises its key rate to 1.5 percent to 2 percent... equity, mortgage, and housing markets will sharply decline.*

The Ukraine conflict is a wild card that may well alter the speed and height of interest rate hikes in the U.S. and EU. For example, should Brent Crude spike well above \$100 per barrel and natural gas prices continue to rise, it will further increase inflation and push the central banks to raise interest rates.

Overall, should military tensions increase in Ukraine, it will be business as usual for the rest of the world.

However, should military conflict spread beyond its borders and continue to extend into Russia and eastern Europe, it will be a warning shot heard around the world that will rattle markets and economies. And, if it is not contained, it may well accelerate into WWIII... the beginning of the end of life on Earth.

GOLD/SILVER: As we have said for decades, gold and silver are the ultimate safe-haven assets. With Ukraine war-talk heightening, oil prices rising, gold prices hit an eight-month high and silver rose to a four-week high. Gold rose 0.13 percent today closing at \$1,903 per ounce and silver edged up 0.74 percent to close at \$24.17 per ounce.

TREND FORECAST: *While gold and silver prices have spiked as a result of Ukraine war tensions, should they increase, precious metals prices will continue to rise. If tensions decrease, prices will move lower.*

What will also drive precious metal prices down is rapidly rising interest rates, since interest rate hikes raise the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding bullion.

And as we note, but the media ignores, it will cost Washington much more to service the \$30 trillion U.S. debt burden... which will in turn also put downward pressure on the U.S. dollar and push safe-haven assets such as gold, silver and bitcoin higher.

And beyond government debt, the higher interest rates rise, the heavier the business and personal debt loads grow. Thus, the higher the levels of defaults,

the deeper the economy falls. And the deeper it falls, the higher safe-haven assets will rise.

*Again, as we note in this and previous **Trends Journals**, global economies have been artificially inflated with years of cheap money. Therefore, when the cheap money flow dries up, most economies will sink into recession and depressions.*

OIL: With Russia being the largest supplier of natural gas and oil to the European Union, and now Russia-backed Nord Stream 2 pipeline project halted, Brent Crude nearly hit \$100 per barrel today and West Texas Intermediate spiked 3 percent to hit \$96 per barrel.

Still up, but down from their highs, today, Brent Crude was up 1.04 percent to close at \$96.39 per barrel and WTI moved up 1.32 percent, closing at \$92.27 per barrel.

TREND FORECAST: *Should the United States strike an anti-nuclear deal with Iran and permit their oil to again hit the market, it will make up for some of the lost Russian crude, thus potentially easing rising price pressures.*

Overall, however, we maintain our forecast, with oil prices up over 17 percent since the start of the year, should Brent Crude passes the psychological \$100-a-barrel milestone and continues to climb, it will spike inflation, thus forcing central banks to radically raise interest rates to fight it... which will sharply drive down equity markets and economies as money becomes too expensive to borrow and the cost of servicing debt increases.

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

BITCOIN: Go back to Super Bowl Sunday. Crypto ads flooded the advertising airwaves. The message was clear. Cryptocurrencies were the wave of the future, and you had to be in it to win it.

For a short time they worked. Shortly following the massive Super Bowl cryptocurrency advertising campaign, Bitcoin climbed more than 4 percent to \$44,115 per coin.

What a difference nine days makes. As we go to press, bitcoin is at \$37,846 per coin and dropped as low as \$36,370.... which is still high considering the price per coin started at a fraction of a penny to \$0.09 some 12 years ago.

Today, across the digital currency spectrum, prices are on a down-trend. Why?

According to the mainstream business media, it's because of the Ukraine crisis: "Analysts attributed the drop to escalating tensions over the Russia-Ukraine crisis. Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday ordered troops into two breakaway regions in eastern Ukraine, moments after declaring them as independent," contends CNBC.

We disagree. Crypto players are not geopolitically focused and more importantly, are not members of the establishment club. On the contrary, they are outside the system and they buy their currencies to stay outside the system.

And in these times of high market volatility.... where to invest and what to do? Check out Gregory Mannarino's article in this issue, ["The Power of a Balanced Hedged Portfolio."](#)

TREND FORECAST: *As we have continually noted, precious metals remain the predominant safe-haven assets and will not be replaced by cryptocurrencies for the foreseeable future. That is, of course, until what is left of "humanity" enters into the ["Metaworld"](#)... one of our ["Top Trends for 2022."](#)*

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

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

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

JOBLESS RISING. ECONOMY SINKING?



U.S. State claims for unemployment benefits bumped up by 23,000 in the most recent week to 248,000, disappointing economists polled by Reuters, who had forecast 219,000 new applications.

New claims had been decreasing since mid-January as reports of new Omicron cases declined, plummeting from 700,000 a day then to under 145,000 in the most recent week for which jobless claims were reported, according to Reuters.

New weekly claims for unemployment payments peaked at 6.1 million in April 2020.

The U.S. economy posted a record 10.9 million open jobs at the end of 2021.

In January, 467,000 new jobs were created, reflecting “an overall low level of layoffs as businesses struggle to reach desired levels of employment,” Citigroup economist Veronica Clark told Reuters.

“While some level of labor market churn should continue in the near term, we would not be surprised to see claims fall even further below pre-[COVID] levels in the coming months,” she said.

In the U.S. Federal Reserve's January meeting, "many" Fed officials "viewed labor market conditions as being at or very close to those consistent with maximum employment," the meeting's minutes reported.

TREND FORECAST: *The higher interest rates rise, the faster the economy will contract and the higher the unemployment rates will climb.*

In the short term, with the Omicron variant receding and no new virulent COVID variation appearing so far to replace it, and governments winding down the COVID War, the jobs market will stabilize at, or close to, what the Fed terms "maximum employment."

However, almost two million pre-COVID workers remain jobless with the economy offering around 10 million jobs.

The horde of unfilled jobs, and workers lacking the skills or interest to take them, will continue to speed automation of routine tasks and direct schools and employers to create new job-readiness and job-training programs.

Widespread adoption of such training programs could reduce the number of people whose lack of skills consigns them to a permanent underclass that has no options but to change sheets in hotels or work the fryer in fast-food joints.

CONSUMER SPENDING REBOUNDS. WHAT'S NEXT?



After sliding 2.8 percent in December, consumer retail spending bounced up 3.8 percent in January to a record \$649.8 billion, despite a 40-year record inflation rate, as the Omicron virus began to ebb, the U.S. census bureau reported.

It was the sharpest monthly jump since March 2021, when households began receiving federal stimulus checks.

The spending bump came even as prices increased 7.5 percent, year on year, the fastest clip in 40 years.

However, as we have continually noted, the reports do not adjust the monthly spending figure for inflation; January's higher figure could mean that things simply cost more than in December, not that consumers are buying larger quantities of stuff, the commerce department pointed out.

Therefore, consumers may well be buying less products but paying more for them. In 2021, about a third of the increase in consumer spending was simply higher prices charged by inflation, Craig Johnson, president of Customer Growth Partners, said to *The Wall Street Journal*.

Inflation will account for as much as 60 percent of this year's increase in consumer spending, he estimated.

Consumers spent 14.5 percent more online last month, with department stores selling 9.2 percent more, furniture sales gaining 7.2 percent and vehicle purchases from dealers adding 5.9 percent. Building materials also sold briskly.

Restaurants and bars saw fewer customers as the Omicron variant still prompted caution among diners.

Sales slipped 3 percent among bookstores, hobby shops, musical instrument stores, and for sporting goods. Gas stations took in 1.3 percent less as gasoline prices dipped during the month.

The retail sales report does not include spending on services other than at dining establishments, but the service sector is estimated to have drooped last month because of lingering Omicron fears, the *WSJ* noted.

As new virus cases decline, spending on services is likely to increase, shifting spending from goods and helping to ease inflation in that sector, economists told the *WSJ*.

That shift may have begun: spending on airfare, entertainment, and lodging all edged up late in the month, according to Bank of America's credit- and debit-card use data.

January's bump in spending aligns with other signs that the economy is healing, including rising wages, an abundance of available jobs, and a 4-percent unemployment rate.

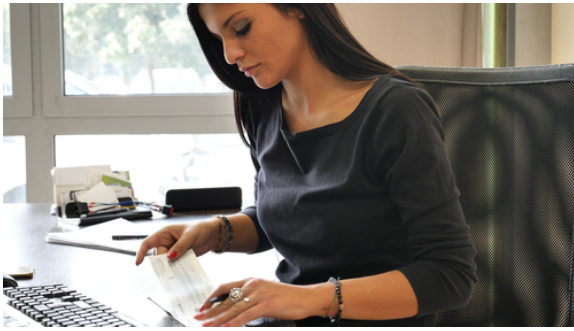
Strong consumer spending is a driver of inflation and a factor in the U.S. Federal Reserve's increasing likelihood of raising interest rates at its meeting next month, the *WSJ* said.

TREND FORECAST: While inflation is driven partly by shortages of raw materials, workers, and tangled supply chains, higher prices also are caused by consumers' unrestrained urge to spend.

Locked up and restricted from many freedoms in the two-year fight to win the COVID War, consumers are spending their way to joy... shopping before they drop.

However, as interest rates rise and the economy contracts, retail spending will decline.

SLAVELANDIA: 61 PERCENT OF AMERICANS LIVING PAYCHECK TO PAYCHECK



At the end of December, 61 percent of Americans were living paycheck to paycheck, a LendingClub survey found, slightly less than the high of 65 percent reported in 2020.

We reported the financial straits of so many U.S. households in [“Paycheck to Paycheck: The American Way”](#) (29 Jun 2021).

Although workers’ pay rose 4.7 percent nationally last year, prices ballooned 7 percent through the year, eroding household purchasing power by 1.7 percent, according to the U.S. labor department.

Among households earning six figures, 42 percent are living hand to mouth, according to the poll.

Wages are expected to grow 3.4 percent on average this year, CNBC reported, but Americans need an annual income of \$128,000 to feel financially secure, as we highlighted in [“Middle Class? Forget About It. Americans Need \\$128,000 a Year to Feel Secure”](#) (18 Jan 2022).

That figure is almost twice the 2020 U.S. median household income of \$67,521, the most recent figure the census bureau has compiled.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have detailed to great extent, in the New World Order, the rich get richer and the middle Class keeps shrinking. As a result of these vast “Off with their heads” inequities, we forecast growing anti-establishment political movements in countries that are called “Democracies” but are in function, fascist states. Indeed, according to Benito Mussolini, fascism is the merger of state and corporate powers... and as the evidence clearly illustrates, they have “merged.”*

These are just a few of our articles that state the facts:

- [*“Plantation Owners of Slavelandia Get Richer, Slaves Get Poorer”*](#)
- [*“Spotlight: Bigs Keep Growing Bigger”*](#)
- [*“COVID WAR: Rich Got Richer, Poor Got Poorer”*](#)
- [*“America Pumps Up the Rich, China Pushing Them Down”*](#)
- [*“Vax Makers: The Billionaire Club Gets Richer”*](#)
- [*“A Modest Tax Proposal for Billionaires”*](#)

HOUSING MARKET: SALES UP, FEWER HOMES FOR SALE



Sales of existing U.S. homes rose 6.7 percent in January from December, the National Association of Realtors (NAR) reported, as buyers rushed to lock in low mortgage interest rates before the U.S. Federal Reserve boosts its key lending rate next month.

Homes are still selling within days of being listed, with more homes being bought outright for cash, the NAR said.

In January, 27 percent of existing-home sales were made with cash, compared to 19 percent in January 2021, the NAR noted.

The median price of existing homes sold in January was \$350,300, 15.4 percent more than a year earlier, according to NAR figures.

Home prices are unlikely to retreat this year, analysts say.

Demand will continue to outstrip the limited number of homes entering the market: there were 860,000 homes for sale in the U.S. at the end of January, 2.3 percent fewer than in December and 16.5 percent less than a year before.

That translates to a 1.6-month inventory, the smallest since 1999 when the NAR began to track the figure.

In the four weeks ending 13 February, the number of active listings was 447,000, 27 percent smaller than during the same period a year earlier, online brokerage Redfin said.

“It will take years to build our way out of the supply-and-demand imbalance that should keep home prices rising strongly this year despite higher [interest] rates,” Robert Frick, an economist at the Navy Federal Credit Union, told *The Wall Street Journal*.

New-home starts in January slipped 4.1 percent below December’s number.

The average interest rate on a 30-year mortgage rose to 3.92 percent, with eight-tenths of a point, as of 17 February, its highest since May 2019, according to the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation.

The rate was 3.69 a week earlier and 2.81 a year ago.

The average rate for a 15-year fixed-rate loan moved up to 3.15 percent from 2.93 the week before.

Higher interest rates are not deterring qualified buyers, in part because rents are rising so quickly. The average residential rent across 50 major U.S. cities leaped 14 percent last year, according to government data reported by CBS News.

The tight market continues to lock out first-time, modest- and middle-income buyers, and those without abundant cash for a sizable down payment.

First-time buyers took just 27 percent of homes sold in January, compared to 33 percent a year previous.

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our long-standing forecast that the higher the U.S. Federal Reserve raises interest the sharper the decline in home sales. And, that when rates hit and go 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 residential 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.

TRENDPOST: *The new normal of remote work has given many employees the option of moving farther from a central office, freeing many to buy homes with more space in cheaper locales.*

That trend has created entirely new enclaves of demand-driven pricey real estate, a trend we have highlighted in the article “Million-Dollar Homes Now the Norm in Hundreds of Cities” in this issue.

TRENDPOST: *A key underlying factor driving housing costs higher and higher is the pervasive entry of private equity firms into the U.S. housing market.*

We have documented the trend extensively: as home prices rose, private equity firms began snapping them up, often snatching a house from a family that already had made an offer.

The firms then rent the houses back to the failed buyers at premium rental rates.

This tactic has reconfigured the housing market for years, and perhaps generations, to come.

Renters are paying top rates because the U.S. is in the midst of a long-term housing shortage. Materials, labor, and especially land to build new houses are in acute short supply.

TREND FORECAST: *Demand for rental homes will keep prices high, making it harder and harder for renters to save enough cash to make a down payment on a home for which the price is now at record levels.*

This is likely to create at least one generation of renters instead of homeowners, depriving these households of the main way in which Americans build and store wealth: by creating equity through home ownership.

To trace the development of this trend and explore its meaning, see our past coverage:

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

APARTMENT INVESTORS HEAD SOUTH



Apartment buildings are the best-performing real estate investment this year, as we reported in [“Commercial Real Estate Investments Hit Record Level. Read Between the Lines”](#) (1 Feb 2021), and investors are panning for gold in the

hottest U.S. real estate patch—the Sunbelt.

Landlords are following migration patterns, as aging Baby Boomers go south and businesses and workers are lured by the region’s low taxes, business-friendly laws, and light regulatory hand.

About a quarter of the \$335.3 billion invested in U.S. multifamily housing last year went to just four Sunbelt locales: Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, and Phoenix, *The Wall Street Journal* reported, with foreign money backing the purchase of thousands of flats across the region.

In some other southern markets, investment in apartments doubled in 2021 from 2020, according to a report by CBRE, a real estate consulting firm.

Emblematic of the trend, Blackstone Group—one of the world’s largest commercial property owners—is paying \$5.8 billion in cash to buy Preferred Apartment Communities, which owns 40 apartment complexes with 12,000 units in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, among other states.

The company also owns 54 shopping centers, but 70 percent of the deal’s value is based on its apartment holdings.

Blackstone is making the purchase through its Blackstone Real Estate Income Trust, which has raised \$50 billion since 2016, most of it from private investors.

Pennsylvania's Morgan Properties teamed with Saudi-backed Olayan Group to create a \$17.5-billion catalog of flats, including 2,000 middle-income units in Tampa, Fla., where rents are soaring as much as 30 percent annually, the *WSJ* reported.

The American division of Germany's Union Investment Real Estate bought upscale rental units in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., last year and is jacking rents by 13 percent when lease renewals come due.

Demand for apartment blocks to buy far outstrips the number available for sale, the *WSJ* said.

Some buyers, such as RXR Properties in New York, are skirting the problem by buying the buildings before their construction is completed.

Read more about the crisis in apartments' availability and skyrocketing rents in:

- [“Apartment Building Boom Targets Affluent Tenants”](#) (21 Jan 2020)
- [“Apartment Rents Climbing”](#) (20 Jul 2021)
- [“Blackstone Pays \\$5.1 Billion to Buy Rent-Controlled Apartments”](#) (20 Jul 2021)
- [“Can't Pay the Rent? It's Getting Higher”](#) (21 Nov 2021)
- [Rents on the Rise](#) (11 Jan 2022)

...and other articles listed in this issue's article “Housing Market: Sales Up From December, Fewer Homes for Sale.”

TREND FORECAST: *As we have pointed out repeatedly, private equity's heavy hand in the housing market will continue to price home ownership beyond the reach of average American income earners as well as what used to be called “middle income” earners.*

Private equity firms are buying thousands of houses and tens of thousands of apartments solely because they can, and now do, charge premium rents, as we reported in [“Apartment Rents Rising, Bigs Buying Them Up”](#) (16 Nov 2021).

Paying those premium rents makes it less and less likely that young families or anyone with a modest or moderate income will become a homeowner unless they inherit property from a relative.

TREND FORECAST: *Private equity's presence as America's landlord will deprive hundreds of thousands of U.S. families and individuals of the chance to stake their claim on the American dream: owning a home.*

The implications go beyond having to ask permission to paint a room or waiting for the landlord to approve a plumbing expense.

It means that those hundreds of thousands of families will not be able to use their real estate to build equity, which has long been the chief means of savings and wealth creation for America's middle class.

Private equity firms are creating generations of cash-poor renters, not homeowners.

MILLION-DOLLAR HOMES NOW THE “AVERAGE”



The average home value has reached \$1 million in 481 U.S. cities, double the number of locales in 2017, according to data from the online real estate brokerage Zillow.

In 2021, 146 cities reached that mark.

“The geography of wealth in the U.S. has begun to shift, as 2021 was the first year for both Idaho and Montana to place any cities on this list, and now those Western states boast three million-dollar cities each,” Zillow’s senior economist Jeff Tucker said in a statement.

An additional 49 cities could add their names to the list by July if home prices continue rising at their current pace, Tucker said.

U.S. home prices rose 19.3 percent during 2021, according to the National Association of Realtors.

California, Massachusetts, and New York had the most new cities with seven-figure average home values, probably because homes in many parts of those states already were pricey and had less distance to go before entering the million-dollar circle.

Among lesser-known cities now boasting a million-dollar average home price at the end of 2021:

- Garrison, Mt: average price \$1.2 million, up 26 percent
- Gallatin Gateway, Mt: average price \$1.2 million, up 33 percent
- West Glacier, Mt: average price \$1.2 million, up 23 percent
- Ketchum, Id: average price \$1.1 million, up 32 percent
- Sun Valley, Id: average price \$1 million, up 31 percent
- Hayden Lake, Id: average price \$1 million, up 47 percent
- Brentwood, Tenn: average price \$1 million, up 37 percent

TREND FORECAST: *We have detailed extensively in this and other **Trends Journals** the growing gap of income inequality in the United States as the Bigs get Bigger, the rich get richer, and the average American keeps getting poorer. (See [“COVID WAR MAKES THE RICH RICHER,”](#) [“SLAVELANDIA: RICH GET RICHER, POOR GET POORER,”](#) [“LOCKDOWNS LEAVE 22 MILLION JOBLESS IN RICH COUNTRIES”](#) and [“\\$4 TRILLION FOR BILLIONAIRES AS MIDDLE CLASS SHRINKS.”](#))*

There are 37.2 million Americans living in poverty in the U.S., which marks a 3.3 million jump since 2019. The report pointed out that married families had the lowest level of poverty at 4.7 percent.

As Gerald Celente has said, "History shows that income inequality is a factor in social unrest and political revolution...Wealth inequality will become an even more central issue in upcoming elections and will draw more people and energy to anti-establishment political movements."

Indeed, as the middle class keeps shrinking and the billionaires keep getting richer, get ready for "Off With Their Heads 2.0" movements to rage across America and the globe.

CLIMATE CHANGE? FORGET ABOUT IT: U.S. COAL PRICES HIT CENTURY HIGH



U.S. coal prices have shot from just above \$80 a ton when 2021 began to more than \$230 now as the world's post-COVID energy demand has strained producers of all kinds of fuel to keep up.

Last year saw the first increase in America's coal production since 2014.

Peabody Energy, the world's largest private coal producer, reported a record profit in 2021's final quarter; second-biggest Arch Resources posted its best results since 2016.

Peabody's share price has risen eightfold since January 2021. The company reported \$513 million in net income in last year's final quarter, compared to a loss of \$129 million for the same period in 2020.

Arch posted profits of \$227 million for the quarter, reversing a loss a year earlier.

Most U.S. coal production fuels electric generating plants, which have shifted to cheaper, cleaner natural gas in recent years. The U.S. coal output fell from 1 billion tons a year to half that.

In 2021, gas prices climbed higher and were in short supply as the COVID-era economic collapse shut down thousands of domestic wells.

When the economy sprang back, many power plants were forced to turn to coal to keep the electricity flowing because gas supplies were short, as well as more expensive than previously.

Domestic coal production will increase this year and next, the U.S. Energy Information Administration has forecast.

However, coal's moment in the spotlight is unlikely to last, analysts and power company executives told the *Financial Times*.

About half of all U.S. coal-fired power plants are scheduled to be retired this decade, according to data from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis.

Earlier this month, Duke Energy and Georgia announced they will mothball all coal-fired generation by 2035.

"Our customers have told us, and continue to tell us, that they want their energy from cleaner sources," Duke vice-president Regis Repko said to the *FT*. "Those views translate to policymakers and investors."

States also are enacting clean energy standards that are edging coal out of the energy marketplace.

"Maybe [coal producers] have gotten a reprieve for a year or two with prices being up as much as they are, but they're going to be very shortly facing brutal economics once again as coal demand drops," Seth Feaster, an analyst at IEEFA said in an *FT* interview.

Markets abroad offer U.S. coal the same limited future.

U.S. producers exported about 13 percent of their output in 2020, but the U.S. is one of the world's highest-cost producers, making competition difficult against cheap miners such as Indonesia and Russia.

Instead, U.S. coal companies are focusing not on “thermal” coal, used to make heat that spins turbines in generating plants, but on “metallurgical” coal, a higher-priced version in demand by the steel industry and other metals makers.

Arch Resources is “managing the long-term wind-down of its legacy thermal assets,” the company said in its most recent annual report.

TREND FORECAST: *Inflation and the costs of fighting the COVID War will keep coal in the energy mix longer and stronger than clean-power advocates expected.*

As a result, the U.S. will fall even farther behind the Biden administration's goal of halving the nation's greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, a goal that was unrealistic to begin with.

While coal is enjoying a short-term surge as the world economy rights itself, the COVID era has left many developing nations destitute. For the foreseeable future, they will burn whatever fuel is cheapest and, in most cases, that is the lowest and dirtiest grades of coal.

The green dream of ridding the world of coal in the near future has become a victim of the COVID War.

TRENDPOST: *As far as fighting climate change, the investment cartels have pumped in massive amounts of cash into the coal industry in recent years, according to Urgewald and Reclaim Finance.*

They report that commercial banks channeled \$1.5 trillion to the coal industry between January 2019 and November 2021... with financial institutions from the U.S., China, Japan, India, Canada and the U.K. accounting for over 80 percent of coal financing and investment.

FRACKERS KEEP PRODUCTION LOW AS OIL AND GAS PRICES RISE



Major U.S. producers of fracked oil and natural gas are investing only enough to keep production at current levels, despite global benchmark Brent crude oil prices briefly breaking through \$100 a barrel on 16 February, its highest in almost eight years.

Three leading U.S. fracking producers—Continental Resources, Devon Energy, and Pioneer Natural Resources—all reported 2021’s profits as their best in more than a decade.

However, after the COVID War decimated the U.S. petroleum industry and the fracking sector in particular, the sector’s investors pressured companies to hoard cash and cut capital budgets, as we noted in [“Betting on Oil”](#) (22 Jun 2021).

All three companies have pledged to adhere to the conservative strategy, even as oil and gas prices are poised to move higher still.

“The only question investors should ask is why on Earth would they want any [U.S. oil producer] to grow,” Ben Dell, managing partner at Kimmeridge Energy Management Co., said to *The Wall Street Journal*.

“The sector is working,” he added. “Cash flow is getting returned. This is not the time to change the business model.”

Devon, the S&P's best performer in 2021, booked \$2.8 billion in profits last year, the most since 2007. It will use a large amount of that profit not to develop new reserves but to buy back 60 percent more of its shares than it has so far and hike shareholder dividends to a record level.

U.S. oil and gas production will increase this year by about 240,000 barrels a day, consulting firm Wood Mackenzie predicted. The Permian Basin of Texas will gain more production than that, but increases there will be partially negated by declines in output across the rest of the U.S. oilpatch.

TREND FORECAST: *U.S. shale frackers will continue to occupy the sweet spot at which they can maximize prices and profits without accelerating consumers' shift to renewable energy.*

With U.S. producers tightening the spigots and OPEC+ failing to meet its production targets, as we reported in ["OPEC+ Continues to Raise Oil Output: What's the Deal?"](#) (8 Feb 2021). And with Russia/Ukraine/Nato pressures increasing and Russia now moving troops into Ukraine, plus new sanctions being imposed on Russia that will cut oil sales, oil prices will break through \$100 a barrel.

And should oil prices continue to rise well above \$100 per barrel, so too will inflation, which will in turn force the Feds to raise interest rates higher. And the higher interest rates rise, the deeper equities and the economy will sink.

BIDEN ADDRESSES PUBLIC'S INFLATION CONCERN IN NEW COMMENTS



As public confidence in president Joe Biden's ability to manage the economy continues to slide, he has adjusted his public comments to show empathy for

households coping with ever-rising prices, *The Wall Street Journal* noted.

Last July, he said that higher prices “were expected and expected to be temporary”; in September, he said “there is a lot of evidence that gas prices should be going down but they haven’t.”

By November, his comments were becoming more personal: “Everything from a gallon of gas to a loaf of bread costs more and it’s worrisome, even though wages are going up.”

“I grew up in a family where the price at the pump was felt in the kitchen,” he said last week. “Everybody knew. Everybody felt it. I understand.”

Nervous Democrats have been urging Biden to address people’s personal struggle with inflation ahead of this year’s midterm elections, in which Democrats already are predicted to fare poorly.

Biden has said he will work with Congress to lower gasoline prices when Russia invades Ukraine and global oil supplies shrink, but he has not identified specific legislative measures he would propose.

Republican politicians and some economists have argued that Biden’s \$1.9-trillion stimulus measure Congress passed last year has fueled inflation by giving consumers more money to spend at a time when goods are in short supply, pushing up prices.

Although several economic measures have improved during Biden’s term in office, “people aren’t feeling it,” David Axelrod, a key Obama political strategist, said to the *WSJ*.

“You can’t, with charts and graphs, make them feel better,” he pointed out.

Inflation was the greatest concern among respondents in a recent Quinnipiac survey, cited by 27 percent, followed by immigration with 12 percent and the COVID virus at 10 percent.

Democrats should “not talk about Nobel laureates” and their views on the economy’s progress “because no one cares,” Rep. Sean Patrick Murphy (D-N.Y.) said in an MSNBC interview last week.

“Talk about the price of a gallon of milk,” he urged. “Talk about the price of a gallon of gas.”

TREND FORECAST: “*It’s the economy, stupid.*” And as Gerald Celente has noted, and our 25 January ***Trends Journal*** illustrates, “*When all else fails, they take you to war. And war time it is!*”

What his speech amounted to was nothing. It fell on deaf ears. Indeed, Biden has a 41 percent approval and 53 percent disapproval rating according to a Real Clear Politics poll.

And, it should be noted that the divisive Donald Trump’s 2018 approval number edges out Biden at 41.4 percent.

Again, as we continue to forecast, the United States, as with many Western nations, are ripe for new anti-establishment political movements. The poll numbers prove it.

TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT



EUROPE'S TWO LARGEST ECONOMIES SURGE IN FEBRUARY. HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN?

Germany's private-sector economy expanded at its fastest pace in six months, driven by a pick-up in consumer spending on services; in France, both services and manufacturing perked, giving the country's economy its best performance since last June, according to data from IHS Markit.

"The slump in January proved to be short-lived," Joe Hayes, senior economist at IHS Markit, told Yahoo! Finance. "Now that the trajectory of Covid-19 in France is on the downturn, this should continue to facilitate greater activity levels across both sectors."

Germany reported supply chokepoints beginning to open.

TREND FORECAST: Germany, as with the U.K., New Zealand, Denmark and other nations and states, are now lifting COVID restrictions.

Indeed, as we had forecast several weeks ago, as a result of business and citizen pressures (most recently such as the Canadian Freedom Convoy), the COVID War would be winding down late March, mid-April... and it is now in wind-down mode. Indeed, today, even the strong COVID Warrior's, Apple, lifted their mask mandate for in-store shopping in several states across the U.S.

ARGENTINA'S INTEREST RATE SPIKE. WHAT'S NEXT?



On 17 February, Argentina's central bank raised its base interest rate by 2.5 percentage points to a whopping 42.5 percent.

The hike, the second this year, is part of the country's attempt to comply with the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) urgings that the country's interest rate exceed the pace of inflation, now running at 51 percent.

Argentina's government is in negotiations with the IMF to reschedule the country's \$40 billion in outstanding loans from the agency.

The hike lifts the effective annual interest rate, which factors in compounded interest, from 48.3 percent to 51.9 percent, bank insiders told the *Financial Times*, edging it just above the official pace of inflation.

Bank officials consider the effective annual rate to be the one that needs to exceed inflation to comply with IMF guidelines, the *FT* reported.

As part of the plan, the bank will issue a 180-day note carrying a nominal interest rate of 47 percent.

The IMF and Argentine government hope to reach an agreement this month.

TREND FORECAST: Long forgotten and barely reported, is that in 2018, under the regime of president Mauricio Macri, the “pro-business” leader saddled the nation with a \$57-billion debt to the IMF.

The Argentine peso crashed in mid-2018 after the country entered a recession in the year’s second quarter. The peso lost more than half its value that year and fell more than 35 percent in 2019.

Before the COVID War began, Argentina’s economy contracted at a rate of 3.1 percent in 2019. Inflation is rampant, reaching 52.9 percent in December. It’s estimated more than 40 percent of the country’s 44 million people now live in poverty.

According to the IMF, it “is not economically nor politically feasible” for Argentina to fully repay its more than \$100 billion foreign debt.

And as we had forecast, when the “stimulus” money dries up, interest rates rise, equity markets crash, and the world descends into the “Greatest Depression,” social unrest will escalate in Argentina and nations across the globe.

The wars between the people and politicians will become common battle cries as the rich continue to get richer and the masses sink lower into economic despair.

TREND FORECAST: As the global economy slows, Argentinian economic conditions, as with many nations across the globe, will continue to deteriorate and social unrest will sharply escalate. It’s the “New World Disorder,” one of our 2020 Top Trends.

INVESTORS HOARDING CASH AMID INTEREST RATE UNCERTAINTY



Cash holdings among professional investors has edged up to 5.3 percent, compared to 5 percent in December, according to a Bank of America survey of asset managers with a collective \$1 trillion under management.

That proportion of cash is the highest since May 2020, when the COVID War's turmoil was gripping the global economy, the *Financial Times* noted.

Around the world, equity prices are down 6 percent this year, as measured by the MSCI World Index. Bloomberg's index tracking corporate and government bonds has lost 3.5 percent so far in 2022.

As inflation gallops out of control, many investors are worried that the U.S. Federal Reserve will have to raise rates so much so quickly that the post-COVID economic recovery will be derailed or even thrown into recession, the *FT* said.

"The start of 2022 has been dominated by an unprecedented hawkish pivot across major developed market central banks," Goldman Sachs analysts wrote in a note cited by the *FT*.

The bank advised clients to "overweight" cash in their portfolios and underweight corporate bonds, even though money-market funds and other cash accounts pay virtually no interest now.

Preserving capital has become more important than seeking returns.

"Once we have a clearer understanding of the interest rate path, that will reshuffle the deck," Tancredi Cordero, founder of Kuros Associates, commented to the *FT*, and then investors can use their stored cash to snap up bargains among undervalued companies.

TREND FORECAST: *We are not licensed financial advisors, therefore, we cannot provide financial advice. We provide extensive trends analyses, trend forecasts, facts and data in a vast variety of economic sectors... you make the decisions. The motto of the **Trends Journal** is “Think for Yourself.”*

*And, you may consider reading Gregory Mannarino’s article in this week’s **Trends Journal**, “The Power of a Balanced Hedged Portfolio.”*

EUROZONE TRADE DEFICIT SETS 13-YEAR HIGH



The value of the Eurozone’s imports in December was 36.7 percent greater than a year earlier, due largely to soaring energy costs and a surprising 53-percent uptick in imports from China, according to Eurostat,

the region’s statistics agency.

Exports rose 14.1 percent in value during the month.

The lopsided figures sent the Eurozone’s trade deficit up to €9.7 billion in December, the largest gap since August 2008.

For all of 2021, the zone’s trade deficit was €248.9 billion, 36 percent higher than in 2020 when consumer spending shut down during the COVID War.

Last year, the Eurozone slightly increased its trade surplus with the U.K., indicating that Europe has benefited more, at least initially, from Britain’s Brexit.

Eurozone exports to Britain expanded 1.9 percent last year while imports from the U.K. fell 13.6 percent. The zone’s exports to Britain grew less than with any of its other trading partners; imports from the U.K. were down 13.6 percent, more than with any other partner.

Britain's exports to Europe have been snarled in red tape since Brexit, as we reported in ["U.K. Trade With Europe Tangled in Bureaucracy"](#) (16 Feb 2021).

TREND FORECAST: As we have reported, Europe depends on Russia for 40 percent of its gas and a third of its crude oil. Now, with the West imposing embargoes on Russian oil, gas and other exports, inflation is likely to bite harder.

EUROPEAN CONSUMERS: FUTURE IS BLEAK



The European Union's monthly survey of Eurozone consumers' economic outlook slipped 0.3 percent this month to -8.8, the gloomiest view since March 2021.

The outlook across Europe as a whole sagged another 0.2 percent to -10.2.

Analysts had expected consumer confidence to rise slightly.

Residents were worried about the region's record 5.1-percent inflation rate in January, the *Financial Times* said.

Their outlook may improve now that Denmark, Norway, and Sweden have lifted virtually all COVID-related restrictions, Germany plans to do so imminently, and Austria has canceled its lockdown for unvaccinated persons, the *FT* noted.

Europe's December consumer spending was 3 percent below November's, but Google mobility data shows traffic returning to shops and entertainment venues across the region and restaurant reservations are increasing in Germany.

“The relaxation of restrictions will allow service spending to spring back,” Melanie Debono, senior Europe economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, said in an *FT* interview.

She predicted household spending will stall in this quarter but gather momentum in the second.

TREND FORECAST: *The survey was taken before international tensions over Ukraine came to a boil. European consumers’ confidence probably has fallen notably lower now and is likely to remain there until the Ukraine conflict stabilizes.*

TURKEY’S CENTRAL BANK INTEREST RATE GAMBLE



For the second consecutive month, Turkey’s central bank has paused its practice of cutting interest rates in the face of mounting inflation, which was running at 48.7 percent in January, according to official figures that we reported in [“Turkey’s Inflation Rate Nears 50 Percent”](#) (8 Feb

2022).

Analysts had expected the bank to leave the rate untouched, World Watch reported.

The Central Bank of Turkey cited “increased geopolitical risks” due to Russia’s military buildup surrounding Ukraine as its reason for standing pat. Turkey and Russia share the Black Sea.

The bank cut interest rates four times in a row last year as inflation more than doubled its pace.

The cuts drove billions of dollars in foreign investment out of the country and sent the lira, Turkey's currency, into a tailspin, plunging by as much as 45 percent against the dollar.

We documented Turkey's long financial slide in:

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

...among other articles.

Last spring, Turkey's president Recep Erdogan fired Naci Agbal, the central bank's governor, after the bank raised interest rates in an attempt to quell inflation and give a positive return to investments denominated in lira, Turkey's currency.

Erdogan fired Agbal for contradicting his insistence that low interest rates tame inflation, a notion contradicted by basic economic theory and his own experience, which we reported in [“Turkey's Financial Markets Crash After Agbal Firing”](#) (30 Mar 2021).

Agbal raised the central bank's key rate, once in November 2020 and again in March 2021, by a total of 8.75 percentage points.

The hikes brought the rate to 19 percent at a time when Turkey's official inflation rate had reached 15 percent. During the period, the lira regained 18 percent of its value.

Erdogan replaced Agbal with Sahap Kavcioglu, an ally who since has continued to cut interest rates as Erdogan wishes, despite inflation climbing relentlessly at its fastest clip in 20 years.

In late May, Erdogan swapped out Oguzhan Ozbas, one of the central bank's deputy governors, for Semih Tumen, an economics professor and key Erdogan

advisor, helping the president cement his control over monetary policy ([“Turkey: Another Day, Another Central Bankster Fired,”](#) 1 Jun 2021).

On Ozbas’s firing, the lira sank to another low for the year against the dollar.

“Independence at the Turkish central bank is non-existent,” economist Jason Tuvey at Capital Economics said at the time.

The central bank has been trying to save the lira by cashing in the country’s foreign currency exchange to buy its own.

Turkey’s central bank also has asked exporters earning foreign currency to sell 25 percent of their hard-currency revenues to the bank in exchange for lira.

At the same time, the government has made a promise to reimburse savings accounts for any loss they incur through inflation, as we noted in [“Turkey’s Bonds Downgraded. Worse to Come”](#) (15 Feb 2022).

The moves have slowed the lira’s decline but not reversed it.

On 12 February, ratings agency Fitch lowered Turkey’s sovereign bond ratings deeper into junk status, dropping them from BB- to B+, putting the G20 nation on the same credit footing as Benin and Rwanda ([“Turkey’s Bonds Downgraded. Worse to Come,”](#) 15 Feb 2022).

Erdogan’s mismanagement of the economy has driven his popularity close to the lowest of his 20-year reign. The country will hold presidential elections in June 2023.

TREND FORECAST: *Our outlook for Turkey remains unchanged.*

As we have been reporting for a year, the country’s crashing currency and soaring inflation continue to roil an increasingly chaotic and unstable socioeconomic and geopolitical environment in the country. Foreign investors are pulling their cash out before Turkey’s economy crumbles completely.

As the global economic recovery decelerates—and as inflation keeps rising across the globe—the lira and Turkey’s economy will continue to decline.

Another virulent COVID outbreak would make Turkey’s plight even worse: nearly 13 percent of its GDP rests on travel and tourism.

Erdogan’s domestic popularity recently fell to a two-year low and will continue to sink with citizens’ economic prospects, especially if his current economic “rescue” schemes fail to reverse the economy’s tailspin.

For that reason, look for Erdogan to become more belligerent in his comments and actions directed at foreign “enemies.” As Gerald Celente often says, “When all else fails, they take you to war.”

SPOTLIGHT: INFLATION



INFLATION EASING, BIDEN ADVISOR SAYS. TRUE OR FALSE

U.S. inflation will slow in the months ahead because the factors driving it are easing, Cecilia Rouse, chair of the Biden administration’s Council of Economic

Advisors, said in testimony to the Senate’s banking committee last week.

Inflation’s speed is fueled by strong post-COVID consumer demand outstripping industry’s ability to regain pre-virus production levels, she said, as well as kinks in global supply chains and a shortage of workers.

“We expect that as people come back into the workforce as the [virus] is under control, that will ease some constraints [and] help on the supply side,” she said.

As the COVID plague “is addressed around the world, that will help bring more goods as well,” she said.

Republicans on the committee chided Rouse over the administration’s plan to spend trillions of new dollars on infrastructure and social programs.

“It’s really important that we not engage in yet another spending spree, which will only make [inflation] worse,” Senator Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) said.

Rouse also urged the committee to advance the nominations of Jerome Powell and four other candidates for posts with the U.S. Federal Reserve.

Republicans on the committee have stalled the nominations over concerns about one nominee, Sarah Raskin, who urged the government to not make COVID-era loans to over-leveraged oil producers and who also favors stronger federal action to combat climate disruption.

PUBLISHER’S NOTE: *At least Rouse did not say inflation is “temporary” or “transitory.”*

TREND FORECAST: *As polls now indicate, Republicans will regain control of the House and Senate in this year’s midterm elections, and no new spending will be approved.*

While that is likely to somewhat help tame inflation, as they have for decades, regardless of which crime syndicate is in charge, long-standing social and infrastructure needs will continue to go unmet.

With wealth gaps widening, war talk escalating, worsening animosities will not only escalate between the two political parties, but also among U.S. economic classes.

ECB CHIEF ECONOMIST DOES 180 ON INFLATION



Inflation in the Eurozone is unlikely to fall to the bank's 2-percent target rate until at least 2024, according to Philip Lane, chief economist at the European Central Bank (ECB).

Three weeks ago, Lane expressed the view that the zone's inflation was equally likely to reach or fall below 2 percent in the next two years.

His change of views is a bellwether: the expected rate of inflation through 2023 is the key factor in the bank's decision when and how quickly to end its €4.8-trillion bond-buying stimulus program and raise interest rates from the -0.50 percent where they have been since 2014.

The bank has not raised its interest rate since 2011.

Lane downplayed his change of outlook as "not staggeringly huge" and said that any changes to ECB policy would be a gradual "normalization of policy," which analysts interpreted to mean ending bond purchases and raising interest rates to zero, the *Financial Times* said.

Lane differentiated that normalization from "monetary tightening," which would involve raising interest rates higher and faster if inflation was to remain far above the 2-percent target for several years.

However, "that's not what we see in front of us," Lane said.

Lane spoke at a webinar hosted by news and data service MNI.

In December, the ECB predicted Europe's inflation would fall to 2 percent by the end of this year and settle to 1.8 percent through 2023 and 2024. The bank is expected to revise those predictions at its March meeting, according to the *FT*.

TRENDPOST: *We could call it “Central Bankster Syndrome.” The symptom: waiting until inflation has stolen everyone’s purchasing power before you stop thinking that soaring prices are “temporary” or “transitory.”*

Patient Zero: U.S. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell.

At his December 2020 press conference, Fed chair Jerome Powell pointed to “disinflationary pressures around the globe” and said “it’s not going to be easy to have inflation move up.”

A month later, with inflation on the move well above the Fed’s 2-percent target rate, Powell said it was only “temporary.”

In July, with inflation running at 5 percent, Powell told a Congressional committee that “we really do believe that these things will come down of their own accord as the economy reopens,” he noted.

Treasury secretary Janet Yellin echoed his mistaken view in a 24 October CNN interview, describing high inflation as “temporary” ([“Powell, Yellin Agree: Higher Inflation Ahead.”](#) 26 Oct 2021).

While Powell was waiting for inflation to give up and go away, we documented its relentless rise in [“Inflation Tsunami Approaching”](#) (4 May 2021), [“Inflation Soon To Get Much Worse”](#) (18 May 2021), [“Fed Officials Send Mixed Signals on Policy Shift”](#) (29 Jun 2021), [“When Will Fed End Cheap Money Policy?”](#) (27 Jul 2021), and in many of our [“Market Overview”](#) sections.

TREND FORECAST: *If Lane’s comments are any indication, the European Central Bank is learning what Powell did: inflation must be addressed now if it is not going to cancel the benefits that low interest rates brought to the economic recovery.*

The ECB will raise interest rates at least to zero before this year ends.

U.S. JANUARY PRODUCER PRICE INDEX RISES MORE THAN EXPECTED



Prices paid to factories for their products rose 9.7 percent in January, year over year. The 1-percent rise from December was the biggest one-month jump since last May.

Economists polled by Bloomberg had expected a 9.1-percent yearly gain and a 0.5-percent bump from December.

“Inflation is everywhere and it seems to be gathering both breadth and momentum,” Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Amherst Pierpont Securities, wrote in a note to clients.

Tangles in supply chains, strong consumer demand, and worker shortages still conspire to push up manufacturing costs, Bloomberg noted.

“The combination of stubborn supply disruptions and elevated energy prices will prevent producer prices from reverting to more normal patterns until later this year,” economists Kathy Bostjancic and Mahir Rasheed at Oxford Economics wrote in a note quoted by Bloomberg.

Prices paid to manufacturers in New York state soared 17 points to 54.1 in the Federal Reserve Bank’s index of general business conditions, the largest single increase since the bank began tracking the figure in 2001.

Also, energy prices added 2.5 percent in January after edging down in December and are continuing to climb as the Ukraine crisis unfolds.

Prices of goods expanded 1.3 percent from December through January, the largest monthly jump since October.

The price of services added 0.7 percent, the same rate of gain as in December.

The cost of hospital outpatient care grew by 1.6 percent during the month, adding the greatest share of increased costs.

TREND FORECAST: Again, as we had forecast when it began, the future of inflation was clear from the start. Yet the central bankers, as we also have been long reporting, kept denying it.

We do not believe they believed it was temporary and transitory. They are not stupid. But rather, the Feds denied it because they wanted to keep the equity markets soaring and the COVID War deflated economy artificially inflated.

Now that game is over. And we maintain our forecast for Dragflation: declining economic growth and rising inflation.

BUSINESSES GET CREATIVE IN PASSING INFLATION'S COST TO CUSTOMERS



Consumers do not always see inflation's cost written onto price tags. Sometimes, we might not be aware of various ways that we pay for retailers' and manufacturers' higher costs.

A Chicago restaurant chain has added a 3-percent "processing fee" when a guest pays with a check. Peloton, the home exercise equipment maker, now charges \$250 for its formerly free delivery and set-up service.

Several Disney theme parks have not raised their \$109 base ticket price, but have added separate fees and, in some cases, canceled free shuttles to pick up guests at their hotels, leaving people to pay for their own transport and parking.

Some Marriott hotels are charging a “sustainability fee” of about \$5 a night. Harley Davidson has tacked a surcharge onto its motorcycles.

Food processors have long practiced “shrinkflation” during inflationary times by leaving retail prices untouched while putting less product in the same package.

Consumers focus on the price and, to some degree, on ingredients but rarely pay attention to a product’s weight, so “it’s pretty easy to move from 13 ounces to 12,” Harvard business school professor John Gourville told *The Wall Street Journal*.

As a result, in recent years the same size cans of tuna have less fish in them than they used to and a roll of toilet paper has less tissue, consultant Burt Flickinger III at Strategic Resources Group said in a *WSJ* interview.

“It’s called a ‘cheater pack,’” he said.

TRENDPOST: *Mondelez International, which makes Oreo cookies and Ritz crackers, among other things, has been experimenting with different packaging and prices that cost consumers less but that carry a greater profit margin, as we noted in [“Restaurants, Food Processors Raise Prices to Meet Costs”](#) (20 Jul 2021).*

The Biden administration contends it is looking into these so-called “junk fees” over concerns that some may be padded beyond the actual cost increases companies are attempting to offset. It is more talk than action and will amount to nothing. And, the “shrinkflation” trend will continue.

U.K. INFLATION HIGHEST IN 29 YEARS



In January, Britain's inflation rate rose to 5.5 percent, year on year, its fastest pace since March 1992, according to the Office for National Statistics.

The rate had been 5.4 percent in December.

Increases in the cost of clothing, footwear, and rents, led prices higher; some household goods also spiked in price.

The Bank of England raised interest rates in each of its last two policy meetings. Inflation's unrelenting rate will pressure the bank to hike rates again, *The Wall Street Journal* noted.

TREND FORECAST: *Two consecutive rate increases have not affected the U.K.'s inflation rate. The chances are now greater that the central bank will boost rates again at its next meeting.*

As we noted in ["Bank of England Raises Rates Again"](#) (8 Feb 2022), futures traders already have bet that the U.K.'s interest rate will reach 1 percent in May and 1.5 percent in November, a level not previously expected until March 2023.

SPOTLIGHT: BIGS GETTING 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...

BLACKSTONE BOOKS €21-BILLION DEAL FOR EUROPEAN WAREHOUSE SPACE

In what the *Financial Times* calls “one of the biggest-ever private real estate deals,” private equity firm Blackstone Group has announced a €21-billion recapitalization of Mileway, its European warehouse business.

Blackstone offered Mileway’s investors the option of increasing their stakes, standing pat, or cashing out.

Some are exiting, but others—including several Asian national wealth funds and U.S. pension programs—have added at least \$500 million to their involvement, the *Financial Times* reported, and will fund about three-quarters of Mileway’s increased value.

The deal is subject to a 75-day waiting period to see if any other entities might offer even more for Mileway, giving Blackstone and its investors the option of selling out for an even heftier profit.

The dramatic rise of online shopping during the COVID War has pushed up the value of warehouses and last-mile distribution centers by an average of 35

percent, MSCI reported, making the properties a key focus of recent real estate investment.

Mileway, which Blackstone formed in 2019, now owns about 1,700 logistics properties across 10 European countries.

Last year, Blackstone spent \$720 million in India to buy 3.5 million square feet of warehouse space and development sites that could sprout another 18 million square feet, as we reported in [“Blackstone Gobbling Up India’s Storage Space”](#) (27 Apr 2021).

Vacant buildings among U.S. warehouses fell to 3.9 percent last fall, a record low, according to an October study by logistics firm Prologis.

The shift from “just in time” to “just in case” inventory structures will continue to keep warehouse space in short supply for at least the rest of this year, with rents climbing by double digits.

CELANESE WILL BUY MOST OF DUPONT UNIT FOR \$11 BILLION



Chemical company Celanese will buy most of Dupont de Nemours’ mobility and materials unit for \$11 billion.

The unit sold about \$5 billion last year in polymers, resins, and products for vehicles, *The Wall Street Journal* reported, and accounted for almost a third of Dupont’s overall sales.

The purchase includes a global production network, 29 locations, intellectual property, and customer contracts, according to the *WSJ*.

The sale's value reflects 14 times the unit's 2021 gross operating earnings, Dupont said.

"We are confident in our ability to capture synergies that will allow us to double Celanese total free cash flow within the next five years," Celanese CFO Scott Richardson said in a statement.

Dupont's share price slipped 1 percent on the news; Celanese stock shed about 5 percent.

INTEL TO BUY TOWER SEMICONDUCTOR FOR \$6 BILLION



U.S. chip maker Intel is finalizing the purchase of Israel's Tower Semiconductor for \$5.4 billion, people familiar told *The Wall Street Journal*.

Tower's market value was estimated at \$3.6 billion, indicating that Intel places a hefty premium on Tower's value to its future.

Tower's shares soared 49 percent in after-hours trading on 14 February after news of the sale broke.

Tower has manufacturing plants in California, Israel, Japan, and Texas.

Intel's purchase is part of the company's expansion plans to meet exploding demand for chips for everything from smart appliances to electric vehicles.

The plan includes investing \$20 billion to build two new chip-making plants outside Columbus, Ohio (["Intel Follows One of Our Top Ten Trends: Self-Sufficiency."](#) 25 Jan 2022) and its attempt last year to buy competitor GlobalFoundries.

Negotiations ultimately failed and GlobalFoundries made a public stock offering instead and is now valued at about \$30 billion.

SPECIAL UKRAINE REPORT



PUTIN OVERSEES NUCLEAR DRILLS: U.S. SAYS RUSSIA CAN STRIKE AT 'ANY TIME'

Russian President Vladimir Putin spent his Saturday inside the Kremlin with his Belarusian counterpart, Alexander Lukashenko, overseeing military drills that involved the test-firing of ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic missiles amid increasing tensions with Ukraine and the West.

Prior to the missile test, Putin—once again—blamed Ukraine for its part in “escalating” tensions in the eastern part of the country, which is home to Russian separatists. He denied having any plans for an invasion but said it is impossible not to see “what is happening around the world and around us. But we have clearly defined guidelines in line with the national interests of the Russian people and the Russian state.”

The Wall Street Journal reported that Saturday’s drill served as a “pointed display of its [Russia’s] nuclear and conventional military might amid a standoff with the West over Ukraine.”

Some of the artillery that was fired included the RS-24, a nuclear-capable missile, and the Tsirkon hypersonic missile, which is an anti-ship weapon, according to the paper.

One U.S. official told the paper that Russia is showing its ability to “operate all the way up the escalation ladder.”

“It is intended to send a message to the West that they are prepared, including their senior leadership,” the official said. (See [“BIDEN MEETS WITH PUTIN: COLD WAR TO CONTINUE.”](#))

The U.S. warned that the missile test raises the risk that there is some kind of miscalculation, a charge that Moscow dismissed, saying the exercises were planned in advance, and Russia “without fail,” notified other countries about them.

Dmitry Peskov, a spokesman for Putin, said the exercises should not worry anyone.

TREND FORECAST: The Russians are coming, the Russians are coming! The Cold War, launched immediately after World War II, paused, but never ended.

From Russian defectors being poisoned in the U.K, to Donald Trump’s Presidential win, to any cyberattack, high crime and misdemeanors—without providing a shred of hard evidence, America’s media and politicians blame it on the Russians. (See [“Pure Propaganda”](#))

And while the western media continues to report on the German horrors of the Holocaust which killed over 6 million Jewish [civilians](#), Adolph Hitler’s “Operation Barbarossa” was launched against the Soviet Union 80 years ago today, costing the lives of some 30 million people on the Eastern Front.

Yet, these Nazi horrors have been brainwashed out of society, masked by the Cold War and the Iron Curtain that separated Eastern Europe and Russia from the west.

Putin met with Biden in person on 22 June 2021. The meeting was par for the course and they signed a Joint Statement on Strategic Stability.

Following the meeting, Biden's detractors said little was accomplished for the U.S., while his defenders say that the diplomatic process takes time and will not be solved with just one meeting.

TRENDPOST: *President Vladimir Putin referred to a quote attributed to Leo Tolstoy at the summit when he said that in life there is no "solid happiness" only "silent lightnings, a mirage of it on the horizon—cherish those."*

"And it seems to me that in our situation there can be no absolute 'family trust.' But I think the silent lightnings of it actually flashed by," he said.

The Washington Post reported that President Joe Biden said there was no "kumbaya" moment.

It is not surprising that there was no diplomatic win by either leader, but if pressed, many political observers said it seemed Putin carried the day. (Once again he shared the world stage with the U.S. president, which further cemented Russia's importance.)

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

Biden has called Putin a killer and stood by his comment before the meeting on Wednesday, and Putin has done little to win over the new administration. Between his aggression in Ukraine, Moscow's decision to leave the Open Skies Arms Control Treaty, and damaging cyberattacks have all hurt the relationship.

An aide for Biden talked to The New York Times shortly after the meeting, and said the president is “perpetually optimistic” that the relationship can turn around.

“He may be the only one,” the aide said.

It was Tolstoy after all who wrote in “Anna Karenina”: “If you look for perfection, you’ll never be content.”

TRENDPOST: *What is not being reported in the ongoing Ukraine/Russia/US/NATO conflict, is that a major growing political force in Ukraine are neo Nazi forces.*

As reported by Reuters in March 2018 in an article “Ukraine’s neo-Nazi problem,” they note that “As Ukraine’s struggle against Russia and its proxies continues, Kiev must also contend with a growing problem behind the front lines: far-right vigilantes who are willing to use intimidation and even violence to advance their agendas, and who often do so with the tacit approval of law enforcement agencies.”

Others had contended that these neo-Nazi forces were also instrumental in the overthrow of Ukraine’s democratically elected president, Victor Yanukovich back in 2014.

The Reuters article also states, according to Freedom House’s Ukraine project director Matthew Schaaf, “numerous organized radical right-wing groups exist in Ukraine, and while the volunteer battalions may have been officially integrated into state structures, some of them have since spun off political and non-profit structures to implement their vision.”

Schaaf noted that “an increase in patriotic discourse supporting Ukraine in its conflict with Russia has coincided with an apparent increase in both public hate speech, sometimes by public officials and magnified by the media, as well as violence towards vulnerable groups such as the LGBT community,” an observation that is supported by a recent Council of Europe study.”

Yet, these neo-Nazi facts of who is pushing the war with Russia are ignored. However, today, Dr. Paul Craig Roberts, in his article ["Breaking news: Russia Has Given Up On Negotiations and Will Resolve the Donbass Issue by Recognizing the Independence of the Republics."](#) notes that Ukraine President "Zelensky has not been able to function as president, because he is caught between Washington and the CIA controlled neo-Nazi militias and is up for reelection."

CHINA SIDES WITH RUSSIA IN CLASH WITH WEST. WILL THE BOTTOM LINE LIMIT SUPPORT?



Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit earlier this month to Beijing to help Chinese President Xi Jinping kick off the opening ceremony of the Winter Olympics was viewed by many in the media as an effort by the two to show a united front against the

West.

CNN ran a headline, "CHINA'S WINTER OLYMPICS MOMENT IS BEING OVERSHADOWED BY ITS 'BEST FRIEND'" and *The New Yorker's* article was titled, "RUSSIA AND CHINA UNVEIL A PACT AGAINST AMERICA AND THE WEST."

Robert Daly, the director of the Kissinger Institute on China and the United States, at the Wilson Center in Washington, told the magazine that the pledge between the two countries illustrates that they will stand "shoulder to shoulder against America and the West, ideologically as well as militarily."

"This statement might be looked back on as the beginning of Cold War II," he said.

But Xi's actions since the meeting have caused some political observers to wonder just how far Beijing is willing to support Russia if there is an invasion of Ukraine. Xi told French President Emmanuel Macron in a phone call Wednesday that he hoped the situation in Ukraine could be solved diplomatically.

Some have pointed to reports that China has already assured Moscow that any revenue it stands to lose in sanctions with the West, could cause less of an impact with the help of Beijing.

"It's one thing for China to back Russia in opposing NATO enlargement, as it costs nothing," Sergey Radchenko, a professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins University in Bologna, told the paper. "It's quite another for China to help Russia evade the economic sanctions it would face if it invades Ukraine."

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

The Wall Street Journal, citing unnamed sources, reported that Xi has been meeting with his seven-member Politburo about the appropriate next steps. (Xi has denied recommending against an invasion during the meeting with Putin at the Olympics.)

The paper pointed out that one of the Chinese Communist Party's founding principles is to avoid international conflict at all costs and meddling in outside conflicts.

Wang Wenbin, the Chinese foreign ministry spokesman, downplayed claims from Biden that a Russian invasion is all but certain. Wang said the credibility of the U.S. intelligence community "has been tested on many occasions, including Iraq and Ukraine."

He said China would like to see a political resolution and “nobody should put up a smokescreen of war and use it as leverage, or threaten others with sanctions and pressure, still less resort to the means of inciting bloc confrontation.”

His comment on sanctions was a thinly veiled swipe at President Joe Biden who warned Putin against invading. “He’s never seen sanctions like the ones I will impose,” Biden warned.

Wang said every effort should be made “on the basis of the Minsk II agreement to properly treat the reasonable security concerns of all sides.”

The 2015 agreement was brokered at the time by France and Germany and called for the immediate withdrawal of heavy weapons by both sides and a ceasefire monitored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The Associated Press called the agreement a coup by Moscow because Ukraine is obligated to grant a special status for the Russian separatist regions in the county that allows them to form their own police force and appoint their own judges.

Ukraine has accused Russia of not pulling back its forces in these regions, which Moscow has denied. Macron called the Minsk deal last month “the only path allowing us to build peace...and find a sustainable political solution.”

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast of “The Rise of China” as one of the Top Trends of 2021. We predicted that the 21st century will be the Chinese century because the business of China is business; the business of America since World War II has been war.*

The Wall Street Journal’s report pointed out that Ukraine plays an important role in Beijing’s Belt and Road Initiative that links China to Europe. (See [“BUMPS IN CHINA’S BELT AND ROAD IN AFRICA”](#) and [“BIDEN VS. CHINA’S BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE: U.S. LOSES”](#))

The Diplomat reported back in 2018 that China looked to gain a foothold in Ukraine shortly after Russia's seizure of Crimea and the beginning of the secessionist conflicts in Donetsk. The report said China competed "aggressively" with Western partners for partnerships in Kyiv.

The magazine said Ukraine, at times, runs into roadblocks with Western countries concerned about corruption and then can turn to China.

"We aren't actively targeting China for foreign direct investment," a top economic advisor to the former Prime Minister Volodymyr Groysman told the magazine. "We're prioritizing Germany, France, and the United Kingdom. But if China wants to come here and improve our ports and railways and build our roads, why would we stop them?"

Both China's manufacturing abilities and tech innovation were at third-world levels before Bill Clinton and George W. Bush brought the communist nation into the World Trade Organization at the turn of the century.

It was U.S. and European companies that exported their manufacturing facilities and high technology to China so they could use its cheap labor to make their products... and sell them back to the citizens around the world at much higher prices so they could boost their profit margins.

POLL: AMERICANS WANT NO U.S. TROOPS TO FIGHT IN A UKRAINE WAR



A new survey released by the *Economist* / YouGov found that only 13 percent of Americans believe it would be a "good idea" to deploy troops to Ukraine in order to fight Russians.

The online poll was conducted by YouGov and used a nationally representative sample of 1,500 U.S. adults from 5-8 February. The poll showed that more

Americans (17 percent) would back the U.S.'s withdrawal from NATO if it meant fighting with Russians.

The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the topic. (See ["WASHINGTON GIVES COLD SHOULDER TO RUSSIA'S SECURITY CONCERNS," "BIDEN HITS RUSSIA WITH SANCTIONS," "NATO: WE ARE THE WORLD" and "KREMLIN BLAMES UKRAINE FOR STOKING TENSIONS AT BORDER."](#))

U.S. intelligence has warned that despite Moscow's assurances, the Russian military is poised to launch a full-scale invasion and their tanks could reach Kyiv within two days. Biden has insisted that U.S. troops will not square off with Russians, but the president has sent extra forces to Europe last week. About 2,000 troops were headed to Poland and Germany, and the 1,000 in Germany will be headed to Romania.

The Biden administration has vowed crippling sanctions against Moscow and promised that no Russian gas will ever be pumped through the Nord Stream 2 pipeline into Germany if Russia invades.

Ukraine is not a member of NATO so other countries are not obligated to come to its defense in the event of an outside invasion, but that has not stopped Western countries from sending "defensive" military equipment into Kyiv.

The poll found that 55 percent of Americans say it would be a "bad idea" for U.S. troops to fight Russians. Many Americans are unfamiliar with the region. About 25 percent are unsure if Kyiv is an ally or an enemy.

TRENDPOST: Long forgotten, and not mentioned by the Western media or its politicians, 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 on Germany, 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."

Also, as noted in the National Security Archives, "Not once, but three times, Baker tried out the "not one inch eastward" formula with Gorbachev in the February 9, 1990, meeting. He agreed with Gorbachev's statement in response to the assurances that "NATO expansion is unacceptable."

Baker assured Gorbachev that "neither the President nor I intend to extract any unilateral advantages from the processes that are taking place," and that the Americans understood that "not only for the Soviet Union but for other European countries as well it is important to have guarantees that if the United States keeps its presence in Germany within the framework of NATO, not an inch of NATO's present military jurisdiction will spread in an eastern direction."

Yet, these and other facts regarding the agreement of NATO not to expand are being totally ignored by the mainstream media and the U.S. and EU governments.

UKRAINE CONFLICT HEATS UP: PUTIN RECOGNIZES DONETSK, LUHANSK AS INDEPENDENT FROM UKRAINE



Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday prompted the Biden administration to promise sanctions after he urged Russian lawmakers to recognize Russian-controlled territories in southeast Ukraine as independent states he called “Luhansk People’s Republic” and “Donetsk People’s

Republic.”

Putin accused Ukraine of taking a “path of violence” in the Donbass region and ordered Russian troops to enter eastern Ukraine to “maintain peace.” Video footage emerged Monday night that appeared to show Russian tanks and troops entering the region. In 2014, these two republics declared their independence and have been controlled by Russian separatists.

Putin faced immediate criticism from Western countries over his decision to move troops into Ukraine. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced Berlin will halt the certification of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline. President Biden also promised new sanctions against Russia that will also impact Americans.

“As I said last week, defending freedom will have costs for us as well and here at home,” said Putin. He had also noted that “I believe it is necessary to take a long overdue decision to immediately recognize the independence and sovereignty” of the two states.

Putin accused Ukraine of taking a “path of violence” in the Donbass region and said he sees no other solution.

“Therefore, I believe it is necessary to take a long overdue decision to immediately recognize the independence and sovereignty” of the two states.

The Guardian reported that the Russian president showed a “visceral anger” toward Ukraine that he called a “brother nation.” The paper pointed out that Putin signed a presidential order and, in all likelihood, will send troops to “defend” the regions.

The move, he said, was a direct result of the failure of the 2014 Minsk agreements, designed to put an end to fighting. “They are not interested in peaceful solutions—they want to start Blitzkrieg,” he said. “Every day they are amassing troops in the Donbass.”

Jen Psaki, the White House press secretary, said the U.S. will cease all trade or investment with these two states and will “soon announce additional measures related to today’s blatant violation of Russia’s international commitments.”

Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European commission, called Putin’s move a “blatant violation of international law, the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the Minsk agreements.”

“The EU and its partners will react with unity, firmness and determination in solidarity with Ukraine,” she said.

Tensions in Ukraine’s Donbass region—where there have been clashes between Ukrainian forces and Russian separatists since 2014—have resulted last week in two Russian leaders urging civilians to flee over the threat of a full-scale invasion.

One Side

There has been a significant increase in violence, according to reports. The main instigator of these clashes depends on who you ask. Western media companies, which have done their best to present Russian President Vladimir Putin as the big bad wolf and the separatists as his wolves, blame the Russians for picking a fight in order to justify an invasion.

The Washington Post reported that separatists have been accused of firing on neighborhoods like Stanytsia Luhanska in order to provoke Ukrainian forces to respond. The paper also pointed out that the separatists claim the exact opposite. They say Ukrainians have been opening fire on their territories and they are simply responding.

The Ukrainian Armed Forces said in a statement that the mortar fire has increased “tenfold” in the region since Thursday and accused separatists of violating the ceasefire 70 times, the paper reported. Two soldiers were killed and five injured, the paper said.

Separatists were also blamed for hitting a kindergarten—injuring three teachers but no students, according to *The New York Times*. Major news outlets presented the attack as an example of Russia's aggression.

CNN wrote that the strike on the school is a reminder “of the very real stakes for people living near the Line of Contact that separates Ukrainian government forces from Russian-backed separatists.” (See [“KREMLIN BLAMES UKRAINE FOR STOKING TENSIONS AT BORDER.”](#))

The Other Side

Separatists on Monday blamed Ukraine’s government for killing two of their civilians in shelling late Sunday, which was widely ignored by Western media.

“Kyiv can start a full-scale assault on Donbass at any moment, the situation is critical,” Denis Pushilin, the head of the unrecognized Donetsk People’s Republic, told RT.

The report said he made the comment shortly after a car bomb exploded near the regional police chief, who was not injured. He told the Russian outlet that buildings in Donetsk have guards in place to prevent a terror strike by Ukraine forces.

At the heart of the conflict in Donbass is the disregard of the Minsk II agreement that was signed on 12 February 2015.

Andrian Prokip, a senior associate, Ukraine, at the Wilson Center, wrote,

“The Minsk Agreements stipulate establishing a ceasefire and separating the opposing military forces, providing a special constitutional regime for the Donbass (with requisite amending of Ukraine’s constitution), and the holding of elections in the non-controlled territories, with Kyiv thereafter to have control over the Russia-Ukraine border in the Donbas.”

Critics of the agreement call the document vague and say it heavily favors the Russians. Kyiv signed the deal after suffering military losses to Russia in 2014. Some analysts say Petro Poroshenko, the Ukrainian president at the time, signed the deal because his military was facing almost certain defeat.

Kyiv and Moscow now have wildly different interpretations of the agreements. Kyiv sees the documents as an avenue to restore territorial integrity and Moscow sees them as increasing the possibility that it could exercise a veto over Ukraine’s future, the *Financial Times* reported.

Despite its imperfections, European leaders hope that the agreements could lead the path to a diplomatic score in the most recent standoff. The *Financial Times* reported that Olaf Scholz, the German chancellor, met with Putin who said the agreements should be the “basis” for a resolution to the current tensions.

The report pointed out that French President Emmanuel Macron has called the Minsk deals the only way to build peace. The U.S. also agreed with the assessment. (See our related articles, [“PUTIN PUTS PRESSURE ON UKRAINE”](#) and [“BIDEN PLEDGES ‘UNWAVERING SUPPORT’ FOR UKRAINE.”](#))

The *FT* pointed out Kyiv wants Russian forces to leave the Donbass region prior to local elections. Kyiv also wants to control its own borders before votes are cast. Russia wants the vote to occur prior to Kyiv taking control of its own

border because Moscow believes that will eliminate any chance of Kyiv joining NATO.

“You may like it, you may not like it—but deal with it my gorgeous,” Putin said earlier this month, referencing his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky.

TREND FORECAST: *The U.S. will not go to war with Russia over Ukraine. The military in Ukraine is no match against the Russians, and its only hope for security in the future is to become a member of NATO, which Blinken did not indicate is any closer today than it was before Russians amassed at the border.*

Jens Stoltenberg, NATO’s secretary-general, has been vague on what kind of response the alliance would have in the event of a Russian invasion and has on one occasion clarified that Ukraine is a NATO partner and not a member, which translates to mean: Kyiv’s on its own.

TREND FORECAST: *Gerald Celente has noted, “When all else fails, they take you to war.”*

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

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

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

In fact, the dot.com bust which happened in March 2000 had sunk the tech-heavy Nasdaq down 66 percent the day before the terror strike that

launched the never ending War on Terror and “Operation Enduring Freedom”... America’s deadly Afghan War that it lost which “endured” for 20 years.

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

BIDEN AGREES TO MEET WITH PUTIN ‘IN PRINCIPLE’ FOR HIGH-RISK SUMMIT



U.S. President Joe Biden agreed “in principle” to meet with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin as Western leaders insist that Moscow could invade Ukraine at any time.

The meeting between the two leaders would occur after another round of talks between Secretary of State Antony Blinken and his counterpart Sergey Lavrov. There has been a diplomatic logjam because both countries have said certain demands are non-negotiable.

Russia does not want Ukraine to become a full member of NATO and wants Western militaries to stop their encroachment.

Russia has given Blinken its lists of demands, and the U.S. has said that it will not allow Moscow to determine what countries are allowed to join the Alliance, even though we have reported that Brussels wants Kyiv to become a member about as much as it wants Pyongyang to apply. (See [“WASHINGTON AND NATO: NO CONCESSIONS TO RUSSIA.”](#))

AntiWar.com reported that the Russians said the U.S. did not offer a “constructive response” because Washington did not address Moscow’s chief concerns.

"We state that the American side did not give a constructive response to the basic elements of the draft treaty with the United States prepared by the Russian side on security guarantees," a statement on the Russian Foreign Ministry's website read. The statement continued, "We insist on withdrawal of all US armed forces and weapons, deployed in Central Eastern, Southeastern Europe, and the Baltics. We are certain that national potentials in these areas are quite enough."

TRENDPOST: *Russia has insisted that it has no plans of invading, but President Biden has suggested that a confrontation is all but certain. (See ["PUTIN PUTS PRESSURE ON UKRAINE."](#) ["KREMLIN BLAMES UKRAINE FOR STOKING TENSIONS AT BORDER"](#) and ["U.S. CONTINUES TO RAMP UP COLD WAR 2 RHETORIC."](#))*

Yet the EU keeps grandstanding that despite Russia's insistence that they do not want NATO military forces and armaments in neighboring Ukraine, just last week, Jens Stoltenberg, the secretary-general of NATO who on more than one occasion pointed out that Ukraine is not a full member, struck a confrontational tone at a security conference in Munich.

"If the Kremlin's aim is to have less NATO on its borders, it will only get more NATO," he said. "And if it wants to divide NATO, it will only get an even more united alliance."

(It is worth mentioning that Stoltenberg has been dividing his time between dealing with Ukraine while making sure his own resume is polished since he is likely to be the next head of Norway's central bank. He is expected to step down as head of NATO later this year.)

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

Warmongers on Parade

Jen Psaki, the White House press secretary, told reporters on Sunday that the meeting hinges on whether or not Moscow decides to invade Ukraine.

The Biden administration has said that an invasion can come at any time and about 190,000 Russian troops are positioned near the border.

CNBC reported that Biden canceled a scheduled trip to his home in Delaware and held a two-hour-long National Security Council meeting at the White House.

The report said French President Emmanuel Macron has emerged as a key diplomat and was in touch with several world leaders this weekend alone about the matter, including British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

The U.S. and U.K. have been vocal in their assessment that an invasion is almost certain. Jake Sullivan, Biden's national security adviser, told reporters earlier this month that the invasion could very well begin while much of the world is focused on the Winter Games in Beijing. But the Olympics have since ended, and no invasion.

Putin has blamed the Biden administration for trying to drag Russia into a war because of Washington's refusal to negotiate on key security demands.

"Let's imagine Ukraine [becomes] a NATO member and starts these military operations. Are we supposed to go to war with the NATO bloc? Has anyone given that any thought? Apparently not," Putin said. (See ["PUTIN ACCUSES U.S. OF TRYING TO PULL RUSSIA INTO CONFLICT"](#) and ["RUSSIA: U.S. SPREADING 'LARGE-SCALE DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN' TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM THEIR 'OWN AGGRESSIVE ACTIONS.'"](#))

In response to the constant U.S. ramping up of the narrative that Russia's invasion is "imminent"—which, as we have detailed they have been claiming since 2014, (See ["COWARDS AND FOOLS."](#) 28 Jul 2015), the Kremlin accused

Western countries of producing an “unprecedented” campaign to attempt to “convince the world community” that Russia is planning an invasion of Ukraine, which has become the daily news.

TRENDPOST: *However, not a peep from the Presstitutes about the Kremlin’s claim that tension in Ukraine has been increasing because Kyiv deployed some 125,000 troops and heavy artillery in the war-torn-disputed Donbass region.*

*The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on Russia’s claim that Western countries are strategically expanding NATO-allies in an attempt to surround Moscow. (See [“PUTIN PUTS PRESSURE ON UKRAINE,”](#) [“U.S. VOWS UKRAINE SUPPORT,”](#) [“KREMLIN BLAMES UKRAINE FOR STOKING TENSIONS AT BORDER,”](#) [“U.S. CONTINUES TO RAMP UP COLD WAR 2 RHETORIC,”](#) [“BIDEN PLEDGES UNWAVERING SUPPORT’ FOR UKRAINE”](#) and [“BLINKEN BELLOWS: U.S. COMMITTED TO UKRAINE’S SOVEREIGNTY IS ‘IRONCLAD.’”](#))*

TRENDPOST: *Totally unreported by the Presstitute media is Washington’s breach of the Gorbachev/Reagan agreement that ended the Cold War, whereby the U.S. vowed not to expand NATO.*

*The **Trends Journal** reported in 2016 that “forward positions in Ukraine, Georgia and the Baltic States are hundreds of miles further east than the Oder-Neisse border between Germany and Poland, where U.S. President George Herbert Walker Bush solemnly promised Soviet and Russian leaders Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin that NATO would halt its expansion more than a quarter-century ago.”*

The trend, clearly, is pushing toward mounting Russia/NATO tensions. (See [“WHAT THE ANTI-RUSSIA RHETORIC MEANS,”](#) 28 Mar 2016).

TRENDPOST: *As NATO’s first secretary general put it, NATO was formed in order to keep the Russians out of Western Europe and the Americans in. Instead of disbanding NATO when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Washington dramatically expanded NATO.*

In violation of the Reagan-Gorbachev agreements, the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush regimes added constituent parts of the former Soviet empire to NATO—Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania.

France, taken out of NATO by General de Gaulle, rejoined in April 2009, 18 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, followed by other nations including Croatia, Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia.

VICTORIA “FUCK THE EU” NULAND WHO SPEARHEADED OVERTHROW OF DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE IN 2014, STILL IN POWER



Victoria Nuland, the undersecretary of state for political affairs, is playing a key role in the U.S.’s response to the current crisis in Ukraine despite a controversial history that included orchestrating the overthrow of a democratically elected president in Ukraine that led to a civil war.

Salon ran a profile on Nuland last year that expressed dismay over her appointment to such an important position in the State Department. The article was titled “WHO IS VICTORIA NULAND? A REALLY BAD IDEA AS A KEY PLAYER IN BIDEN’S FOREIGN POLICY TEAM.”

The magazine said Nuland is “stuck in the quicksand of 1950s U.S.-Russia Cold War politics and dreams of continued NATO expansion, an arms race on steroids, and further encirclement of Russia.”

The article pointed out that Nuland’s resume includes her role as foreign policy adviser to former Vice President Dick Cheney from 2003 to 2005.

The **Trends Journal** published an article on 24 February 2015, titled, ["RUSSIA. EU MAKE TRADE, NOT WAR."](#) that pointed to a troubling phone call that reportedly included Nuland, who was Obama's assistant secretary of state for European Affairs, and Geoffrey Pyatt, the U.S. ambassador for Ukraine.

We wrote:

In early February 2014, a recording was leaked of Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Victoria Nuland, telling Geoffrey Pyatt, the US 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 who urged her to move quickly because "the Russians will be working behind the scenes to torpedo" the deal.

"F#& the EU!" Nuland told Payatt. "Exactly," he responded. Shortly thereafter, Yanukovych was overthrown and "Yats" became president. Ukraine agreed to Nuland's demands to make "a new deal with the IMF," which was "necessary for the long term economic health of the country." Yet, the new Western-leaning Kiev government did not represent the Russian-speaking Ukrainians in the east and south who had voted Yanukovych into office.*

One year later, Ukraine is racked by civil war and is in depression. The US and EU blame Russia for the destabilization because of its support of Ukrainian separatists. And as punishment, the US pushed the EU to impose trade sanctions against Russia. Russia retaliated with trade sanctions against Europe.

Nuland's call went viral at the time and the U.S. blamed Russians for tapping the line and Nuland kept her job despite criticism from world leaders like former German Chancellor Angela Merkle.

Neo-con Con-artists

Nuland and her neocon husband, Robert Kagan, were said to have fallen in love on one of their first dates while talking about “democracy and the role of America in the world,” the Brookings Institute reported.

She recalled a time when they were young and in love. She was stationed in Moscow from 1991 until 1993 and he was working on his first book about Nicaragua in their spare bedroom.

“The KGB used to rifle his office regularly—we could tell by the lingering stench of cigarettes and body odor. They couldn’t fathom that he was really just a writer,” she recalled.

Her career took off and she held some of the highest diplomatic positions—including becoming the first female ambassador to NATO in 2005.

Kagan, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, has been an advocate for just about every U.S. foreign policy blunder over the past two decades. He was an advocate for the war in Iraq and a muscular approach to Syria. *The New York Times* reported that his father, Donald Kagan, “a historian of ancient Greece, is a patriarch of neoconservatism.”

Kagan wrote an article in *The New Republic* in 2014, titled “SUPERPOWERS DON’T GET TO RETIRE.”

He wrote,

“If a breakdown in the world order that America made is occurring, it is not because America’s power is declining—America’s wealth, power, and potential influence remain adequate to meet the present challenges. It is not because the world has become more complex and intractable—the world has always been complex and intractable. And it is not simply war-weariness. Strangely enough, it is an intellectual problem, a question of identity and purpose.”

New Europe published an article that said it is the shared Washington worldview that Nuland and her husband maintain that led to the current tension in Ukraine. James W. Carden, a former adviser to the State Department, pointed to Harvard University's Stephen Walt who once said, "Being a Neocon Means Never Having to Say You're Sorry."

Carden pointed to how Kagan and Nuland's careers have blossomed despite obvious criticisms. Nuland was accused of becoming more of an activist for Ukraine's pro-democracy movement about a decade ago.

"Part of the reason the U.S. is at grave risk of a war with Russia—and there is precious little debate about the policies that have brought us to this point—is that foreign policy in Washington is conducted by a virtually closed circle. And that circle is dominated by people like the Kagans," he wrote.

He said Washington's "legacy media" companies perpetuate these policies and essentially function as "the permanent bureaucracy's echo chamber."

Nuland addressed the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation Conference in Washington, D.C. back in December 2013 and talked about the "historic" challenges that Ukraine faced when it seemed to be slowing its embrace of Europe.

She was fixated on Ukraine's turn toward Europe instead of Moscow and praised a protest that was growing against Yanukovych's decision to "pause on the route to Europe."

"Since Ukraine's independence in 1991, the United States has supported Ukrainians as they build democratic skills and institutions, as they promote civic participation and good governance, all of which are preconditions for Ukraine to achieve its European aspirations. We've invested over \$5 billion to assist Ukraine in these and other goals that will ensure a secure and prosperous and democratic Ukraine," she said, while standing at a rostrum in front of Chevron and Exxon Mobil signs.

Yanukovych's ouster was from that point almost certain. Russia called his removal a "neo-fascist" coup that was coordinated by the West and "dressed up as a popular uprising," *The New York Times* reported.

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.

TRENDPOST: We also note this article to illustrate who is in charge of Washington and the so-called peace Institutes. From 1998 until August, 2010, war-hawk Kagan was a Senior Associate with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He was appointed senior fellow in the Center on United States and Europe at the Brookings Institution in September 2010.

As detailed in Wikipedia:

"In January 2002, Kagan and [William] Kristol falsely claimed in a Weekly Standard article that Saddam Hussein was supporting the 'existence of a terrorist training camp in Iraq, complete with a Boeing 707 for practicing hijackings, and filled with non-Iraqi radical Muslims.'

“Kagan and Kristol further alleged that the September 11 hijacker Mohamed Atta met with an Iraqi intelligence official several months before the attacks.[17] The allegations were later shown to be false.”

FEATURED ARTICLES BY GUEST WRITERS



BAITING THE BEAR IS BECOMING A DANGEROUS GAME

By *Paul Craig Roberts*

What the so-called Russian experts and politicians all forget is that the U.S. does not have troops scattered about in Poland, Romania, the Baltic states and other Eastern European late comers to NATO because Washington cares about these countries and feels morally obliged to protect them from Russia, which does not want them. In truth, Washington doesn't care a hoot about Ukraine, Poland, Romania and neither do Americans.

The reasons for Washington's presence in Eastern Europe are entirely different. One reason is that Washington wants the countries as locations for missile bases such as Washington has placed in Poland and Romania. These bases are on Russia's borders leaving no response time to nuclear missiles launched from

them. The bases give Washington the advantage in a confrontation to back down Russia.

Another reason is that the NATO countries provide customers for the U.S. armaments industry. Washington keeps pressure on NATO members to “do their part” and spend more on their own defense. So much of the analysis and commentary about the current situation in Ukraine presents Washington and NATO as rescuers on white horses riding to the defense of states threatened by Russia. If Russia really were a threat, Washington and NATO would not be so aggressive.

The Soviet Union had Eastern Europe as a buffer. Most Russian experts at the time concluded that the Warsaw Pact was a net drain on Soviet resources. Responsibility for these countries today is the last thing Russia wants.

All Russia wants is for the U.S. to get military bases off her doorstep. This is a reasonable demand, and compliance with it would relieve the tensions that otherwise could break out in war. Washington’s aggressive policy seems designed for one reason only: to cause a war.

Few people understand that the U.S. sanctions against Russia are based entirely on lies and are in effect acts of war. That Russia has tolerated them is interpreted by Washington as Russian weakness. The reason Russia gets so much abuse is that she doesn’t do anything about it.

The narrative is that Russia invaded Ukraine by accepting the vote in Crimea to be reunited with Russia.

Until 1991, Crimea had been part of Russia since 1783. The vast majority of the people who live there are Russian. Between 1991 and 2014 when the U.S. overthrew the Ukrainian government in a coup, Crimea was occupied by Russia as Russia’s Black Sea naval base is there. The Russian forces were already there, because Russia had a long term lease on the area.

It was the U.S. that invaded Ukraine while the Kremlin was preoccupied with the Sochi Olympics. The U.S. plan was for the puppet government it installed to revoke the lease and kick the Russians out of their naval base. It was an audacious plan that had no chance of success. To prevent Americans from understanding the situation, the narrative was started that Russia invaded Crimea.

There are Americans who pose as Russian experts who maintain that Putin has territorial ambitions to restore the Soviet empire. These people are not experts. They are liars. If Putin has territorial ambitions, why did he not reincorporate Georgia into Russia? Why has he refused for 8 years to honor the vote of the Donbass Russians to be returned to Russia? The Donbass area, like Crimea, is historically part of Russia. Both were transferred to the Ukrainian province of the Soviet Union by the Soviet government, but Russians, not Ukrainians live there.

In U.S. universities and think tanks, researchers' analyses come to conclusions consistent with the views of those who fund their research. This is why there are no more Stephen Cohens who give an independent objective analysis of the real situation. Indeed, in the U.S. today an objective analysis is considered to be pro-Russian and the author is said to be a Russian agent.

As a result, we get a one-sided story. The problem with one-sided stories is that the implication is that the other side is entirely to blame and hasn't a leg to stand on. This is the position that Russia finds herself in, and it is the reason that the West doesn't listen to a word she says. It is very dangerous to ignore Russia when she says she finds the situation intolerable. Russia seems at times to be masochistic, but sooner or later she will bite back.

[Click here](#) for more fact-based insights and analysis from Dr. Paul Craig Roberts, former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy during the Reagan administration and renowned journalist.

IVERMECTIN SHOULD BE RECOMMENDED FOR TREATING ALL CORONAVIRUS INFECTIONS



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

The mainstream media, including many liberal news sources who pride themselves as being independent, such as Amy Goodman's Democracy Now, continue to channel the voices of Anthony Fauci, the CDC and FDA to demonize the highly effective repurposed drug, Ivermectin, for treating Covid-19 and to reduce hospitalization and deaths.

This propaganda campaign, however, has completely ignored the large body of medical literature that shows ivermectin's statistically significant efficacy against symptomatic and asymptomatic SARS-2 infections.

To date there have been 148 studies conducted on the efficacy of ivermectin against SARS-2 infection. All but seven show some degree of ivermectin's efficacy.

Among those seven are two that prescribed highly toxic levels of the drug (1200 mg), which is demonstrably unsafe; critics of ivermectin largely base their argument against ivermectin's use on these two studies and a very small handful of anecdotal cases of deaths that the FDA has attributed to ivermectin.

Ninety-seven studies have been peer-reviewed and 78 compare treated patients against a control group. Thirty-three of those are random controlled trials.

Ivermectin has been officially adopted in 22 nations—39 if non-government organizations in some countries are permitted to prescribe it. We can compare this with the novel drug remdesivir, which is approved in the U.S., but has only been approved in 9 countries and only for very early treatment of Covid-19 cases.

In addition, the ivermectin studies show statistically significant improvement for mortality, ventilated patients, ICU admissions, recovery rates, positive case numbers, viral clearance and as a preventative prophylaxis. The 28 remdesivir studies, on the other hand, have only shown significant improvement for mortality and mild to modest recovery.

Several ivermectin studies are worth noting. The most recent is a Brazilian study published in the *Cureus Journal of Medical Science*. This study involved a citywide prophylaxis program in a town of 223,000 residents. 133,000 took ivermectin.

The results for a population of this size are indisputable in concluding that ivermectin is a safe first line of defense to confront the pandemic. Covid mortality was reduced 90 percent. There was also a 67 percent lower risk of hospitalization and a 44 percent decrease in Covid cases.

The All India Institute for Medical Science (AIIMS) and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), two of India's most prestigious institutions, acted against the WHO and launched an ivermectin treatment campaign in several states.

In Uttar Pradesh there was a 95 percent decrease in mortality (a decline from 37,944 to 2,014). The Indian capital of New Delhi witnessed a 97 percent reduction. During the same time period, the state of Tamil Nadu, which did not allow ivermectin, had a 173 percent increase in deaths (from 10,986 to 30,016 deaths).

A few other studies are worth noting. A Mexican retrospective study published in the January 2022 issue of *Archives of Medical Research* involving 28,000 patients over 60 years of age had a 71 percent lower hospitalization and death rate in the ivermectin group compared to the group that didn't take the drug.

An Australian study reported in *Trial Site News*, which is still in pre-print and awaiting publication, treated 600 PCR positive patients with ivermectin and

zinc. There was 92 percent lower risk of hospitalization and death compared to those who did not receive ivermectin.

These are only several of many other studies that would indicate that ivermectin should be approved and recommended for the treatment of any coronavirus infection. There are also numerous highly respected physicians around the world, who are pro-vaccine, but who believe that waiting for a person to become seriously ill before being rushed to a hospital, and often too late, is gross malpractice.

Many started prescribing FDA approved off-label and safe drugs such as hydroxychloroquine and ivermectin early in the pandemic. They consistently report remarkable results at the clinical level with significant shorter infection times, less ER visits and far less deaths.

However, strangely, without any open debate or conversation, Fauci and the federal agencies state that no treatment is permitted except remdesivir and a couple of more recent expensive and questionably effective drugs. Even more bizarre is that the entire American media attacks proponents of multi-discipline therapies, including ivermectin.

Considering the enormous resources that these media networks have at their disposal, it is surprising that not a single positive article is published or aired about a patient who has been saved by ivermectin or another repurposed drug.

The discussion on treating Covid-19 has become draconian. State medical boards inform clinics and doctors' offices that if these drugs are prescribed, they could lose their medical licenses. Why?

One hypothesis is that the FDA could only grant emergency use authorization to the experimental mRNA vaccines if there were no competing therapeutic drugs available.

But there are and the evidence is overwhelming.

A larger question may be asked. How many people might be alive today if they were immediately prescribed ivermectin or multiple drug therapies? And what are journalists' moral responsibility, such as Amy Goodman, when they refuse to do their homework to find contrary evidence to how the government has been handling covid infections?

Time and a lot of litigation will tell.

FEAR AND LOATHING IN WASHINGTON



By *Philip Giraldi*

One can frequently disagree with government policies without necessarily regarding them with disgust, but the Joe Biden Administration has turned that corner, first with its senseless promotion of a new Cold War that could turn hot with Russia and, more recently, with its actions undertaken to undermine and punish Afghanistan.

The fact that the White House wraps itself in the sanctimonious, self-righteous twaddle that is so much the hallmark of the political left is bad enough, but when the government goes out of its way to harm and even kill people around the world in pursuit of an elusive global dominance it is time for the American people to rise up and say “Stop!”

As a former CIA operations officer, I departed government service in 2002 in part due to the impending invasion of Iraq, which I knew was completely unjustified by the web of largely fabricated information that was flowing out of the Pentagon to justify the attack. In the years since I have been appalled by the Obama era attacks on Syria and Libya as well as by the assassinations and cruise missile strikes carried out under Donald Trump.

But all of that was a Sunday in the park compared to the hideous nonsense being pursued by Biden and his crew of reprobates. Trifling with the use of force as part of negotiations intended to go nowhere over Ukraine could well by misstep, false flag or even design escalate into nuclear war ending much of the life on this planet as we know it, and we are now also witnessing the cold, calculated slaughter of possibly hundreds of thousands of civilians just because we have the tools at hand and believe that we can get away with it.

What we are seeing unfold right in front of us goes beyond appalling and it is time to demand a change of course on the part of a runaway federal government that is drunk on its own self-assumed unbridled right to exercise total executive authority over vital issues of war and peace.

I am most particularly shocked and dismayed over what the Biden Administration did to Afghanistan on February 11th, which is unambiguously a crime against humanity. On that day the President of the United States Joe Biden, still smarting from the botched departure from Afghanistan and low approval ratings, issued an executive order invoking emergency powers stipulating that the \$7 billion in Afghan government money being held and frozen in the Federal Reserve Bank of New York would be retained by the US and divided in two.

Half of the \$7 billion would be placed in a US government administered trust fund. The money would in theory go to fund humanitarian relief in Afghanistan to be carried out by agencies unidentified but presumed to be acting in coordination with the barracudas at the Treasury Department while the other half would go to benefit the victims of 9/11. This money is not just “frozen assets,” it is the entire reserve of the Afghan central bank, and its appropriation by the US will destroy whatever remains of the formal Afghan economy, making Afghanistan entirely reliant on small rations of foreign aid that come through channels unconnected with the Afghan government.

The other half of the story is that Afghanistan had nothing to do with 9/11 but instead became a victim of the US lust for revenge. After 9/11, the Taliban government offered to turn over Osama bin Laden to the United States if Washington were able to provide evidence that he was somehow involved in the attacks in New York and Virginia. The George W. Bush Administration was unable to do so, but chose to invade instead.

Afghanistan now has a government that is recognized by the United Nations and many other countries, though not by Washington, which insists that the Taliban are terrorists. Sanctions pressure being exerted by Washington on the new Taliban dominated regime has inter alia brought about a major humanitarian

disaster, with various international agencies predicting that many thousands of Afghan civilians will die of starvation because there is no money available to provide relief.

The United Nations [has reported that](#) three-quarters of Afghanistan's population has plunged into [acute poverty](#), with 4.7 million people likely to suffer severe or even fatal malnutrition this year.

The money in New York unambiguously belongs to the Afghan government and the country's central bank. It is not money that came from the United States, which means that what Biden, who is already stealing Syria's oil, is engaging in yet one more large scale theft, this time from people dying from famine and disease.

Furthermore, as the US was de facto an occupying military power in Afghanistan, the responsibility to protect the civilian population is explicitly required under the articles of the Geneva Convention, to which the US is a signatory. That Washington will watch many thousands of civilians die because it has used its position as an occupying power to steal money that might alleviate the suffering is unconscionable and amounts to a war crime.

Undoubtedly the half of the money allegedly allocated for humanitarian relief will be directed to organizations that will do Washington's bidding in terms of how the aid is distributed and who gets it. It is [being reported that](#) it will take months to set up the aid network, by which time thousands will die. That is to be expected and may have been intentional. And as for the other half of the money directed towards 9/11 "victims," just watch how that plays out.

There are undoubtedly instances of Americans who lost multiple and even cross generational family members at 9/11 and are still in need of assistance. Fine, that is a given, but why punish the Afghans to deal with that?

And as soon as the money is on the table you know exactly what will happen. All the shyster lawyers working on a percentage of the payoffs will come out of the

woodwork and the major beneficiaries of all the loot will be people who know how to manipulate and game the system.

That is what happened to the billions that came raining down as a consequence of the insurance claims on the World Trade Center and also in the distribution of other monies that followed. You can bank on it.

Washington has become adept at lying to cover up its crimes overseas, but foreigners, who are not likely inclined to read the Washington Post and are directly affected by the deception, frequently have a more facts-based understanding of what exactly is going on.

And it is why no one any longer trusts the United States. And, it is interesting to note how inevitably the lying by the US government is both bipartisan and inclined to blame the victim as a fallback position. This was seen in Donald Trump's [assassination](#) of Iranian general Qassem Soleimani over two years ago.

Soleimani was in Baghdad for peace talks and was falsely accused by the White House of preparing to attack American soldiers. There is also the more recent assassination of alleged ISIS leader Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi and killing of 13 additional women and children in Syria where [accounts of villagers](#) don't quite square with the Pentagon version of what allegedly took place.

And then there is a [long-concealed atrocity](#) also in Syria which took place in the town of Baghuz in March 2019. At least 80 mostly women and children died in an [attack by American F-15 fighter bombers](#), which was only reported in the media in November 2021. Reportedly, a large crowd of women and children were seen by photographic drones seeking shelter huddled against a river bank.

Without warning, an American attack jet dropped a 500-pound bomb on the group. When the smoke cleared, another jet tracked the running survivors and dropped one 2,000-pound bomb, then another, killing most of them.

Military personnel at the Udeid Airbase in Qatar watching the attack by way of the drone camera reportedly reacted in "stunned disbelief" at what they were

witnessing. A Pentagon cover-up followed and to this day the official comment on the attack is that it was “justified.”

So, by all means go and listen to lying Jen Psaki and pencil neck Ned Price or to Secretary of State Tony Blinken and possibly to the ultimate nitwit himself, President Honest Joe Biden. Or you can just pick up a New York Times or Washington Post where deliberately leaked government lies are backed up by what the newspapers pretend to be editorial integrity.

These folks just might drop us into a nuclear war or could possibly continue in their larcenous ways to rob the world. Sooner or later the chickens will be coming home to roost and accountability for America’s war crimes will be demanded. Stay tuned.

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THE GREAT AWAKENING VS THE GREAT RESET



By *Michael J. Talmo*

We have a choice folks—the most monumental choice humanity has ever had to make.

First, heed and [never forget](#) the words of Klaus Schwab, head of the World Economic Forum regarding what he calls “The Great Reset”:

“The pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine, and reset our world.”

Schwab is right. But we don't have to go along with the way he wants to reset things.

COVID-19 is also an opportunity for a Great Awakening. More than any other event in history, it has shown that people in positions of power are too corrupt, too irrational, and too stupid to be trusted. They have demonstrated that they are far more dangerous than any disease real or imagined could ever be.

So, let's take COVID-19 as an opportunity to get rid of the current system because if we don't it will continue to find new ways to scare and con us into surrendering our freedom. And we must recognize that we have surrendered too much of our freedom already.

Corporations have gotten too big to fail, governments too powerful to curtail, and billionaires too wealthy to jail. So, first and foremost, we must take away their power and do away with their instruments of oppression which include, but are not limited to the following:

The Department of Homeland Security's inane, inept TSA. This is one of the

most useless agencies ever created. Get rid of it. We don't need to go through cancer-causing porno scanners, take off our shoes, and get felt up to get on a plane any more than we need to wear masks. Enough of this nonsense already. Let's start protecting our [4th Amendment](#) rights.

Get rid of passports. In a 2016 [article](#), Business Insider reported that throughout the early 20th Century and as late as 1963 world leaders considered doing away with passports. Back then they recognized that passports were “a serious obstacle to freedom of movement.”

I think we should revisit that discussion. The problem is, as stated in the article, that people get used to oppression in their lives and think they need it if it goes on long enough. And because we have allowed regular passports and TSA groping and snooping, they now want to impose masks and COVID vaccine passports not just for international travel, but for every aspect of our lives. The time has come to say no to all of it.

Get rid of all compulsory vaccinations in schools, the military, and on the job—not just the COVID vaccines, but all vaccines. Vaccination should be voluntary and one's personal choice. The human race has survived and thrived for [300,000 years](#) without them. No government, business, or doctor has the right to tell anyone what to put in their body.

Arguments that some deadly plague requires forced vaccination or it helps protect people from disease are based on accepting the underlying narrative. But what if the underlying narrative is wrong? What if it's just a sales pitch to sell vaccines and promote a political agenda? The risk is too great so end all medical mandates. All health departments and other government officials should be allowed to do is advise and suggest.

Get rid of vaccine liability protection. Hold companies accountable if their vaccines kill and injure people. No more EUAs (Emergency Use Authorization) for vaccines. An EUA should only be for a drug that might save a dying person's life or for someone who is suffering with a low quality of life.

Vaccines to prevent disease do not fall into that category.

Get rid of all standing armies—especially the police. And to all the authoritarian personalities who think the cops can do no wrong, wake up. Most cops are supporting COVID-19 restrictions. They stand lined up against the people. They are there to protect the fascist corporate system, not We the People.

Replace them with a militia consisting of civilians who serve for a month and then rotate back into the citizenry. This will avoid the us versus them mentality of professional soldiers. All we need is a navy and an air force for protection against foreign invasion. And even for a citizen police force, end [qualified immunity](#). Any government official or cop who breaks the law must be held accountable like everybody else. No special privileges.

Because the wealthy have power as in vast amounts of money they can be every bit as dangerous as some bureaucrat who sits in this or that office. A huge corporation can be just as dangerous as this or that government agency. Get rid of big corporations and the oppressive arm of big government.

Get rid of big institutions and bureaucracies like the WHO (World Health Organization) and the CDC (Centers For Disease Control and Prevention). Such bureaucracies and institutions only wind up becoming corrupt and self-serving—we don't need them. Do away with the deep state and corporate cabals. Ban all forms of shadow government. Get rid of all billionaires so they can't use their wealth to corrupt governments—allow them to have no more than say 10 or 20 million dollars.

And finally, recognize that all oppressive government measures, whether the excuse is to protect us from disease or some other manufactured crisis, are designed to divide us, to make us hate and fear each other, to pit us against each other. Don't fall for it. Don't allow them to divide us. Get on the right side of history folks. Get with the program. Say enough is enough and resist.

Thanks to mass protests all over the world the phony COVID narrative is beginning to crumble and a number of countries like the U.K. are ending their

oppressive policies. At the [massive protest](#) in Washington, D.C. last January, Holocaust survivor [Vera Sharav](#) had this to say: (see 19 min 9 sec mark)

“People are being pushed around, denied normal interaction, and they're just following it like sheep. That's what happened in Germany essentially. All Germans were not evil. But most of them, the vast majority, simply went along. The German people elected a tyrant who took away their freedom and controlled their lives. But the German people were obedient. Their failure to resist the tyranny resulted in the genocide of millions of people.”

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has shown us that the majority will continue to stand by and do nothing.

Also realize that politicians and bureaucrats who have imposed these restrictions will hope that once they lift the restrictions that people will forget the evil they have done and even praise them for liberating them. They will also try to blame lower downs on the bureaucratic totem pole for the destruction and death. Don't fall for it. Don't let them go quietly into the night. Arrest and jail all of them. Make them pay dearly for the crimes they have committed.

Some writers have speculated that there must be some external agent other than us humans driving this global insanity. And this is understandable. It's hard to believe that people could be so self-destructive, evil, and incredibly stupid.

Some say it's the work of the devil. Others have suggested the manipulation and even replacement of world leaders by space aliens and inter-dimensional beings. Who knows? But maybe, just maybe, it's just us after all. Maybe us humans are just plain nuts.

(Excerpted from “Let's Face It: The Human Race is Stark Raving Nuts.” Read the full article [here](#).)

Michael J. Talmo has been a professional writer for over 40 years and is strongly committed to the protection of civil liberties. He also did three music videos on

COVID-19. [The Masker Mash](#), [COVID Vaccine Man](#) and [The Corona Globalists](#).

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TRENDS IN THE MARKETS



THE POWER OF A BALANCED HEDGED PORTFOLIO

By *Gregory Mannarino*, TradersChoice.net

If you follow my work, then you know that I strongly advocate having an investment portfolio which is divided into both risk-on assets, as in owning large cap. dividend paying companies' stock, AND being “hedged” by owning risk-off assets, as in physical gold, silver, platinum, and palladium.

***I also advocate for having some of your investment portfolio allocated into cryptocurrencies.*

Having your investment portfolio structured in this manner “insulates” you from suffering major losses in the event of a shock to the financial system.

The next question is this. overall capital distribution.

As a general way to structure your investment portfolio, consider allocating 1/3 into risk on assets, 1/3 into gold, silver, other precious metals and 1/3 into

cryptocurrencies. You can of course move these numbers around, allocating more or less investable capital into a particular asset class, but I still strongly believe that you need to be hedged—holding both risk on and risk off assets simultaneously.

***If having cryptocurrencies in your portfolio is not for you that's fine—you could then allocate your capital in other ways. For example, a 50/50 distribution risk on/risk off. Or 60/40, 70/30. Or weighted more heavily into precious metals. Every person should consider for themselves how they would like to “stay hedged,” understanding most importantly that they should BE HEDGED.*

How a shock to the financial system will INITIALLY, play out.

The key here is INITIALLY.

At the onset of an initial shock to the financial system several things always happen:

1. Capital seeks “safety.” Invariably capital will make its way into debt, as in U.S. Treasury bonds and the U.S. Dollar—this in turn causes risk on assets/stocks to sell off.
2. Capital also finds its way into risk off assets, as in gold, silver, and other commodities.

***Regarding cryptocurrencies. This asset class is too new to reliably track how it consistently reacts to an initial shock to the financial system—what we do know is cryptocurrencies are extremely volatile. In my opinion, in the event of an initial shock to the financial system, cryptocurrencies would be even more volatile.*

Staying hedged is the key.

Every investor/trader should be very aware that there is inherent risk involved when putting capital to work via investments. Therefore, one must have a portfolio structure which can withstand a shock to the system at any given time.

TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM



ARE YOU TRAINING TO HELP YOUR ATTACKER?

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

Years ago, we saw a documentary on TV about violent crime. During the course of the show two young pieces of s—t were interviewed in prison. They were violent offenders. The apparent amusement when they discussed the damage and harm they had done while on their career paths made it very clear that these rodents would be resuming their inexcusable lives of predation when they were eventually released. Neither of the two could have been older than 20.

The interviewer asked many questions. One of the replies he received stayed with us. He asked: “Did you ever worry about going after someone who had been trained in karate, or some other martial art?” And one of the scum replied: “Dat don’t mean nuthin, man,” he said with a smirk and a giggle. “I ain’t worry ‘bout dat!” And the second lump of s—t chimed in, as the two of them shared a hearty laugh: “Nah man, dem martial arts stuff be nuthin at all. Really nuthin,” he said. “Dem guys who do that s—t can’t do nuthin to us.”

Very interesting.

We actually understood (and understand) why the roaches in humanoid form have this attitude—and by and large they do—as far as the possibility of encountering trouble from a statistically average student of martial arts is concerned.

To really be able to adapt your jiu-jitsu or karate training to a situation in which a dangerous, violent predator suddenly attacks you normally demands years of training and hard practice. Not years of going to an hour-long class two or three times a week, but years of training hard at a serious traditional dojo four to six times a week . . . for at least two or three hours a session!

Classical arts contain too much bullshit as far as close combat for real is concerned, and it takes a long time to be able to master the core basics and a handful of practical stuff that you've gleaned from all the crap, before you can use it aggressively, powerfully, automatically, and with ruthless disregard the second you are set upon.

Not that those classical/traditional martial arts are “bad.” And not that training in any of them at greatly reduced severity because your motivation and interest and lifestyle just does not permit you to follow the all-out, true classical way is “wrong.” Nope, not at all.

Just understand that if you are in a classical system, it will require at least some years of training as we explained, before you can use it for real. And remember: If you enjoy spending a few hours during the course of a week in a traditional dojo and are satisfied with the exercising and combat-like movements that you're developing, all's well and good.

Just don't be entertaining any ideas of knocking some street-hardened tough senseless if he attacks you for real. For self-defense and close combat, you must train in self-defense and close combat. And that means an all-combat system, a modern self-defense and all-combat system.

For precisely as the scum whose interview we alluded to earlier pointed out in their disgusting excuse for human verbal communication, violent offenders know very well that dilettantes in the martial arts and/or those with way insufficient training (but who believe that what they've acquired will see them through a dangerous emergency) are zero threat to street-smart garbage that have grown up with and embraces mindless violence as a lifestyle.

If you are a “dabbler” and are pursuing a classical martial art for but for a few hours a week, do not expect that you will be able to handle serious violent danger. Don't lie to yourself, and don't let any “teacher” fill your head with bullshit, either. And if you're into classical martial arts, fine. But if you expect your training to be fully functional during dangerous, unanticipated and catastrophic emergencies, plan on hard and long years of training. And we mean training as is done in the Asian countries by the Asian students.

Go over the following points and if any of these apply to how you're training presently, but you want self-defense and close combat only, then realize you're not getting it, and you just may be training in a way that makes your attacker's job easier!

- Does your teacher discount size and strength as being of little importance so long as you possess technical skills? If so, then your teacher is misinformed and you are being taught to discount one of the important factors for success in close combat—strength. Strength (and to some degree size) is not necessarily the deciding factor in hand-to-hand combat, but it is sheer folly to claim that skill alone will be enough.
- Are your classes 1/4 to 1/3 stretching, limbering, and conditioning exercises? For hand-to-hand close combat your classes should consist of technical practice and drill. Working out can and should be done with weights or some other form of progressive resistance exercise at times other than practice sessions. These workouts are important and should be regarded as serious training. Your techniques done easily at first and then full force should be the only “warmup” you need.

- Do you practice classical kata as an important mainstay in your classes? If you are in classical training because that's what you want, fine. But classical kata make no sense in an all-combat, self-defense program.
- Are any defenses that you're learning very complicated, and/or are they completely situation-specific? These techniques require a cooperative training partner and will not work effectively against a dangerous, violent offender. Quality counterattacks are broadly applicable, and address actions and principles that may be applied in a wide variety of contexts, naturally and easily.
- Are you being taught that "all fights go to the ground," and that ground fighting is for anything except sport? If so, you are learning something that virtually every authentic and qualified combat instructor has cautioned against. Despite the widespread influence of this idea (and the popularity of combat sports, where the principle is often true) you should always stay on your feet!
- Is the clenched fist your primary hand weapon, which you incessantly seek to develop in punching—during self-defense practice and freestyle sparring? The clenched fist is not the most effective natural hand weapon. Serious combat training emphasizes the open hand blows (especially edge-of-the-hand and heel of the hand; with fingertips and clawed fingers also emphasized, along with elbows, head, teeth, knees, and feet). The fist is a weapon, but used exclusively on soft targets—i.e. solar plexus, sternum, testicles, liver, spleen, and kidneys.
- Are modern weapons ignored, while classical weapons are included in the advanced curriculum? Once again, for classical-oriented students who are not primarily concerned about hand-to-hand combat and self-defense, this is fine. But for the modern student seeking self-defense and combat training, firearms, fighting knives, and the stick (especially the walking stick), as well as a few other modern weapons, should be the order of the day.

Here, very briefly, is what the core and backbone of a genuine close combat and self-defense program should emphasize and advocate:

1. A vicious, savage, and frankly merciless mindset.
2. Genuinely destructive, very damaging and harmful techniques.
3. The need to speedily neutralize any foe—and to do so with ruthless disregard.
4. Commit to relentless attack when it is necessary to engage an enemy (in war or in peacetime) and not stop delivering punishment until he is completely helpless.
5. Techniques that are simple, easily learned, practiced, and retained, and that are broadly applicable to numerous situations.
6. The attainment and maintenance of the highest degree of strength and condition that your genetics will allow. We cannot stress too frequently or too emphatically that actual, real, honest-to-goodness close combat entails risk, and that there is no “nice” or “sanitized” way to defend yourself. In violent combat the most ferociously animalistic, brutal, and merciless generally wins.

So, by all means acquire a commitment to that constellation of phenomena, and back it up with a solid repertoire of war-proven combat skills. If you heed our counsel your training will be productive of reliable, workable, valuable skills upon which you can stake your life in a dangerous emergency. The last damn thing you want is to learn an impractical classical or sporting approach that frequently results in the one who attempts to utilize it actually helping his assailant to defeat him.

TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY



By *Joe Doran*

O CANADA: GOVERNMENTS UNLEASH NEW REIGN OF ‘TERROR’

“It’s easier to resist at the beginning than at the end.”

Quote attributed to Leonardo Da Vinci

The boundless technocratic will to power and control was on full display this past week in various events.

Justin Trudeau invoking Canada’s Emergencies Act to gain new powers to crush the Truckers Freedom Convoy in Canada, was the obvious example.

The spectacle of Canadian police trampling a protester, causing grievous injuries, became a “Tiananmen Square” visual of the dangerous demise of political protest rights in the West.

In the U.S., the move by the Biden administration to smear the Zerohedge news outlet as a Russian asset showed again the willingness of the government to abuse terror laws to neutralize opposition on virtually any front.

Zerohedge, already a thorn in the government's side for exposing CDC and Wuhan lab COVID intrigues, has been critical of Biden beating the war drum with Russia.

In the U.K., Foreign Secretary Liz Truss told *The Daily Mail* that the national government would be [reviving](#) a cold war era Government Information Cell (GIC), to fight Russian “false information.”

“At the end of the Cold War we disbanded our information unit,” Truss said, “but the Russians didn’t disband theirs, so we faced years and years of Russian disinformation.”

Like intelligence agencies in the U.S., the CIG will no doubt target as Russian stooges any significant domestic voices who question U.K. government policies.

Less noticed, but consequential nonetheless, were comments by YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki exhorting governments to enact more laws to outlaw “harmful speech.”

All these events shared a common thread: 20 years after 9/11, technocratic powers have fully weaponized anti-terror laws to crush domestic dissent and virtually any perceived threats to their rapacious rule.

Dooming Lives and Liberties: The Patriot Act

The Patriot Act introduced unprecedented intrusions on the rights and freedoms of Americans. In a global climate of fear and demonstrated deadly chaos of 9/11, citizens were told that new intelligence assets, surveillance measures and other powers were necessary to stop further foreign “terror attacks.”

In classic Orwellian fashion, the Patriot Act was sold as a needed measure to ensure the lives and liberties of Americans.

In fact, the Justice Department has a document defending the success of the Patriot Act titled [“The USA PATRIOT Act: Preserving Life and Liberty”](#) (“Life and Liberty” being a phrase lifted directly from the nation’s founding Declaration of Independence).

Already in 2004, a growing number were arguing against the law’s re-authorization.

The Washington Times in 2004 quoted Bob Barr, a former member of Congress who once headed the Judiciary Committee, expressing his [concerns](#) at the reauthorization of the law:

"The Fourth Amendment is a nuisance to the administration, but the amendment protects citizens and legal immigrants from the government's monitoring them whenever it wants, without good cause—and if that happens, it's the end of personal liberty.

Barr was so opposed to the Act that he helped form a coalition of conservatives to fight against it. The coalition included Americans for Tax Reform, the American Conservative Union, the American Association of Physicians and Surgeons, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the American Policy Center, the Citizens’ Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, the Eagle Forum, and the Second Amendment Foundation.

In response to Attorney General John Ashcroft’s contention that anyone opposing the Patriot Act was “aiding and abetting” the terrorists, Barr told the [Inter Press Service](#) in 2005:

“Anyone who takes the position that Americans who stand up and fight to retain our civil liberties, including the right to privacy, and who believe that we as Americans do not need to sacrifice our liberty in order to fight terrorists, are aiding and abetting terrorists, is rendering a disservice to our

Founding Fathers, and to Americans through the ages who cherish and fight for our God-given liberties.”

One of the catastrophic consequences of the Patriot Act was its use to comprehensively surveil not foreign terrorists, but average Americans.

That reality was definitively revealed by Edward Snowden, a former National Security Agency contractor, in 2013.

The news, though it shocked and appalled many, did not lead to any long lasting reforms.

Snowden himself has noted that while his revelations changed the behaviors and precautions of some citizens, and led to some initiatives to strengthen data encryption, etc, there was hardly a groundswell of outrage for legal changes.

(See [“EDWARD SNOWDEN REFLECTED WITH THE EFF ON PRIVACY PROGRESS.”](#) 15 Jun 2021.)

“Terror” Was Destined to Mean Anything Government Decided

Former House speaker Newt Gingrich also was among those who saw the abuses the Patriot Act made possible. In an 11 November 2003 article in *The San Francisco Chronicle*, Gingrich [said](#):

"I strongly believe the Patriot Act was not created to be used in crimes unrelated to terrorism."

"Recent reports, including one from the General Accounting Office, however indicate that the Patriot Act has been employed in investigations unconnected to terrorism or national security."

"In our battle against those that detest our free and prosperous society, we cannot sacrifice any of the pillars our nation stands upon, namely respect for the Constitution and the rule of law."

One of the central flaws of the Patriot Act, that has led to its wholesale abuse, was its definition of “terrorism.”

In light of recent abuses of government freezing bank accounts of dissident protest movements, the [Blindspot](#) finance blog provided a reminder of the dangerously vague definition of terrorism as defined by the Act:

“Section 802 of the USA PATRIOT Act (Pub. L. No. 107-52) expanded the definition of terrorism to cover “domestic,” as opposed to international, terrorism. A person engages in domestic terrorism if they do an act “dangerous to human life” that is a violation of the criminal laws of a state or the United States, if the act appears to be intended to: (i) intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination or kidnapping. Additionally, the acts have to occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States and if they do not, may be regarded as international terrorism.”

As the American Civil Liberties Union noted:

“The definition of domestic terrorism is broad enough to encompass the activities of several prominent activist campaigns and organizations. Greenpeace, Operation Rescue, Vieques Island and WTO protesters and the Environmental Liberation Front have all recently engaged in activities that could subject them to being investigated as engaging in domestic terrorism.”

In the age of Trump and the COVID War, technocratic authorities have increasingly used “anti-terrorism” to neutralize dissident voices questioning government narratives.

Labels like “domestic terrorism,” “misinformation,” “Russian collusion” and “harmful” have been used under the rubric of anti-terrorism to invoke abusive and dangerous overreaches of authorities.

So it is that tragic and absurd abuses have ensued. This past year alone, parents complaining at school board meetings had the FBI mobilized against them.

People protesting against vote fraud and against mega billionaires like Mark Zuckerberg and George Soros co-opting their democratic franchise, were hyperbolically termed “insurrectionists.” New “anti-domestic terrorism” programs ensued, including using the Post Office to surveil citizens, and enlisting banks to freeze accounts of protesters.

Those opposed to mandatory COVID gene level treatments, masking, lockdowns, or who advocated for their medical “right to try” formerly uncontroversial, safe drugs like hydroxychloroquine and ivermectin, have been smeared and censored for promoting dangerous “health misinformation.”

At one point, the FBI accused someone who owned an unassembled LEGO Capitol Building set of conspiring to use it in a terrorist act.

Government Terror Wars Against Average Citizens Enters A New Phase

On the wings of The War On Terror, the COVID War, and “Russia Russia Russia!”, technocrat-controlled governments have siphoned the wealth of average citizens, while destroying their legal rights and practical abilities to resist the abuse.

With the Truckers Freedom Convoy protest in Canada, a state-of-the-art blueprint is being established to crush mass protest.

Seized bank accounts and crowdfunding resources, tracking and tracing of crypto addresses, outing and castigating donors and supporters, and relentlessly propagandizing via government allied media, have all been employed to isolate and undercut protesters.

Even the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), an international body that advises governments on implementing greater financial tracking to combat terrorism,

human trafficking, drug trade and other ills, recently noted that its own recommendations are being used against legitimate political dissent:

“[Our] analysis explores a number of ways in which misapplication of the FATF Standards may affect due process and procedural rights, including:

- *excessively broad or vague offences in legal counterterrorism financing frameworks, which can lead to wrongful application of preventative and disruptive measures including sanctions that are not proportionate;*
- *issues relevant to investigation and prosecution of TF and ML offences, such as the presumption of innocence and a person’s right to effective protection by the courts;*
- *and, incorrect implementation of UNSCRs and FATF Standards on due process and procedural issues for asset freezing, including rights to review, to challenge designations, and to basic expenses.”*

The financial strangling of the Canadian Freedom Convoy protest shows again how “well-intended” anti-terrorism measures are being thoroughly abused by political megalomaniacs like Justin Trudeau.

At least some civil liberties groups are opposing Trudeau’s extraordinary abuse of legal authority.

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association announced it was filing suit against its government over the misuse of the Emergencies Act.

Noa Mendelsohn Aviv, Executive Director of the Association, said in a press conference [announcing](#) the suit:

"Protest is how people in a democracy express and share their political messages. Many protests are disruptive. It's possible for protests to be both disruptive and peaceful, and non violent. Disruptive protests, while often unlawful, can be the most effective way of raising awareness."

The Canadian Constitutional Federation (CCF) has also filed suit against the Federal government, [stating](#):

“Prime Minister Trudeau has set a dangerous precedent by invoking the never before used federal Emergencies Act to address the current situation. The high threshold for declaring a public order emergency in the Emergencies Act has not been met. The Act has been invoked to address a failure to use existing legal tools under the Criminal Code, which were used effectively on the Ambassador Bridge. The federal government has invoked the Emergencies Act as a matter of political convenience. This is illegal and violates the rule of law, and that’s why we are challenging the government in court.”

In the U.S., the cry of “anti-terrorism” is being used to unleash the FBI on journalistic outfits like Zerohedge.

And Constitutionally protected free speech rights continue to be eroded by powerful tech corporatists like YouTube CEO Susan Wojcicki, who frame dissident viewpoints as terroristic “harmful content.”

In an [interview](#) this past week, Wojcicki asked governments to enact more laws to make it [easier](#) for platforms like YouTube to censor speech:

"We work around the globe, and you're right, certainly there are many different laws and many different jurisdictions, and we...enforce the laws of the various jurisdictions around speech or what's considered safe or not safe.

"What has been the controversial part is when there is content that would be deemed as harmful but yet is not illegal. An example of that, for example, would be COVID.

"I'm not aware of there being laws by governments saying around COVID in terms of not being able to debate the efficacy of masks or where the virus came from or the right treatment or proposal, but yet there was a lot

of pressure and concern about us distributing misinformation that went against what was the standard and accepted medical knowledge.

"And so this category of harmful but...legal has been, I think, where most of the discussion has been."

All Downhill From Here?

Where do things go from here? Over the weekend, the newly installed Ottawa police chief Steve Bell made clear Canada will spin up its own version of a "January 6th" [hunt down](#) and [vilification](#) of protesters:

"If you are involved in this protest, we will actively look to identify you and follow up with financial sanctions and criminal charges. Absolutely. This investigation will go on for months to come."

Meanwhile, a Canadian member of Parliament who pointed out a connection between Klaus Schwab, head of the World Economic Forum, and Justin Trudeau, was censored for spreading "misinformation."

The WEF, funded with billions by Schwab and other of the world's wealthiest, acts as an unelected government influencing factory bent on merging corporate and government authority.

In the 2017 [video](#), Schwab [brags](#) about his influence over Trudeau and others:

"I have to say, when I mention now names, like Mrs. (Angela) Merkel and even Vladimir Putin, and so on, they all have been Young Global Leaders of the World Economic Forum. But what we are very proud of now is the young generation like Prime Minister (Justin) Trudeau ... We penetrate the cabinet. So yesterday I was at a reception for Prime Minister Trudeau and I know that half of his cabinet, or even more than half of his cabinet, are actually Young Global Leaders."

Globalist powers cannot let the Truckers protest succeed.

It's possible truckers not imprisoned may opt to go on strike, or not to deliver to certain locations. Who knows? That too may become a crime, deemed an act of domestic terrorism.

American political commentator Jessie Kelly [voiced](#) his theory that governments may use protests as an opportunity to take over vital industries like the trucking industry.

So it is that the slouching of the West from citizen-centric democracy to technocratic elite dystopia continues.

For related and supporting **Trends Journal** articles, see:

- [“GOVERNMENT: FREE SPEECH IS BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH”](#) (21 Sep 2021)
- [“FBI: THE POLITICIZED POLICE UNDERMINING AMERICA”](#) (2 Nov 2021)
- [“FBI ENCOURAGES SNITCHING ON “EXTREMIST” FAMILY MEMBERS”](#) (13 Jul 2021)
- [“U.S.S.A. IF YOU DON'T OBEY THE GOVERNMENT, YOU ARE A DOMESTIC TERRORIST”](#) (18 Jan 2022)
- [“FBI USES ‘DOMESTIC TERRORISM’ LABEL TO TARGET POLITICAL DISSENT”](#) (4 May 2021)
- [“TRUCKER’S FREEDOM CONVOY, MEGATREND TROUNCED BY PRESSTITUTES AND POLITICIANS”](#) (8 Feb 2022)

THIS WEEK IN SURVEILLANCE



ACOUSTIC WEAPON COMING TO A PROTEST NEAR YOU? “Conspiracy” speculation that Australian police were using a Long Range Acoustic Device (LRAD) to

disrupt protesters turned into a confirmation this past week.

The Epoch Times and others have reported that police employed the technology during the Canberra Convoy Freedom rallies outside Parliament House.

According to reports, Australian Capital Territory Policing confessed to using an LRAD.

Protesters had been claiming such a device was being used against them, but their claims up to now have been dismissed as “conspiracy theories” by the government and news media.

RebelNews.com [noted](#) that a spokesperson for police released a statement to the *Times* admitting:

“ACT Policing has deployed several types of loudspeakers and amplification devices to quickly and effectively convey voice messages to large, and often loud, crowds of people during the recent protest activity in Canberra.”

Various injuries from the demonstration are still being reported, the most of which seem to be sunburn and heat stroke. There are also allergic responses from what some believe to be chemical exposure.

There are two modes on the LRAD gadget. The LRAD may be used as a crowd control tool, sometimes known as a ‘sound cannon,’ ‘acoustic hailing device,’ or a ‘sonic weapon.’

It can also be used as a loudspeaker or amplification device to convey messages to the crowd in the other mode, which was utilized in Canberra.

The police were eventually forced to admit the use of the dystopian crowd control technology after One Nation party Senator Malcolm Roberts and Liberal Senator Alex Antic brought up the issue during an Australian Parliament proceeding.

Senator Antic, attending a Senate estimates meeting virtually, displayed a photo of the LRAD device beside members of the police as he asked about the use of such a device.

Though Australian Federal Police Commissioner Reece Kershaw, who was being questioned, evaded answering directly during the meeting, the growing controversy resulted in the police issuing the statement confirming LRAD use.

The Canberra Convoy, mounted by Australians in solidarity with the Canadian Freedom Convoy in Ottawa, led to a huge gathering in front of Parliament House, turning into one of the largest protests in Canberra's history.

One journalist observer, Channel Nine political editor Chris Uhlmann, said the protest against Covid vaccine mandates was the [largest](#) he had witnessed in 30 years.

Some government aligned factions have tried to downplay the numbers.

“The crowd was massive,” said Uhlmann. “Trying to judge its size is a mug’s game, but it was easily the biggest I have seen in 30 years of covering protests in the capital.”

Livestreamers and members of the independent press said they encountered a lot of problems with their feeds throughout the day's proceedings. For many portions of the day, attendees reported weak or no reception.

TRENDS IN CRYPTOS



INTEROPERABILITY: A BLOCKCHAIN BUZZWORD

Blockchains need to work together in order for end users to have the kinds of utility that take the sector to the next step.

If a crypto asset or Non-Fungible Token can't be easily and cost effectively routed or transferred to exploit desired services, that's a problem.

Developers are working on expanding the interoperability of blockchains, and more needs to be done for the industry to continue to mature and grow its user base into the mainstream.

Blockchains not named Bitcoin and Ethereum may tout faster transaction times for their networks, lower costs, smart contract software app features, and more environmental friendliness.

But if they don't easily "speak" to the Bitcoin and Ethereum networks, they are effectively siloed from the two leaders that have the lion's share of users and market cap value.

Some blockchains are working on specific compatibility projects with Bitcoin and Ethereum.

This past week, for example, Algorand CEO Staci Warden announced that 10 million would be awarded to developers to deliver solutions for that blockchain to interact more seamlessly with the Ethereum network via Ethereum Virtual Machine (EVM) technology.

An EVM component would allow, for example, apps and NFTs created on Ethereum to be easily routed, run, traded, etc on the Algorand blockchain. To understand the scope of what NFTs can do, check out the recent **Trends Journal** article ["NFTS: MUCH MORE THAN DIGITAL ART"](#) (15 Feb 2022).

Some blockchains, like Polygon, already have EVM compatibility (see ["GAMING EMPIRES TO BATTLE UPSTART NFTs?"](#) 19 Oct 2021).

Cosmos, Chainlink and Quant Promise Comprehensive Interoperability

Several crypto token fueled projects have a core focus on building technology that allows data and assets to flow between blockchains, and even beyond.

Cosmos (with an associated crypto token called ATOM) bills itself as "the internet of blockchains." The Cosmos SDK (software development kit), offers a platform for creating unique, application-specific blockchains.

Instead of having several apps operating on a central chain, any project may create its own blockchain, which is then linked to the rest of the network.

There are currently over 260 applications and services operating in the Cosmos ecosystem including those of some major crypto networks like Binance Smart

Chain, Crypto.com, Polygon, Terra, and Oasis Foundation according to financemagnates.com.

The Quant network is an even more ambitious and possibly consequential technology. Via something called the “Overledger DLT gateway,” the project is facilitating the ability of virtually any Distributed Ledger Technologies (DLTs), including blockchains, but also other systems like Hedera Hashgraph, the enterprise-leading non-blockchain based DLT, and current corporate and governmental networks, to talk to each other.

Companies like database powerhouse Oracle, and Microsoft’s Hyperledger are just two systems that can integrate with blockchains via Quant’s Overledger DLT gateway.

Quant network tokens (QNT) must be acquired and used by developers who want to build on the platform. Overledger read and write activity done by developers also requires QNT tokens.

The tokenomics of the Quant token, limited to 14.6 million that will ever be issued, also make it attractive.

Chainlink offers a different kind of interoperability—that between blockchains and real world data.

The Chainlink token (LINK) incentivises a worldwide network of computers to provide trustworthy, real-world data to smart contracts built on top of blockchains.

Many smart contracts depend on some form of external data source to correctly execute their terms.

Chainlink rewards data providers (called "oracles") for acting as a link between blockchain smart contracts and external data sources.

Because each oracle in the Chainlink network has a reputation score, it is encouraged to supply correct data, according to Kraken.com.

Nodes are also compensated in Chainlink's cryptocurrency, LINK, when they obey the software's rules and offer important data.

There's little doubt projects that are able to offer efficient solutions to facilitate interoperability, will be in growing demand as blockchain technology itself continues to innovate.

EL SALVADOR BECOMES WORLD'S FIRST NATIONAL BITCOIN EXPERIMENT



After legalizing Bitcoin as legal tender last September, El Salvador, under self-described “world’s coolest dictator” Nayib Bukele, has become an experiment in Bitcoin’s power to play a role in national economics, perhaps opening new venues

for borrowing and using profits from Bitcoin mining to fund new social spending.

Bukele’s government has spent \$180 million setting up Bitcoin ATMs around the country and putting \$30 in Bitcoin into a digital wallet for anyone who registers to use the digital currency.

Although most adults in the country signed up to receive the free Bitcoin, merchants report few shoppers use it to pay for purchases.

Instead, people have exchanged their Bitcoin for U.S. dollars, which have been El Salvador’s official national currency since 2002.

In the months ahead, El Salvador will issue a billion dollars' worth of sovereign bonds backed by Bitcoin trading on the Bitfinex exchange, Bukele has announced.

U.S. citizens and businesses are barred from trading on Bitfinex, but could buy and sell the bonds through offshore platforms, Bitfinex founder Samson Mow, a Bukele advisor, told *The Wall Street Journal*.

The country's sky-high budget deficits, coupled with inflation and an \$800-million bond payment due next January, have made El Salvador a poor candidate among conventional lenders.

Bukele is hoping to skirt the usual funding sources such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund and trade on Bitcoin's cachet and the novelty of issuing Bitcoin bonds to draw investors.

On 9 February, Fitch Ratings sharpened its view of El Salvador as a default risk, sinking its rating on the country's long-term bonds B- to CCC, saying that "weakening of institutions and concentration of power in the presidency have increased policy unpredictability, and the adoption of Bitcoin as legal tender has added uncertainty."

Bukele also is hoping that profits from a national Bitcoin-mining project will fund expansive social programs to address poverty and turn his country into "the Singapore of Latin America," according to the *WSJ*.

The president also has teased that the bonds will help fund creation of a seaside "Bitcoin City," where geothermal energy from a nearby volcano will provide the energy necessary for Bitcoin mining.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has not been impressed, pointing out the Bitcoin's prices are too volatile to become a key element of a small nation's economy and that Bukele's new social spending—on which much of his popularity is based—puts the country's debt on "an unsustainable path."

El Salvador is in negotiations with the IMF for a \$1.3-billion loan.

Also, El Salvador has long been a hub from drug traffickers and criminal gangs, heightening the risk that Bitcoin as a national currency will open doors to money laundering and other illegal uses.

Bukele is undeterred.

“Bitcoin is...the evolution of humankind and we’re going there,” he told a cheering crowd at a November rally announcing plans for the Bitcoin bond issue.

SEQUOIA CAPITAL DEVOTES UP TO \$600 MILLION TO CRYPTO



Sequoia Capital, the \$80-billion U.S. private equity firm, will put \$500 to \$600 million into a new fund that will invest in crypto tokens on third-party exchanges, the company announced.

Sequoia previously had invested in DeSo, a crypto social media start-up and Filecoin, a data storage network.

“The area in crypto where we have the most opportunity for improvement is in the liquid stuff,” Sequoia partner Shaun Maguire told the *Financial Times*. “We just haven’t been able to deliver in the traditional venture capital model.”

Traditionally, venture capital firms take seats on the boards of companies they invest in. However, many crypto firms have abolished the board structure and instead issue tokens to investors, allowing coin holders to vote on key issues.

About 20 percent of Sequoia’s new U.S. and European investments in 2021 were in the crypto industry. The new fund will allow the company to take a larger part in the crypto projects it funds, the *FT* said.

Sequoia will view its crypto holdings through “a 20-year lens,” Maguire said, making investments to hold long-term and will trade tokens only in “exceptional circumstances.”

Regulators in several countries are taking a close look at cryptocurrencies with an eye toward regulating them as securities.

The Securities and Exchange Commission and the Commodities Futures Trading Commission in the U.S. are vying to regulate digital assets, as we have reported in [“SEC Push to Regulate Crypto”](#) (21 Dec 2021) and [“CFTC Chief Seeks Authority to Regulate Crypto”](#) (8 Feb 2022), among other articles.

“We expect regulation but there’s a balance between protecting consumers and maintaining innovation,” Maguire added.

BLOCKCHAIN BATTLES



CANADA AND U.S. CRACKDOWNS DRAWING CRYPTO RESPONSE.

Government attempts in Canada to strangle fundraising for the trucker’s Freedom Convoy has caught the attention of the crypto world, along with anyone holding

money in banks.

It’s now a fact of life in the faux democracies of the West that governments will smear virtually any protest or dissident voice opposing their illegal power abuses, as terrorists and/or Russian agents.

The Canada truckers have been accused of both. Justin Trudeau used the charges as a pretext to unleash the never before utilized Emergencies Act.

The truckers and their supporters in fact represent a politically wide range of average Canadians who don't want to be forced to take medical treatments: in this case, the experimental gene level treatments deceptively called "vaccines."

By Friday, lead organizers including Tamara Lich and Chris Barber were arrested.

Bank accounts connected with the protest and protesters had already been seized earlier in the week. Coincidentally, multiple Canadian banks closed for a period the following day. Some pointed out that seizure of bank accounts is something that wouldn't exactly encourage citizens to keep extra money lying around in them.

Cryptos Figure Into Protests

Canadian Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland claimed that as part of Emergency Act powers, "crypto wallets" of protesters have been frozen:

"The names of both individuals and entities, as well as crypto wallets, have been shared by the RCMP with financial institutions and accounts have been frozen, and more accounts will be frozen."

Freeland likely meant "custodial wallets," or crypto held on centralized exchanges. Non-custodial, or Crypto held directly by users via secret phrases, with wallet addresses on the blockchain, cannot be "frozen" by authorities, though it is possible to trace transactions from or to an address that has been tied to a person or group.

Some privacy focused cryptos like Monero and ZCash make it nearly impossible to trace transactions.

Nicholas Anthony of the Cato Institute told FOX Business that the Canadian government's [seizure](#) of bank accounts and crypto wallets (or at least "custodial" wallets on centralized crypto exchanges) is a worrying government overreach that could be tried in the U.S.

Of course, it basically already has, against some January 6 protesters.

"I think this really needs to be an eye opener for Americans across the country, across political ideologies," Anthony commented.

He said Canada's actions are a ploy "reserved for authoritarian regimes" to punish citizens who dissent against government policies.

Before the bank freezes, the crowdfunding platform GoFundMe drew scorn a few weeks ago for freezing donations to the Freedom Convoy, then saying it would give the money instead to selected "worthy" charities.

GiveSendGo, an alternative Christian based funding platform accepted a campaign to fund the trucker protest. Another controversy ensued after the platform was hacked and names of donors were released, almost half of who hailed from the U.S..

Government allied media in Canada and the U.S. happily jumped in and published the hacked information. Twitter allowed names to be posted.

Even Democrat Minnesota Senator Ilhan Omar, no ally of the protest, called the publicizing of the hacked info "unconscionable."

The Canadian government has also been pursuing crypto donations, though depending on the cryptos and methods used, that nut is harder to crack.

Meanwhile, in the U.S., the Biden administration is on the edge of announcing its own crackdown on cryptos, following regulations enacted last year that now allow the government to snoop on smaller amounts of money held in banks and with payment vendors like PayPal.

Noble sounding excuses like combating "terrorism," ransomware, child trafficking and drug money laundering have been provided as reasons for the abusive invasion and surveillance.

But the fact that the Biden administration is doing laughably little to stem either poisonous fentanyl drug running or human trafficking on U.S. borders speaks volumes about its real intents with crypto.

More people are waking up to the fact that governments in the dawning age of cryptos are after two things when it comes to money: (1) they're out to protect their monopoly, so they can continue siphoning wealth to enrich themselves and their elite cohorts; and (2) they're out to control mediums of value more comprehensively, to help crush unwanted dissent.

The crypto space has been reacting to the moves by Trudeau and Biden. Many are becoming reacquainted with some of the original underlying motivations for the creation of cryptos and decentralized blockchains: resistance to wholesale stealing of wealth by elites that characterized the 2007-2008 financial crisis.

Barry Silbert, famed crypto billionaire, has indicated that the government crackdowns are showing the need not only for bitcoin, but more stringent privacy coins like ZCash.

Silbert is the founder and CEO of Digital Currency Group (DCG), a conglomerate that includes Grayscale, which oversees \$28 billion worth of Bitcoin, Ether and other assets, according to *Forbes*.

On 17 Feb, following a retweet that condemned Trudeau's actions, Silbert [tweeted](#): "Every investor should have 5% of their crypto portfolio in privacy-focused coins."

Silbert was already known for his crypto privacy views, having previously made a large investment in ZCash, though the coin has dropped precipitously in value from its 2017 highs.

Silbert has also been retweeting messages of others supporting privacy and protest rights, including this one by Andreas M. Antonopoulos, a noted expert and proselytizer for permissionless blockchains:

“Privacy is a human right! It is also the fountainhead for all other human rights. Without financial privacy, we don’t have human rights.”

Meanwhile, the CEO of Kraken, a major centralized cryptocurrency exchange, actually advocated that crypto holders take their holdings off such exchanges.

Jesse Powell advised people to move their assets to non-custodial crypto wallets, where governments could not easily get at them.

Powell made his comments in response to questions about whether crypto exchanges would freeze people's crypto at the request of police, even without judicial consent, according to theBlockCrypto.com.

Powell indicated that kind of scenario was inevitable.

"100% yes it has/will happen and 100% yes, we will be forced to comply. If you're worried about it, don't keep your funds with any centralized/regulated custodian. We cannot protect you."

He said that concerned users should not only get their coins off centralized exchanges, but should only trade “peer-to-peer”, or directly with other crypto owners using direct crypto addresses.

But even that avenue proved problematic for the Trucker’s Freedom Convoy, when they publicly advertised a bitcoin address to which to send crypto donations.

Alex Gladstein of the Human Rights Foundation called the move a mistake, since it allowed federal authorities to blacklist that address and others associated with it.

Gladstein drew a parallel to a recent abuse of so-called “anti-terrorism laws” in Myanmar, where two young women have been imprisoned for donating to refugees. Gladstein [noted](#):

“These two college students have been sentenced to seven years in prison in Myanmar for violating an ‘Anti-Terrorism Law’ after their donations to refugees were divulged to the military junta.

“This is what happens when a society has no financial privacy.”

This past Friday, none other than Ethereum co-founder Vitalik Buterin weighed in with a mixed view of the trucker protest.

In an interview given during the ETHDenver conference, Buterin, who was raised in Canada, said that while he didn’t condone some of the tactics of protesters, government financial moves against them were “dangerous.”

"If the truckers are blocking the roads and that's breaking the economy, fine, blocking the roads is illegal and there are laws against that," he told crypto outlet [CoinDesk](#). But he added:

"If the government is not willing to follow the laws ... [and] give people a chance to defend themselves...and they just want to talk to the banks and basically cut out people's financial livelihoods without due process, that is an example of the sort of thing that decentralized technology is there to make more difficult."

BITCOIN OFFICIALLY INVITED TO INVADE UKRAINE. Zerohedge, smeared without evidence by the Biden Administration as a “Russian asset” this past week, kept on trucking with breaking news.

One item of note: Ukraine’s parliament approved a bill that legalizes bitcoin.

The new law doesn’t make the leading crypto legal tender. But it assures citizens that they can buy and hold bitcoin legally.

“The new law is an additional opportunity for business development in our Country,” said Mykhaylo Fedorov, Ukrainian minister of digital transformation. “Foreign and Ukrainian crypto companies will be able to operate legally, and

Ukrainians will have convenient and secure access to the global market for virtual assets.”

The bill specifies regulations that Bitcoin exchanges and other service providers need to abide by in order to legally operate in the country.

It also lays out regulation by Ukraine’s National Securities Commission.

“The Law on Virtual Assets is largely a framework law and requires further substantial refinements, for instance, changes to the tax code,” said crypto industry mover Serhiy Tron.

Tron heads White Rock Management and the Parea Foundation international fund.

He told *Bitcoin Magazine*, “Nevertheless, the document became an important signal to the global community, since the National Bank of Ukraine officially stated that digital currency is a ‘monetary surrogate, which has no real value.’”

Blockchain Battles has addressed the question of the value of bitcoin and blockchains in articles including [“WHAT IS THE VALUE OF CRYPTOS AND BLOCKCHAINS?”](#) (15 Jun 2021) and [“THE CRYPTO ‘AGE OF UTILITY’ HAS JUST BEGUN”](#) (12 Oct 2021).

CANADIAN “CRYPTO” RUN ON BANKS. Canadians are reportedly removing money from bank accounts in reaction to the actions of the Canadian government.

Under the Emergency Powers Act invoked by President Justin Trudeau, the government has frozen bank accounts of peaceful Trucker Convoy protesters, and even family members not directly associated with the protests.

Graphs showing bank outages from late last week, released by UK economic writer James Melville, indicate a jump in banking activity.

According to Yahoo News, registered financial organizations in Canada were commanded by authorities to prohibit facilitating transactions across 34 crypto wallets associated with the trucker protest.

With Canadians apparently flocking to Bitcoin (BTC) and other cryptocurrencies, the government may try to exert added restrictions on centralized crypto exchanges, to try to limit Canadian citizens from moving money from fiat to crypto.

TRENDS IN THE COVID WAR



BERKSHIRE BILLIONAIRE WHO MADE A FORTUNE INVESTING IN COMPANIES THAT CONTRIBUTED TO U.S. OBESITY EPIDEMIC ‘APPALLED’ BY THOSE WHO REFUSE COVID JAB

Charlie Munger, the billionaire vice-chairman of Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway, said in an interview last week that he was “appalled” at the number of Americans who refused to roll their sleeves up for a COVID-19 vaccine.

“Speaking for myself, I couldn't wait to be vaccinated. and I think the risks of being vaccinated are way less than the risks of not being vaccinated,” the 98-year-old told Yahoo! News. He called the decision by some to skip the vaccine “massively stupid.”

“We probably have 30 percent of the people in the country that think vaccination is evil and [are] coming after them like the hobgoblins. It's not good that there's that much ignorance left.”

Munger, who is worth an estimated \$2.4 billion and got rich by buying enormous stakes in Dairy Queen and Coca-Cola—leading to the country's obesity epidemic, imagined a world where he was in charge, and said he would force the vaccine on the public.

Buffett, his boss, faced criticism at a conference in 2015 about his massive investments in companies like Heinz and Coca-Cola, which are famous for the generous amount of sugar in their products amid the country's obesity epidemic.

Forbes reported that Buffett tried to brush off the criticism and said his own diet is widely known to be unhealthy and observed that, "I don't see smiles on the faces of people at Whole Foods."

"If I were running the world, of course it would be mandatory," for people to get vaccinated, Munger said. Recalling the time he served in the Army during WW2, he told Yahoo News, "They just vaccinated me." "It didn't hurt me or anybody else in that world. We all just submitted to whatever the government told us to submit to. And it was no big deal. I don't like big chunks of the country going crazy. And I would argue the anti-vaxxers are somewhat crazy."

About 64 percent of the U.S. population is considered to be fully vaccinated—with two shots of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or one dose of Johnson & Johnson. The vaccination rate is slowing since the beginning of the Delta and Omicron outbreaks. (See ["YOU ARE WRONG IF YOU BELIEVE ALL VACCINES ARE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE."](#))

A Pew Research Poll released on 9 February found that the country is divided evenly when asked whether or not health officials have been clear with their messaging during the outbreak. Democrats are far more likely than Republicans to have received the jab (90 percent vs. 64 percent), according to the study.

A majority of Americans (58 percent) favor requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccination for air travel. By relatively narrow margins, more favor vaccine

requirements to go to a sporting event or concert (53 percent to 46 percent) and to attend public colleges and universities in person (52 percent to 47 percent).

Two-in-ten U.S. adults say they have not received a vaccine for COVID-19. These estimates generally align with other national public opinion surveys, including those conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation.

The CDC admitted that there is a heart-inflammation risk with taking both the Moderna and Pfizer jabs, but insist that there is a great risk for those who don't take the vaccine and come down with the virus.

The British Medical Journal, which was founded in 1840, has been critical of the amount of data on the vaccines that have been released to the public.

“Big pharma is the least trusted industry,” current and former staffers wrote. “At least three of the many companies making COVID-19 vaccines have past criminal and civil settlements costing them billions of dollars. One pleaded guilty to fraud. Other companies have no pre-covid track record. Now the COVID pandemic has minted many new pharma billionaires, and vaccine manufacturers have reported tens of billions in revenue.” (See [“VAX MINTS NEW BILLIONAIRES.”](#))

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

Not all of those investments are private funds. BioNTech, for example, received the equivalent of \$397 million from the German government to put toward the development of a vaccine. In return, the company is supplying it to low-income countries at cost. Nevertheless, BioNTech reported a net profit of \$1.3 billion for the first three months of 2021.

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

TRENDPOST: *The arrogance of the ruling billionaire class is verbally illustrated by Munger who said, “If I were running the world, of course it [the COVID Jab] would be mandatory.”*

Not if “I was President.”

Not if “I was Prime Minister.”

No! If I was running the world I would tell every human being what they should inject into their bodies. Thus, rather than challenging the psychotic “billionaire” for making such a dictatorial statement, the Presstitutes applaud him.

To illustrate his belief of no freedom and taking full control over We the People of Slavelandia, Munger goes on to say, “We all just submitted to whatever the government told us to submit to. And it was no big deal.”

Submit? “No big deal?”

Bend over, take it up the ass? Do what you are told by “whatever the government told us?”

What government? Political boys and girls that get campaign contributions —bribes and payoffs from billionaires and the “Bigs” like Munger, Soros, etc. —who pay them off to tell us what to do.

Munger Stupidity.

And illustrating his ignorance, the mRNA Operation Warp Speed Gene Therapy Jab, is not a World War II era vaccine, thus calling people “crazy” because they won’t take the inoculation—the first ever injected into a human body—is Munger “crazy.”

ONTARIO: COVID WAR ENDING



Dr. Kieran Moore, Ontario's chief medical officer, announced Thursday that it is his belief that the highest risk for COVID-19 has passed and the policies that have been put into place to slow infection should wind down.

"I do think we should align their removal with the removal at a population level, so on March 1," he said. "That may be early for some organizations, but that's my goal."

Among the rules that stand to end are proof of vaccination requirements for indoor settings and likely the end of mandatory vaccinations for colleges and other public entities, *The Toronto Sun* reported. (See ["ONTARIO: BACKLASH AGAINST LOCKDOWN LUNACY," "ONTARIO POSTS RECORD UNEMPLOYMENT IN 2021"](#) and ["ONTARIO FINANCE MINISTER: ANOTHER POLITICAL JOKER."](#))

"I do think that the peak and risk ... of Omicron is behind us," Moore said, according to the paper. "There remains a risk of transmission every day and hence the need to continue to wear our masks at present, but we'll review the evidence of when we can further reduce that public health measure of masking in public spaces."

Moore said vaccines provide the best protection against the virus and he urged residents to take the jab and the orders that have been put in place "served their purpose."

But the very same newspaper article, citing public health data, reported that unvaccinated and partially vaccinated people make up "just over half of patients in intensive care" with the virus, which means the other half is fully vaccinated individuals.

Moore told CBC Radio the key metrics including wastewater data and the rate of hospitalizations.

"We certainly have the peak behind us," Moore said. "We were worried about a rebound and that's why we've been watching the data so closely and we've been opening in a phased manner ... [but] I don't anticipate a significant rebound in cases."

Masks will remain in place for at least two weeks after the other policies expire, but he told Canadian news outlets that he is considering ditching masks next. The Canadian Press asked more than a dozen hospitals in Ontario if they would lift their vaccination policies. They all said no, the CBC reported.

The **Trends Journal** reported on missteps taken by Ontario Premier Doug Ford's government. In August, he faced swift backlash when he announced plans to extend the COVID-19 measures. After a public thrashing by medical professionals and law enforcement, his government retracted the new guidelines the following day.

Yahoo!Canada reported that Ford sought to close playgrounds and give new powers to police to “randomly stop any pedestrian” to inquire about their home address or where they’re headed. But the report noted many residents said they would not comply with the rules.

TRENDPOST: *As with most lockdown orders imposed on entire populations that have been dictated by politicians, ignored are the facts of who is dying from the virus and why.*

In Ontario, where Mr. Ford ordered people to “stay home because the situation is extremely serious and we need to hunker down right now,” some 88 percent of the virus victims are over 70 years of age.

In addition, over the past two years, of a population of 14 million, there were 12,230 registered COVID deaths in Ontario.

Thus, rather than take measures to protect those who are most vulnerable, instead, millions of lives and livelihoods were destroyed by draconian rules that have proven ineffective.

And with anti-vax protests escalating and elections on the near horizon politicians will be winding down the COVID War as we had forecast several weeks ago.

CDC'S MASKQUERADE: MAKING UP BULLSHIT AS THEY PLEASE



Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said last Wednesday at the White House that she hopes to “give people a break from” mask-wearing in public, even though many Americans seemed to have already ditched their face

coverings.

The shift may have been sparked by the leaked image last month that showed California's top elected officials inside a SoFi Stadium luxury box without a mask in sight, while the country was under a strict mask policy. (See [“POLITICAL FREAKS CAUGHT LYING, KEEP LYING...WHILE ORDERING PEASANTS TO OBEY.”](#))

The **Trends Journal** has reported on numerous occasions where politicians don't follow their own farcical COVID-19 rules. These politicians end up emerging unscathed because they know the public doesn't care. (See [“NEWSOM'S ‘MISSION ACCOMPLISHED’ MOMENT SEEN AS HIS LATEST COVID SNAFU.”](#) [“CALIFORNIA'S NEWSOM: NO VAX, NO SCHOOL”](#) and [“ONTARIO FINANCE MINISTER: ANOTHER POLITICAL JOKER.”](#))

Walensky, who perhaps is adored by Drug Lords for her decision to overrule CDC advisers who did not recommend booster shots for younger individuals, said any face-mask rule change needs to coincide with remaining hospital capacity.

President Joe Biden announced Friday that the U.S.'s national emergency that was declared in March 2020 will be extended beyond March 1 due to the risks still posed by the virus.

Jeff Zients, the White House COVID response coordinator, said the administration is working to move toward a time when the virus is no longer a crisis, but something “we can protect against and treat.”

“The president and our COVID team are actively planning for the future,” he said.

Despite his decision to extend the national emergency, California announced that it will be the first state in the country to have an ‘endemic’ virus policy. The Associated Press said the state will emphasize “prevention and quick reaction to outbreaks over mandated masking and business shutdowns.”

TRENDPOST: On 3 November, in an article titled, [“FACING THE TRUTH. PART II: MORE EVIDENCE MASKS ARE INEFFECTIVE.”](#) we pointed out that in the early days of the outbreak, the New England Journal of Medicine wrote:

“We know that wearing a mask outside health care facilities offers little, if any, protection from infection. Public health authorities define a significant exposure to Covid-19 as face-to-face contact within 6 feet with a patient with symptomatic Covid-19 that is sustained for at least a few minutes (and some say more than 10 minutes or even 30 minutes). The chance of catching Covid-19 from a passing interaction in a public space is therefore minimal. In many cases, the desire for widespread masking is a reflexive reaction to anxiety over the pandemic.”

The article also pointed to a 26 September report on the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons’ website called “Mask Facts.”

“COVID-19 is as politically-charged as it is infectious. Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHO, the CDC and NIH’s Dr. Anthony Fauci discouraged wearing masks as not useful for non-healthcare workers. Now they recommend wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are hard to do (e.g., grocery stores and pharmacies).

TRENDPOST: *On 12 February, althealthworks.com, a website that focuses on news about natural health, revealed that an article posted on the Microsoft News website detailing potential health risks from long-term mask wearing was taken down.*

According to althealthworks.com:

“The potential side effects include the following according to several doctors quoted by MSN.com:

“Shortness of Breath and Lightheadedness: According to Dr. Lili Barsky, any activities that result in the expulsion of air, such as talking, singing and exercising can result ‘in the accumulation of carbon dioxide between the face and the mask.’

“The symptoms are seen due to increases in CO₂ levels in the body according to Dr. Rashmi Byakodi as mentioned in the MSN article. ‘Breathing over exhaled air that turns into carbon dioxide might make you feel dizzy.’

“Headaches: According to Dr. Byakodi, ‘Headaches may occur due to the band fitting around the head all day, stress from breathing through the mask, or slight changes in oxygen and carbon dioxide levels in the blood.’

“Dermatitis: Some people’s skin may break out, and scarring around the area where the mask is worn may result in some cases.

“Weakened Immune System: Perhaps the most troubling of all symptoms on the list of doctor warnings, the immune system can be greatly weakened by low oxygen levels in the tissues as noted by Dr. Esteban Kosak in the article.”

HONG KONG UNDER PRESSURE FROM CHINA TO WIN THE COVID WAR



Chinese President Xi Jinping has been one of the world's last remaining holdouts to enforce a "zero COVID" policy, which means any small outbreak results in an immediate lockdown until any risk of further contamination is snuffed out.

Xi, who oversees a massive country with 1.4 billion people, has reported a relatively small number of cases and deaths due to these policies. There have been a total of about 130,000 reported cases and about 5,000 deaths.

But Xi may be facing his toughest challenge yet amid an Omicron outbreak in Hong Kong, the semiautonomous Chinese city and global financial hub. Hong Kong has had 21 deaths over the past week alone and Xi has already told the city to make "controlling the epidemic as soon as possible an overwhelming priority."

His fear is that the virus could easily jump to the mainland and spread like wildfire. China is, of course, notorious for implementing a heavy-handed approach to stopping the spread of the virus. Residents in Xi'an were locked down for a month during a recent outbreak.

The Omicron variant has been blamed for the jump in cases. The city recorded 6,116 new cases on Wednesday.

The New York Times reported that hospitals in Hong Kong are overwhelmed and patients are left waiting on sidewalks. All positive cases are forced to check in to hospitals and quarantine centers, even if they only have mild symptoms.

“The reality is that there are very few severe cases,” Jin Dong-yan, an epidemiologist at the University of Hong Kong, told the *Financial Times*. “Logically, it shouldn't cause a big run on our medical facilities, but [it does] if you take in all patients. Hospitals should primarily admit the elderly, pregnant women, and children.”

The paper reported that Beijing will not allow Hong Kong to live with the virus.

Carrie Lam, the city's leader, has described the approach to “dynamic zero,” which she called a “policy requirement from the mainland.”

“But I am not the initiator, so if you want an authoritative definition of ‘dynamic,’ I’m sorry, I really can’t explain it,” she said.

The concern for China is that if Hong Kong loosens restrictions and takes the position that it will live with the virus, it raises the possibility of a massive outbreak on the mainland.

Regina Ip, a pro-Beijing lawmaker, told the *FT* that there is little chance that Beijing will abandon its “zero-COVID” policy for Hong Kong.

Jin, the epidemiologist, told the paper that it would be impossible to close Hong Kong.

TRENDPOST: *Hong Kong, a city of 7.4 million that is being forced by China to fight the COVID War, has had just 276 COVID deaths since the beginning of the outbreak two years ago. To put the number into perspective, New York City, which has a million more residents, absorbed nearly 67,000 deaths.*

Known as “Asia’s World City” Hong Kong is dead town as a result of the series of draconian COVID lockdown rules that have closed down restaurants, nightlife

and business... cutting itself off from the outside world with its travel restrictions and mandates.

Indeed, Fitch ratings agency warned that the foreign travel restriction would severely threaten Hong Kong's economic future. And according to the South China Morning Post, twenty banks temporarily closed another 135 branches over the last seven days, bringing the total closures to 412 city-wide as of Saturday, based on a Post analysis of announcements by banks. This represents 37 per cent of the 1,100 local branches versus 25 per cent a week earlier.

AMERICA'S #1 COVID JAB SALESMEN GETS JABBED AND GETS THE VIRUS... LIKE OTHER BIG NAME JAB LOVERS



Dr. Vivek Murthy, the U.S. surgeon general who has been a vocal proponent of COVID-19 booster shots, announced that he and his immediate family came down with the virus and are experiencing minor symptoms.

Murthy announced on Twitter Friday that he had muscle aches and a sore throat. He said his wife had a headache and was unusually tired. He said his two young children were improving.

“When you've been as safe as you can, getting COVID-19 can be frustrating and disappointing,” he wrote on Twitter. “I’ve felt that. It can also be a source of shame. Many people assume you must have been careless to get sick. Our safety measures reduce risk, but they can't eliminate risk. Nothing can.”

Reports of so-called breakthrough cases used to warrant news coverage, but it has become commonplace because officials admitted that the vaccines are significantly less effective against the Omicron variant. (See [“BREAKTHROUGHS BEGET RISK REASSESSMENT,”](#) [“BREAKTHROUGH: NEW](#)

[TERM FOR VACCINE FAILURE](#)” and [“CDC CHANGES TESTING TO ERASE ‘BREAKTHROUGH’ CASES.”](#))

Murthy joins the long list of notable people who came down with the virus despite being fully vaxxed, and in most cases boosted. Prince Charles tested positive last week and was spotted out for the first time with his sister Princess Anne on Friday at St. James Palace. Neither were wearing masks, according to photos from the event.

“If his 5-day quarantine is over, shouldn’t he remain masked to protect others?” one commenter posted.

Queen Elizabeth, the 95-year-old monarch, also tested positive for the virus, according to Buckingham Palace. She was experiencing mild, cold-like symptoms and expected to “continue light duties at Windsor over the coming week.”

There have been recent high-profile cases among comedians like Jimmy Fallon, James Corden, and Bob Saget. Saget was found dead in his hotel room last month and died as a result of head trauma. His friends said he had recovered from the virus.

Lloyd Austin, the fully vaccinated U.S. Defense Secretary who pushed for all troops to be vaccinated or resign, contracted the coronavirus. (See [“FULLY-VAXXED, FULL OF COVID, FULL OF CRAP.”](#) [“CELEBRITY SELLOUTS SELL COVID VAX”](#) and [“GET VAXXED, GET THE VIRUS, GET SICK.”](#))

Also making the news is the Democrat media star, Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez who is also fully jabbed and boosted who got the virus as did Rep. Michael McCaul who also received the booster shot and came down with the infection.

TREND FORECAST: The COVID War has shown that there are only a handful of true celebrities who don’t need to worry about their future employment and do not suck up to their corporate bosses. But for the others, the embrace of Big

Government policies could be as beneficial for their careers as securing a big-time agent.

That will not change any time soon. (See [“‘FART OF OLD’ NEIL YOUNG SUCCEEDS IN GETTING ROGAN CENSORED.”](#))

As we have forecast, following the COVID War, there will be a Renaissance. Art will be among the most powerful mediums to spread the message of Liberty, Love, Joy, and Beauty in an era of complete corporate/government control of the mainstream media.

U.S. health regulators announced that they delayed the reviews of Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine for children under 5 years old because the initial two-dose series have been essentially ineffective against the Omicron variant, The Wall Street Journal reported, citing people familiar with the matter.

The paper said there was such a low amount of infection—whether the children were vaccinated or unvaccinated—that the small number of cases "made the vaccine appear less effective in early statistical analysis."

Nature magazine also reported that Omicron-specific jabs that are being developed have also shown little to no advantage over the third dose of current vaccines.

“What we’re seeing coming out of these preclinical studies in animal models is that a boost with a variant vaccine doesn’t really do any better than a boost with the current vaccine,” David Montefiori, director of the Laboratory for AIDS Vaccine Research and Development at Duke University Medical Center, told the magazine.

Pfizer and Moderna booster shots have protected recipients from the Omicron surge during the winter months, but the C.D.C. announced in a study published Friday that these mRNA vaccines lose a substantial amount of effectiveness after four months.

The researchers found that booster shots were 91 percent effective at preventing hospitalization against any variant for two months. After four months the number declined to 78 percent, the-scientist.com reported.

TRENDPOST: The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on COVID-19 vaccines and the effort by governments and The Drug Lords, i.e. Big Pharma, to find as many arms as legally possible to take the jab. (See [“BIDEN’S BOOSTER PLAN: VAX YOU!”](#) [“SELLING BOOSTER SHOTS, CDC’S WALENSKY SAYS ‘FU’ TO AGENCY ADVISERS”](#) and [“THE VAX/BOOSTER MARKET: DRUG DEALER ON PARADE.”](#))

TRENDPOST: The New York Times reported that of 18-49-year-olds that were unvaxxed, 0.9 per 100,000 died of the virus. What they did not report is that 0.9 per 100,000, equals just a 0.0009 COVID death rate. Yet, from newborns to dying elderly, governments continue to dictate COVID jabs for all.

And as we have continually reported, rather than taking precautions to protect those most vulnerable from catching the virus, such as the overweight and obese who account for 78 percent of the hospitalization according to the CDC, those with preexisting comorbidities and the elderly... governments have imposed their draconian mandates and must get vaxxed decrees on entire populations.

TRENDPOST: The number of COVID-19 infections among those who are fully vaccinated raised legal questions about the Biden administration’s effort to mandate these jabs. Luc Montagnier, the winner of the 2008 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for discovering the human immunodeficiency virus, and Jed Rubenfeld, a constitutional scholar, wrote an op-ed in The Wall Street Journal questioning the merits of a mandate for a vaccine that does not seem to be effective.

“It would be irrational, legally indefensible and contrary to the public interest for the government to mandate vaccines absent any evidence that the vaccines are effective in stopping the spread of the pathogen they target. Yet that's exactly what's happening here,” they wrote.

CANADIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES ASSOCIATION SUES TRUDEAU GOV'T



The Canadian Civil Liberties Association announced that it was taking Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his government to court over their decision to invoke emergency powers to quell the anti-vaccine-mandate protest that broke out in Ottawa that has carried on for about three weeks.

The association called Trudeau's emergency orders "an extreme law that has never been used." The group said the declaration is "unprecedented" and "seriously infringes the Charter rights of Canadians."

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

The CCLA said the rarely used act can only be used when a situation emerges that "seriously threatens the ability of the Government of Canada to preserve the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of Canada."

The **Trends Journal** has reported on the protest in Ottawa over the vaccine mandate for truckers to travel across the border and into the U.S. (See ["CANADIAN TRUCKERS FREEDOM CONVOY: MEGATREND DEFAMED BY MAINSTREAM MEDIA LIES," "TRUDEAU STILL IN HIDING, INVOKES RARELY USED EMERGENCY ACT"](#) and ["CANADIAN TRUCKERS PROTEST: A MEGATREND FOR FREEDOM."](#))

The protest has attracted international attention. Gerald Celente called the truck convoy the opening salvo in the West's freedom-from-vaccine movement.

He said the truckers cannot back down if they want to achieve their goals. He said they must tell the media that this is a PEACEFUL protest, and that any violence "will be that of the Trudeau Mob...agents provocateurs."

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

The Wall Street Journal's editorial board wrote:

"Protests aren't emergencies, and Western leaders had better get used to handling civil disobedience firmly without traducing civil liberties." The paper accused the younger Trudeau of deputizing financial institutions "without due process or liability."

Ryan Alford, a professor of law at Lakehead University in Ontario, wrote in *Newsweek* that Trudeau failed to prove that the trucker protest warranted the order. He wrote that the Canadian government claimed that the Freedom Convoy's activities are "directed toward or in support" of terrorism, which he said is bunk.

"It's an astonishing claim for those who have been following the protests both in Canada's capital and at border crossings closely," he wrote. "There is not a single violent incident that could possibly support a legally sufficient argument that the protests have been in support of or connected with terrorism."

The *Journal* reported that when police moved to break up the blockades at borders, the protesters dispersed peacefully, including one that ended with police and protesters shaking hands.

The paper pointed out that gas pipelines in Canada are commonly protested by green or aboriginal activists—including one on Thursday that included men wielding axes. But not a peep from Trudeau.

Dramatic footage emerged from the Ottawa protest that showed police officers using tear gas, stun grenades and mounted police on Saturday to clear the protesters.

There were more than 100 arrests on Friday and 47 more on Saturday. Police said some were sprayed with “a chemical irritant in an effort to stop the assaultive behavior and for officer safety.”

Video emerged on social media that purportedly showed officers holding a long-range acoustic device that can cause permanent hearing loss.

Reports online also said police began to target restaurants and cafes that served protesters.

Police in Ottawa’s downtown moved in on Sunday and broke up the last remaining protesters. Trudeau’s bullying gang had a message for the few remaining demonstrators: we’ll find you.

“If you are involved in this protest, we will actively look to identify you and follow up with financial sanctions and criminal charges,” Ottawa police tweeted Sunday, according to *The National Post*. The paper pointed out that Steve Bell, the interim police chief, said on Saturday that the investigation into the protest will last months.

“You have my commitment that that investigation will continue and we will hold people accountable for taking our streets over,” Bell said.

Rep. Yvette Herrell, R-N.M., said Saturday that she intends on introducing a bill that would grant temporary asylum to these protesters “just as we provide asylum for political prisoners.”

"We should do the same for truckers who have been subjected to violence, had their property confiscated, and their bank accounts frozen by a government that is quickly becoming the embarrassment of the free world," she announced on Twitter.

TREND UPDATE: Yesterday, Canada's lower house of parliament, by a 185-151 vote, approved extending Prime Minister Justin Trudeau Emergencies Act for a 30-day period.

Canada's left-leaning New Democratic Party gave strong support to extend the Act while the Conservative Party and Bloc Quebecois opposed, arguing that the emergency powers were a threat to civil liberties.

As we have noted, the imposition of the Emergency Act to stop future demonstrations is one of the most aggressive moves taken by Western governments to repel citizens who protest against being forced to be inoculated with the Operation Warp Speed jab and the strict mandates imposed upon them to fight the COVID War.

TRENDSPOST: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau received an open letter from clergy in the country admonishing the leader for missing an opportunity to speak with the truckers who "lawfully and peaceably" called on the restoration of their constitutional rights.

"However, in response to their singing, praying, dancing, candy floss, bouncy castles, speeches about the constitution and outpourings of patriotic love for the country, your government has not only refused to meet with these citizens to hear their concerns, you have insulted, denigrated and lied about them, further dividing a hurting and broken nation," the letter read.

The letter—which was signed by 29 clergymen—told Trudeau that the elected government "does not grant people the right to their bodily integrity, the right to work or earn a living, the right to decide for their children or to be with their families or dying loved ones, the right to gather to worship and obey God, the right to travel in their own land or enter and leave. Civil government exists to

protect these pre-political and fundamental freedoms, not bestow and remove them as if it can function in the place of God.”

They called his decision to invoke the act “tyrannical” and said they are “deeply concerned that you do not appreciate the significance of God’s wrath upon a rebellious and lawless nation.”

Trudeau, a member of the Liberal Party, has been fixated on tying the protesters to right-wing groups. He joined the Canadian House of Commons on Wednesday and an exchange got testy when he accused the Conservative Party of standing with “people who wave swastikas.”

Melissa Lantsman, who became the first Jewish woman to be elected as a Conservative in parliament last year, read Trudeau’s characterization of the Freedom Convoy as “very often misogynistic, racist, women-haters, science-deniers, the fringe.”

She asked, “When did the prime minister lose his way?”

Trudeau fired back:

"Conservative Party members can stand with people who wave swastikas, they can stand with people who wave the Confederate flag. We will choose to stand with Canadians who deserve to be able to get to their jobs, to be able to get their lives back. These illegal protests need to stop, and they will."

Dane Lloyd, a Conservative MP, said:

"Mr. Speaker, I've never seen such shameful and dishonorable remarks coming from this prime minister. My great-grandfather flew over 30 missions over Nazi Germany. My great-great-uncle's body lies at the bottom of the English Channel. There are members of this Conservative caucus who are the descendants of victims of the Holocaust. For the prime minister to accuse any colleague in this House of standing with a swastika

is shameful. I'm giving the prime minister an opportunity. I'm calling on him to unreservedly apologize for this shameful remark."

Trudeau was given three chances to apologize. He did not.

AUSTRALIA OPENS TO SOME TOURISTS AFTER 2-YEAR COVID WAR FREEZE



Australia's Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced last month that the country will be open to fully vaccinated tourists after two years of closed borders due to Canberra's "Fortress Australia" policy to keep COVID-19 at bay.

The *Financial Times* reported that the country is expecting a "full return" of tourism. Andrew David, the CEO at Qantas, said flight bookings doubled the day after Morrison made the announcement.

Up until the COVID-19 outbreak, Australia served as the destination for 9.3 million visitors who spent \$32 billion from 2018-2019, Al Jazeera reported.

The report said from March 2020 to March 2021 the number of tourists dropped to almost zero, which resulted in travel-industry losses of nearly \$30 billion. The report pointed out that China is Australia's biggest tourism market and that country remained closed off under its "zero COVID" policy.

"China's probably not going to get their residents out in a hurry," Jason Cronshaw, an operator of Blue Mountains Explorer Bus in regional New South Wales, told the outlet.

Morrison said 1.2 million people have obtained visas to enter the country and 56 international flights were expected to land on the first day, The Associated Press reported.

Australia has enforced some of the world's strictest COVID restrictions. (See ["AUSTRALIA: DOUBLE WHAMMY."](#) ["AUSTRALIA: NO JAB, NO JOB."](#) and ["AUSTRALIA: FOLKS FIGHTING AGAINST COVID WAR."](#))

Craig Wachholz, the operator of a surf school on Sydney's Bondi beach, told the *FT* that tourists made up a large portion of his 27-year-old business. His company had a banner year prior to the COVID-19 outbreak and he said beaches were closed and business "fell off a cliff."

TREND FORECAST: *We had forecast the COVID War begins to wind-down late March, mid-April. Yesterday, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson unveiled his "living with COVID" plan that ends all COVID restrictions on Thursday and free mass testing will stop from 1 April.*

There will be a sharp boost in global tourism and a spike in the hospitality, entertainment and restaurant sectors as the COVID War ends. It should also be noted that the looser the vaccine passport requirements, the higher the number of tourists.

TRENDS IN GEOPOLITICS



ISRAEL KEEPS LAUNCHING MISSILES INTO SYRIA. WILL WAR ESCALATE?

Israel launched missiles into Syria last Wednesday, targeting what was believed to be a Syrian Army base just south of Damascus.

Al Jazeera, citing Syria's SANA news agency, reported that the surface-to-surface missiles caused material damage to buildings in Zakiya, a town south of the capital city.

The report said the missiles did not trigger Syria's missile defenses—and were the second such strike in a month. SANA reported that the missiles were fired from the Israeli-annexed Golan Heights. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

“The shelling targeted a regime military post,” Rami Abdel Rahman, the head of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, told the AFP.

Critics of Israel took to social media to accuse Tel Aviv of firing the missiles while the focus of the world is on Ukraine. Sarah Abdallah, a Lebanese geopolitical

commentator, took to Twitter to post, “While all eyes are on Ukraine, Israel just bombed Syria’s Damascus, terrorizing Syrians in the middle of the night.”

(See [“ISRAEL CONDUCTS SERIES OF DEADLY AIRSTRIKES IN SYRIA.”](#) [“TERROR STRIKES SYRIA: ALL OUT WAR COMING?”](#) and [“ISRAEL KEEPS BOMBING SYRIA.”](#))

Israel sees proxy forces in Syria as an existential threat because it is widely seen that Israel cannot fight a war on multiple fronts. Israel has admitted to launching hundreds of airstrikes into Syria that target Iranian troops, military targets and allied groups such as Hezbollah who, along with Russia, are supporting the government of Bashar al-Assad.

The military base that was targeted was believed to be used by pro-Iranian militias, *The Times of Israel* reported.

The decision to use surface-to-surface may have stemmed from a recent meeting between Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The paper reported that Israel agreed to “rely less on airstrikes” because Russia provided al-Assad with the anti-missile batteries, which have been easily defeated by Israeli rockets. The agreement was reportedly put in place so Russia is not embarrassed.

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

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

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

LANDMINE MURDERS IN IRAQ = WASHINGTON'S LOVE OF WAR, EXPERTS SAY



Remember the Iraq War, launched by George W. Bush and his criminal gang who sold Americans the lie that the nation was in danger of a devastating military attack from Iraq because its leader, Saddam Hussein, had weapons of mass destruction?

Do you remember the hundreds of thousands of innocent people the U.S. military and its mercenaries killed in Iraq, how they destroyed the nation and how it cost the American taxpayers over \$2 trillion?

Do you remember when George, “Daddy’s Boy” Bush landed on USS Abraham Lincoln on 1 May 2003, to blurt out his “Mission Accomplished,” bullshit speech that the U.S. won the Iraq War?

Nineteen years later, the U.S.’s military engagements in the Middle East continue to plague the region with millions of landmines buried in neighborhoods throughout Iraq that threaten any Iraqi looking to return home.

The fear of stepping on a landmine in Iraq is so widespread, that many internally displaced individuals opt to stay inside camps than return to their home village.

Leyla Murad, a 22-year-old Iraqi woman living inside a camp in the northwest part of the country, told German outlet DW that she has heard dozens of stories of “adults, children, and animals shredded into pieces by mines.”

The report said these mines are buried in farms, on the side of roads, and in fields. The UN estimates that there are about 25 million landmines and other explosives in the country that need to be removed. These landmines in countries like Syria and Afghanistan have been blamed for up to 48,000 deaths, *The Global Times* reported, citing Airwars, the British investigative organization.

The U.S.'s foreign policy has been blamed for its role in destabilizing these countries. *The Global Times*, which is an arm of the Chinese Communist Party, recalled Wikileaks founder Julian Assange, who said in 2011, the U.S.'s goal in Afghanistan is to use the country "to wash money out of the tax bases of the U.S. and Europe and back into the hands of a transnational security elite. The goal is an endless war not a successful war."

(See ["WAR CRIME GANG GETS RICHER."](#) ["AMERICA: MILITARY SPENDING HEADED TO RECORD LEVELS"](#) and ["MILITARY SPENDING INCREASES AS ECONOMIES DECLINE."](#))

Li Haidong, a professor at the Institute of International Relations of China Foreign Affairs University, told the paper that the U.S. "executes its foreign strategy" by producing wars in order to achieve its global hegemony.

"The U.S. military-industrial complexes formed a huge special interest group by acquiring weapons contracts to gain great wealth in the war, which has formed a vicious circle of war, hijacking domestic economic growth and is an important reason why the US is mired in war and cannot extricate itself from it."

TRENDPOST: *In February 2003, one month before the much heralded invasion of Iraq, Celente predicted in a Trend Alert to subscribers: "While victory on the battlefield may be swift, considering the massive military power of the US, the war against Iraq will eventually be lost... They will not let the US, or any western sympathizer, run their country. So, while it may appear that victory is at hand, the battle will have just begun and the war won't stop at the Iraqi borders."*

*A year later (May 2004), in a special edition of the **Trends Journal** dedicated to Iraq, Celente observed that, "Iraq never was, and most likely never will be, a*

Western model democracy." He called out every pertinent lie, deception and misrepresentation of fact that political leaders delivered, and too many in the media bought into, that twisted the real facts behind the roots of turmoil in Iraq into a fantasy that, he predicted, would make "terrorism" the new "Communism."

For his prescience, Celente became persona non grata for the mainstream media, no longer welcome on TV programs where he had long been a regular. "The press was complicit with government aims," says Celente. "They were getting pressure from the top, from their corporate owners, and they folded."

A study by FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting) bears Celente out. The study found that in the three weeks after the start of the invasion, the ratio of pro-war US TV guests to anti-war guests was 25 to 1 and that 68 percent of the pro-war guests were current or former government officials.

U.S. FADING FAST: SOUTHEAST ASIANS SEE CHINA AS #1



A recent study found that over three-quarters of Southeast Asians believe China is the most important economic power—with the U.S. coming in at a distant second.

The ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute survey, released on Wednesday, showed that many of those polled expressed concerns about China's growing economic influence. The survey found that 64.4 percent feared Beijing's growing influence, while 35.6 percent saw the growth as a good thing.

We reported that while America spent countless trillions waging and losing endless wars and enriching its military-industrial complex, China has spent its trillions advancing the nation's businesses and building its 21st-century infrastructure.

And while America and Europe have outsourced their manufacturing to China and developing nations to increase profit margins, China's dual circulation/self-sustaining economic model is directed toward keeping jobs and trade and profits within the nation, thus relying less on global trade.

TRENDPOST: The ***Trends Journal*** has reported extensively on China and its economic growth. (See ["TOP TRENDS 2021: THE RISE OF CHINA."](#)) As we have often noted, the 20th century was the American century, the 21st century will be the Chinese century. The business of America is war, the business of China is business.

LATEST DURHAM FILING STIRS ANTI-RUSSIA SENTIMENT IN U.S.



Special Prosecutor John Durham's recent filing in his case against the Hillary Clinton campaign lawyer who is accused of lying to the F.B.I. served little else except reminding Americans that Russia is not to be trusted.

Durham, who has been tasked by former Attorney General William Barr with investigating Russia's alleged interference in the 2016 election, issued a recent motion that conservative media incorrectly seized on as evidence that Hillary Clinton's campaign staffers infiltrated servers inside the White House to spy on former President Trump.

Michael Sussmann, a former lawyer for the Clinton campaign who has been indicted for allegedly lying to the F.B.I. in 2016, was at the center of the new filing. His lawyers came out swinging against organizations like Fox News that treated the filing as though it was a blockbuster revelation and the latest example of Clinton's corruption.

But Sussmann's lawyers brushed off the filing as a nothing burger. Clinton, who gave a speech, hinted that she could end up suing Fox News after saying it

seemed the network was approaching “actual malice” in its reporting. (Notice how the network has become silent on the matter.)

The Wall Street Journal reported that Durham’s three-year probe has only yielded three cases.

Russia's alleged ties to the Trump campaign has been a source of suspicion and innuendo in the American media. The theory is that a “wide-ranging group of Russians” hacked the Clinton’s campaign, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, and the Democratic National Committee in order to dig up dirt and get their boy, Donald Trump, elected.

The group is also accused of spreading propaganda on social media.

The U.S. does not allow anyone to question these allegations. In 2018, then-President Trump took heat for committing the mortal sin of questioning U.S. intelligence.

After meeting with Putin in Helsinki, Trump said he had “great confidence” in U.S. intelligence, but said Putin was “extremely strong and powerful in his denial today.”

“Dan Coats [director of national intelligence] came to me and some others, they said they think it’s Russia,” Trump said. “I have President Putin. He just said it’s not Russia. I will say this: I don’t see any reason why it would be.”

NPR pointed out at the time that Trump’s refusal to accept the intelligence assessment was met with vitriol on Capitol Hill. The late-Sen. John McCain, called Trump’s “performance” one of the most disgraceful by a president in recent memory.

"The damage inflicted by President Trump's naiveté, egotism, false equivalence and sympathy for autocrats is difficult to calculate. But it is clear that the summit in Helsinki was a tragic mistake," McCain said.

The Durham filing against Sussmann was vague but asked the court to study potential conflicts of interest for the law firm defending Sussmann.

Reports said a tech executive tied to Sussmann had a “sensitive arrangement” and access to servers in the White House. Sussmann met with the C.I.A. and raised concerns that he learned about data that showed YotaPhones, which are made in Russia, in proximity to Trump and the White House, the *NYT* reported.

But the report pointed out that the filing did not mention when the data was collected, or even if Trump was even in the White House at the time.

TRENDPOST: *Beyond Russiagate, we note this article to illustrate the anti-Russia campaign that has been going on since the end of World War II. And, how Russia, America’s ally back then, were Cold War enemies while its WWII deadly enemies, Japan and Germany, are now close allies.*

TRENDPOST: *On 24 September 2019, when it was announced House Speaker Nancy Pelosi initiated the impeachment process against President Donald Trump, Gerald Celente was asked by Daniela Cambone, Editor-in-Chief of Kitco News, how it would unfold.*

Celente said impeachment “could possibly happen, but it won’t mean anything because if they impeach Trump then it has to go to the Senate for conviction. It needs a two-thirds Senate vote, and the Senate is controlled by the Republicans, so it’s not going to happen. It’s going to be more of a waste of time, and it’s more of ‘Russiagate’.”

And that’s precisely what happened.

Throughout the tax-payer costly, time-wasted impeachment process, the Democrats kept pumping the propaganda that the Russians were responsible for Hillary Clinton losing the race to the White House because of the Russians and Donald Trump’s ties to Russian President Putin... and because Russia hacked into the Democratic National Committee computers.

Celente called it propaganda because not one shred of evidence was provided to support the Democrats accusations.

Most Americans buy the “hate Russia” propaganda, just as Washington has been brainwashing the public to hate the Iranians.

FRANCE, ALLIED COUNTRIES ANNOUNCE WITHDRAWAL OF TROOPS FROM MALI



France announced Thursday that it will begin to withdraw forces from Mali after a nearly 10-year anti-terror campaign in the country.

Paris has been locking horns with the military junta that took over Bamako in 2020. France said most of its forces will be sent to Niger, Mali's neighbor to the east. Paris said these soldiers will continue to fight terrorists in the Sahel region.

France's departure comes amid a diplomatic rift between the junta and Western countries in general.

Tension also broke out between the junta and Denmark, which resulted in Copenhagen announcing that it planned to pull its forces from the country. (See [“MALI JUNTA: DENMARK GO HOME.”](#))

Copenhagen sent 105 military personnel to Bamako to join the counter-terrorism force in the Sahel called Takuba Task Force. The task force was organized in March 2020 as a counter-terrorism operation.

European Union countries have expressed publicly their dismay over the fact that there have been no countrywide elections since the coup.

Al Jazeera reported that back in 2013, French troops were embraced as liberators that protected Bamako from armed groups advancing on the capital.

The report said the feelings have changed in the country and the blue, white, and red French flag is now seen as a “neocolonial symbol” and French flags are being burned during anti-France protests in the former French colony. The troops are now accused of “splitting the country and training militias.”

The French troops were in the region to ostensibly fight against Islamic terrorism. But the diplomatic tension between the West and the junta has led the junta to turn to Russia. The Malian government hired a Russian private security firm to counter the threat of terrorism.

“We cannot remain militarily engaged alongside de facto authorities whose strategy and hidden aims we do not share,” French President Emmanuel Macron said. About 5,000 French troops are believed to be in the region and the withdrawal is expected to last about six months. “The fight against terrorism can't justify everything,” Macron said.

The European and Canadian governments involved in the Operation Barkhane and Takuba Task Force wrote in a joint press release that “the political, operational and legal conditions are no longer met to effectively continue their current military engagement in the fight against terrorism in Mali.”

Some Malians believe that the French troops stationed in the country are training insurgents in order to justify their own presence in order to eventually “expropriate Mali’s natural resources,” Michael Shurkin, the director of Global Programs at 14 North Strategies, wrote in *The Hill*.

Mali's junta asked France to withdraw troops from its territory “without delay,” according to Reuters.

TREND FORECAST: As we reported when the United States and France led the overthrow of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, the situation in Mali and the region has significantly worsened as a result of the U.S.-led destruction of

the nation. (See [“MALI: FRANCE WANTS ITS COLONY BACK.”](#) [“FRENCH AIR STRIKE IN MALI: MASS MURDER OF INNOCENTS”](#) and [“CHAD: MORE AFRICAN WAR DRUMS BEATING.”](#))

We have pointed out in previous issues that France has held a colonial-power relationship with Mali for 50 years in order to exploit its resources, particularly uranium.

This includes propping up government leaders who support the exploitation while opposing protesters in mining areas who are angered over environmental degradation and the outflow of resources to France. Paris has announced that it will also begin drawing down forces from Mali.

As economic conditions continue to deteriorate across the continent, civil wars will spread to regional war and the colonial powers of the past will again intervene in the name of bringing “Freedom and Democracy” to the war ravaged nations.

Also, as civil unrest escalates, so too will the migrant crisis as more people flee poverty, government corruption, crime and violence in their war ravaged nations. This in turn will intensify anti-immigration populist movements in safe-haven nations they are escaping to.

In the past 18 months, the African continent has experienced six coups in five countries, including Mali, Chad, Guinea, Sudan, and Burkina Faso.

TRENDS-EYE VIEW



WASHINGTON: ONLY BELIEVE U.S. WARMONGERING. SAYS ZERO HEDGE PEDDLES RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA

The U.S. government continues to attack media companies and journalists that report on any narrative that is contrary to the war talk they are selling.

Washington has taken a shot at the Zero Hedge website for printing information from Russian sources regarding the Ukrainian conflict that is contrary to the line President Biden, his spokespeople and the mainstream media are peddling.

History is Repeating Itself

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

There is no clearer example than the grand media platform extended to John McCain and other war-hawks during the lead-up to the Iraq War, while others who saw through the war criminal George W. Bush's Washington lies, that

Saddam Hussein had WMDs and ties to Al Qaeda, or even questioned those lies, were blackballed.

We and many others knew the Iraq War was based on false pretense and mass media propaganda, such as those promoted by "The Paper of Record," *The New York Times*: "U.S. Says Hussein Intensifies Quest for A-Bomb Parts;" "An Iraqi Defector Tells of Work on at Least 20 Hidden Weapon Sites;" "Defectors Bolster U.S. Case Against Iraq, Officials Say."

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

The Associated Press was first to report that U.S. intelligence officials claimed Zero Hedge published and promoted articles that were created by media entities controlled by Moscow—unaware of their ties to Russian intelligence.

Fast Forward

Zero Hedge has denied the allegations in the AP report and said it publishes a "wide spectrum of views that cover both sides of a given story." The website—which was founded by Daniel Ivandjiski, rose in prominence after the 2008 financial crisis. It has been accused in the past of publishing controversial stories and its Twitter account has been permanently banned.

On 9 March 2020, *The New Republic* published an article titled, "IS ZERO HEDGE A RUSSIAN TROJAN HORSE?" that pointed to a 2018 RAND Institute study that said the website's commentary "frequently echo the Kremlin line."

Part of the report said the website took a "particular interest" in the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, which was allegedly shot down by Russian separatists in the region—killing 298. The website "published a story claiming,

without evidence, that the U.S. was using the MH17 crash as a pretext for a NATO invasion of eastern Ukraine.”

The AP report said Zero Hedge has been critical of President Joe Biden and allegations against his son Hunter. The report also said articles for the website have been penned by people with ties to the Strategic Culture Foundation, which has been sanctioned by the Biden administration over allegations of election interference in 2020.

“The bottom line is that such hit piece accusations that we somehow work with or for the Kremlin are nothing new: we have repeatedly faced similar allegations over the years, and we can absolutely confirm that all of them are ‘errors,’” Zero Hedge said.

TRENDSPOST: *The messaging war between the U.S. and Russia has hit a fever pitch with both countries looking to sell the better narrative to sway international opinion of the crisis in Ukraine.*

Beyond the series of deadly wars the U.S. has launched since the end of World War II, we've seen the tactic the government used during the COVID War—when anyone who questioned Washington's narrative was quickly tarred, feathered, and removed from the public eye.

This is nothing more than another attempt by the government to silence any voice it cannot control, and how better to raise these suspicions than with two unnamed "intelligence officials."

The reports tying Zero Hedge to these Russian organizations raise some concern that the website is not as transparent enough with its readers, but to write off any opposite view as Russian disinformation is dangerous for the public discourse. A vibrant, independent media is important for democracy; otherwise, you're forced to march with the corporate media groupthink.

TRENDPOST: *As we have reported, when Washington ramps up the war talk, the media marches off to their orders. We had noted, for example, that in the*

lead-up to the Iraq War, those who questioned it were minimized and demonized, and is well documented in the book, "What Happened," by Scott McClellan, George W. Bush's former press secretary during the run-up to the Iraq War.

*"We overplayed and overstated the case for war," admitted McClellan, as we detailed in our June, 2008 **Trends Journal**, special edition, "TRENDS AND TRAGEDIES."*

"I was part of this propaganda campaign, absolutely," he wrote saying he was a member of the "culture of deception," and that "the media would serve as complicit enablers."

And enable they did. McClellan's book details how major media "stars" such as CBS's Katie Couric admitted, "There was a sense, a pressure from the corporations who own where we work, and from government itself, to really squash any kind of dissent."

Yes, they "own where we work" and they own who they are, too. Male, female, race, creed, color... Couric, like all the rest, are not "journalists" but merely Prostitutes who put out for their corporate pimps "who own where we work."

The media propaganda mill keeps spinning out its lies, and the vast majority of the public buy into those lies, obediently repeating what they have been told and "patriotically" giving up their lives and money in the march toward the next illegal and immoral war.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: *Please do your share to support and promote media sources, such as the **Trends Journal**, that provide you with factual data and analyses so you can "Think for Yourself." You may also consider contributing to Gerald Celente's Occupy Peace movement. www.OccupyPeace.com*

GLOBAL FREEDOMS FALL TO RECORD LOWS AMID COVID-19 WAR



Freedom is dead and dying. The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index released its global freedoms index last week and found that democracies across the globe have hit "dismal" new lows in large part because of the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent

lockdown orders imposed.

The COVID restrictions, which have been in place for over two years, have “led to the normalization of emergency powers, which have tended to stay on the statute books, and accustom citizens to a huge extension of state power over large areas of public and personal life,” the report said.

The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the oppressive lockdowns that have not only proven to be ineffective but also damaging to the public's health and economy. (See [“COVID-19 LOCKDOWNS: COMPLETE POLICY FAILURES.”](#) [“LOCKDOWNS CREATE CHILD SUICIDE EPIDEMIC”](#) and [“W.H.O NOW SAYS ‘WE DO NOT ADVOCATE LOCKDOWNS.’”](#))

Earlier this month, in an article titled, [“LOCKDOWN LIES IGNORED BY PRESSTITUTES. DISMISSED BY D.C.”](#) we reported that it has been almost totally ignored by the mainstream media that economists at Johns Hopkins University researched used meta-analysis of multiple studies and said they found that the lockdowns during the first COVID-19 wave in the U.S. and Europe only reduced mortality by 0.2 percent.

We reported:

Constitutional Rights in nations that front as democracies were shredded by political boys and girls that took complete control of their nations, states

and cities... imposing draconian COVID War mandates, lacking a scintilla of science, to kill the coronavirus.

Rather than killing the virus, after destroying the lives and livelihoods of billions for two years (as we had forecast they would), the same sociopaths, psychopaths and pathological liars that started the COVID War, are, (as we had also forecast) beginning to wind it down.

The **Trends Journal** has reported since the start of the outbreak that lockdowns were not based on science and did more harm than good.

See:

- [“EUROPE: MORE LOCKDOWNS, PROTEST, ECONOMIC HARDSHIP”](#)
- [“LOCKDOWN PROTEST RAGING. NEW LOCKDOWN ORDERS”](#)
- [“COVID-19: THE VIRUS OF GOVERNMENT SUPPRESSION”](#)
- [“QUEENSLAND: 13 NEW COVID CASES, LOCKDOWN 5.1 MILLION”](#)
- [“NEW STUDY: LOCKDOWN LUNACY”](#)

The report blamed an “unprecedented withdrawal of civil liberties among developed democracies and authoritarian regimes alike” for the fall to 5.28 out of 10. The score marks the lowest score recorded since the survey started in 2006. (The global state of democracy came in at 5.37 in 2020.)

The EIU surveyed 167 states and territories and found that 21 were considered full democracies and 53 were seen as “flawed democracies.”

The index used 60 indicators grouped in five different categories to make its determination. The categories include electoral process and pluralism, the functioning of government, political participation, democratic political culture, and civil liberties.

About 6.4 percent of the world’s population lives in what the report identified as a “full democracy.”

VOA News reported that the U.S. fell one spot—to 26—in the ranking and was rated as a “flawed democracy.” The report also pointed out that Afghanistan,

Myanmar, and North Korea are the countries with the most restrictions. Norway, Finland, Sweden, Iceland, and New Zealand were the top five countries.

The report said the virus outbreak has “opened the door for governments to exploit the health crisis to suppress political participation.”

We’ve seen countries suspend elections and the devastating Tigrayan war in Ethiopia was started because Tigray held an election during the outbreak.

TRENDPOST: *Gerald Celente said that the COVID war will end in late March to mid-April because the global economy cannot bear its weight anymore... and upcoming political elections.*

The financial burden on the middle class and poor has become too extreme while the super-rich saw their wealth exceed their wildest dreams. (See [“COVID WAR: RICH GOT RICHER, POOR GOT POORER,”](#) [“SPOTLIGHT: BIGS GET BIGGER, RICH GET RICHER”](#) and [“AMERICANS PUMPS UP THE RICH, CHINA PUSHING THEM DOWN.”](#))

FDA & BIG PHARMA: REVOLVING DOOR KEEPS SPINNING



Dr. Robert Califf, the 70-year-old cardiologist, was confirmed by the U.S. Senate last week to lead the Food and Drug Administration despite bipartisan concerns about his close ties to drug companies.

Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., voiced his opposition to Califf’s nomination because he owns millions in pharmaceutical stock and is a senior advisor at Google Health and Verily.

CNBC reported that Califf, last year, pulled in \$2.7 million from Google and \$5 million in Verily, the life science arm of Alphabet. He also serves on the board of Centessa Pharmaceuticals and Cytokinetics, the biopharmaceutical company. (See [“FDA AND BIG PHARMA: ONE BIG CLUB.”](#))

The report said he has up to \$5 million in unvested stock options at Contessa and owns stock in Amgen, Gilead, and Bristol-Myers Squibb. He agreed to resign from his board jobs and divest his stock holdings within 90 days of taking the role.

The Senate passed his nomination with a 50-46 vote. He is expected to be sworn in sometime this week.

Dr. Scott Gottlieb, who was once commissioner of the FDA and now sits on Pfizer’s board of directors, praised the selection of Califf to lead the agency.

He joined five other former commissioners in a statement that read, “Confirming Dr. Califf is critical not only for moving beyond the Covid-19 emergency, but also to help meet FDA’s many other major regulatory responsibilities where Senate confirmed leadership is essential for the nation’s wellbeing.”

Califf already has a docket of major items to consider ranging from COVID-19 vaccines for children under 5 and a review of e-cigarette applications.

The Biden administration was reportedly considering keeping the acting head of the agency, Dr. Janet Woodcock, in place. But she was seen as damaged due to her time as the head of the FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research in the 1990s, when opioids were approved.

Sen. Joe Manchin, D-WVa., urged President Biden to withdraw Califf's own nomination in an op-ed published in *USA Today*. He pointed to Califf's “significant ties” to the pharmaceutical industry and pointed to how drug-related overdoses surged in the U.S. during his previous tenure as head of the agency.

“In 2016, then-Commissioner Califf announced the FDA's plan to overhaul its opioid policies. But between 2016 and 2017, the FDA approved five new opioids and only removed a single opioid from the market.

Dr. Califf also commissioned a report on opioids, but the report failed to review the flawed enriched enrollment randomized withdrawal (EERW) methodology used to approve new opioids,” he wrote. (See [“BIDEN PRESIDENCY=OBAMA 2021.”](#))

On 23 November 2021, the **Trends Journal** reported that Califf is no stranger to controversy. He was one of seven different FDA commissioners since 2015.

He’s from Duke University, where he ran a research center funded by the drug industry, which could indicate that he is a member of the drug lords mobs while acting as a consultant to Merck, Amgen, Biogen, Genentech, Eli Lilly, and Boehringer Ingelheim. (See [“NEW FDA HEAD STUCK IN REVOLVING DOOR.”](#))

Manchin gave an impassioned speech in the Senate and said he has “never been more profoundly confident of a vote.”

“We need people who want to protect us, not people who allow drugs to destroy us,” he said.

Sen. Edward Markey, another Democrat, also accused the agency of becoming the “country’s biggest pill pusher.”

At the time of his previous tenure as head of the agency—during the Obama administration—he called for all data that is submitted to the FDA during the drug development process to be made public, StatNews reported.

“Making nonclinical and clinical data submitted to the FDA as part of the drug development process publicly available in a way that protects identity and trade secrets is the big idea that will accelerate the development of treatments for Covid-19 and many other diseases that continue to ail the global population,”

Elizabeth Baker, the regulatory policy director at the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, wrote in the online magazine.

TRENDPOST: *As the late-great comedian George Carlin noted, “It’s one big club and you ain’t in it.”*

The FDA claims collaboration with the drug industry is necessary and helpful. But the critics believe that such closeness constitutes a breach of an ethical barrier between the regulators and those they are supposed to regulate.

Need proof? As we had noted in the above article, the former commissioner, Scott Gottlieb is now on the board of directors of Pfizer, the Big Pharma drug dealer that made nearly \$1 billion in vaccine profits in the first quarter of this year.

AMAZON UNIONIZATION: 2022 TOP TREND ON THE RISE



Workers at an Amazon warehouse on Staten Island, New York—about 5,000 in all—will hold a vote at the end of next month on whether they should form a union.

The Wall Street Journal reported that the workers pushing for the union at the JFK8 facility face an “uphill climb.” Firstly, no Amazon location has ever successfully voted in favor of unions and this facility—like many—has a high turnover rate. The work-life of many of these employees involves the preparation of hundreds of packages an hour, and burnout is common.

The **Trends Journal** has been reporting extensively on the push for unionizations among workers who are stuck in menial, low-paid jobs with no room for career growth, while the companies they work for pull in record profits. (See [“STARBUCKS STORE TO UNIONIZE, A TOP TREND FOR](#)

[2022?”](#) [“ACTIVISION STUDIO GROUP WILL FORM A UNION. SOLIDIFYING TRENDS JOURNAL FORECAST.”](#) [“POLITICO JOURNALISTS FORM UNION. A TREND OF THE TIMES”](#) and [“REI: UNIONIZATION TREND EXPANDS AS FORECAST.”](#))

We reported in our 8 February issue, in an article titled, [“UNIONIZATION ON-TREND: AMAZON WORKERS VOTE TO UNIONIZE”](#) that Amazon has been accused of going “all out” to kill unionization bids in their crib.

The company told the *Journal* that it agreed to the vote because “we want our employees to have their voices heard as soon as possible.” Amazon said it is skeptical if the workers there have enough votes.

Unions need support from at least 30 percent of eligible workers in order to hold an official election under the supervision of the U.S. National Labor Relations Board, according to the agency's policies.

The workers want the Seattle-based company to change its break policies and performance goals. The vote will be held in a tent outside the facility for five days to prevent company interference.

“We got five weeks to make history,” Chris Smalls, a former Amazon employee and president of the group seeking unionization called Amazon Labor Union.

The Gothamist reported that despite Amazon's statement about its desire to have its workers' voices heard, staffers at the facility have already received text messages urging a “NO” vote. Smalls reposted the message that read, “We encourage every eligible associate at JFK8 to vote in the election, make your voice heard, and vote NO.”

Smalls wrote, “They ain’t wasting no time.”

TREND FORECAST: *Unionization will continue to be a Top Trend; the more limited the supply of workers (made worse by "No Jab, No Job" mandates; (see [“WANT TO KEEP YOUR JOB? GET THE JAB!”](#) and [“NO JAB,](#)*

[NO JOB. VACCINE MANDATES ‘WORKING’](#)”), the more powerful the trend toward unionization will be.

And, as inflation continues to rise faster than wages, corporations that wish to incentivize their workforce to do and give the best they can, will raise the pay scale to levels higher than inflation rates. In doing so, they will create atmospheres of mutual appreciation.

TREND FORECAST: Among the reasons there is a shortage of workers is that they no longer want to work for poverty level wages, and after being locked down and having the time to reflect on their lives, many assessed the worthlessness of their jobs in their personal development.

As Gerald Celente has long said, “When people lose everything and have nothing left to lose, they lose it.” Therefore, as socioeconomic conditions continue to deteriorate, “NEW WORLD DISORDER,” one of our 2020 Top Trends, will escalate as billions take to the streets, demonstrating against the lack of basic living standards, crime, violence, and government corruption.

And now, after it was disrupted when the COVID War began in 2020 and governments forbade people from protesting, the demonstrators are now back on the streets.

As inflation skyrockets and wages decline, this past Friday, mass demonstration took place in San Juan, Puerto Rico’s capital city as teachers and government workers peacefully marched, calling on the government to raise their wages and pensions as inflation eats away at their income.

Indeed, according to the island’s Institute of Statistics, power and water bills are nearly 60 percent higher in Puerto Rico than the U.S. average. Groceries are 18 percent more expensive than on the mainland. They are also protesting the privatization of schools and government services.

What is now going on in Puerto Rico, will spread globally as Dragflation—economic decline, rising inflation—spikes across the globe.

CNN CLOWN SHOW EXPOSES MEDIA'S POLITICAL TIES



Put aside for a moment that CNN's former anchor, Chris Cuomo, used to interview his brother, ex-New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, on his primetime show at the height of the COVID-19 War.

And forget how the media and Hollywood adored the former governor—who was forced to resign due to sexual harassment allegations—by awarding him an International Emmy for his “Masterful” COVID-19 briefings.

The public demise of Jeff Zucker, the former CNN president, has, once again, showcased how mainstream media companies and the people they claim to cover often have close, personal relationships and work with each other to decide the best approach to deliver the "news" to the public.

These are the conversations that occur far behind the scenes and not just between two Cuomo brothers yucking it up on television.

There is no clear line between corporate media and government.

Allison Gollust, the former CNN executive who came undone after it emerged that she had a secret affair with Zucker, once worked for Gov. Cuomo's communications team as the director.

Gollust has been accused of letting the former governor approve questions prior to interviews on the network. *The New York Post* reported that Gollust would even coach the former governor on how to respond to questions about the COVID outbreak.

Gollust has defended herself against these claims and said, through a spokeswoman, that she did not direct these interviews or limit the subject matter.

The **Trends Journal** has reported on Cuomo's disastrous job as governor during the virus's outbreak, all while the news media embraced him as though he was destined for the White House. (See ["CUOMO COVID COVER-UP CONTINUES,"](#) ["CUOMO'S BOOK A BUST, BUT GOT PAID MILLIONS"](#) and ["KILLER CUOMO: MISREPRESENTED COVID NURSING HOME DEATHS."](#))

The New York Times reported on the ties between Gollust and Gov. Cuomo, writing that "the episode is the latest example of how closely entwined CNN's leadership was with one of the country's most prominent Democratic politicians."

Of course, the close relationship between a network and its sources is not isolated to CNN. Fox News hosts Sean Hannity and Laura Ingraham were caught appealing to former President Donald Trump to come out against the capitol rioters during the 6 January attack in D.C.

"Can he make a statement? Ask people to leave the Capitol," Hannity wrote to Mark Meadows, Trump's former chief of staff. "Ask people to peacefully leave the Capitol."

But while Hannity was on the airwaves, he framed his concerns around the possible infiltration of "radical groups" like Antifa during the otherwise peaceful protest.

NPR ran an article titled, "THE TEXTS FOX HOSTS SENT DURING JAN. 6 RIOT DON'T MATCH HOW FOX COVERED IT ON AIR."

Ingraham must have received the same memo that Hannity read because she, too, reported that Antifa may have infiltrated the rally. (See ["CNN: THE VOICE OF HYPOCRISY."](#))

Christy Haubegger, WarnerMedia's top communications official, reportedly told staffers to focus on the network's journalism in an effort to shift the public's attention from the problems within CNN.

She saw the network's coverage of Ukraine as a way out, which is another example of a mainstream media company selecting news items that benefit their bottom lines. So Haubegger admitted that war in Ukraine will get viewers and clicks, who cares about the human toll?

We reported on 9 March 2021, in an article titled, ["CNN AGAIN ADMITS SELLING COVID-19 BOOSTS RATINGS."](#)

Jason Kilar, the CEO of WarnerMedia, CNN's parent company, was asked early last year about how the network would be able to keep its high ratings, and he essentially said the network will keep selling COVID Fear and Hysteria.

Kilar commented:

"It turns out that pandemic is a pretty big part of the news cycle, and that's not going away anytime soon... If you take a look at the ratings and the performance, it's going well. And I think it's going well because... as it turns out that the pandemic and the way that we can help inform and contextualize the pandemic, turns out it's really good for ratings."

TRENDPOST: *Journalism is dead in America and much of the world. We have been reporting that for years. See: ["The Fourth Estate: RIP."](#) (1 Dec 2016) and ["POLITICO'S NOT JOURNALISM, IT'S A PRESSTITUTE PUBLICATION"](#) (19 Oct 2021).*

*As we reported in our **Trends in the News** broadcast, on 10 February 2021, the Financial Times headline read: "Fox News plans to maintain centre-right slant."*

The article went on to quote Fox Corporation CEO Lachlan Murdoch, who made it 100 percent clear it is not true journalism that drives Fox News, it is the bottom line.

FT quoted Murdoch, who stated last year that “We will stick where we are and we think that is exactly right and is the best thing for business. We believe where we are targeted, to the centre-right, is exactly where we should be targeted.”

There it is: “the best thing for business” is their being “targeted, to the centre-right.”

*Unlike the **Trends Journal**, where our motto is “Think for Yourself,” for Fox Corporation, it is not about journalism, not about reporting news, but playing to an audience.*

That is why the company hires Republican hacks to host their shows. The list includes Kayleigh McEneny, the former Trump spokeswoman; Trey Gowdy, the former Texas representative; and Jason Chaffetz, the former Utah representative.

COVID War

We've seen the way corporate media companies have parroted inaccurate claims about COVID-19 and the vaccines. But what has been more perverse is the ability these companies have in destroying individuals who question government decisions. There is an old saying in journalism: “The job of the newspaper is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.”

Between the crackdown in Ottawa, the imposition of the Emergencies Act to stop protesters, and the bashing of those who refuse to fight the COVID War in body and spirit, that is no longer the case. See, [“THE HILL: PROPAGANDA SUPREME. EVIL LURKS IN THE HEARTS OF ANTI-VAXXERS.”](#) (20 Jul 2021) and [“CNN, HOW LOW CAN YOU GO?”](#) (5 May 2020).

AMERICAN SATIRIST P.J. O'ROURKE CHECKS OUT TO GREENER PASTURES



This section notes the passing of P.J. O'Rourke on 15 February.

A quintessentially American satirist who was known for irreverent and relatable observations, O'Rourke served as Editor-In-Chief of *National Lampoon* during its comic heyday in the 1970's.

He later authored numerous books of mostly political humor, including *Parliament of Whores* and *All the Trouble in the World: The Lighter Side of Overpopulation, Famine, Ecological Disaster, Ethnic Hatred, Plague, and Poverty*.

He was adept at skewering all sides on practically any topic or issue.

"P. J. was one of the major voices of his generation," Grove Atlantic publisher Morgan Entrekin noted. "His insightful reporting, verbal acuity and gift at writing laugh-out-loud prose were unparalleled."

One of the funniest (and today unprintable) contributions of O'Rourke was *National Lampoon's Sunday Newspaper*, co-authored by John Hughes (who would later write and/or direct movies including *The Breakfast Club*, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* and the classic *National Lampoon's Vacation* movie series).

The fictional Dacron Ohio Republican-Democrat was issued on newsprint, and even contained various inserts including a comics section and grocery advertisements.

It was all a glorious spoof of the times, and today stands as a record of how much more easily Americans circa 1978 could laugh at themselves and each other.

To illustrate how the observations of the fake newspaper still sound fresh, the following is an excerpt from a fake column in the edition titled “The Lighter Side of Stuff.”

The column’s fictional author, a geezer named Biff Lighter, imagines that he once had a conversation with famed American satirist Mark Twain.

According to an addle-brained Biff, Twain told him the following:

“Biff,” he said, “there’s two kinds of humorists; humorists who say there’s two kinds of humorists and others who do not. It’s these latter kind that seem so prevalent in your modern times, the most glorious and prosperous times in the world.

“They seems to believe that contempt of government is funny, and that flouting laws against marijuana in public is smart—they forget the fact that their rights are privileges that may be taken away. You see, Biff, society is like a parent--it has its little peculiarities--but it also has a parental type authority: it can ‘ground’ us in a jail, or it can cut our ‘allowance’ by putting us on a blacklist so we can’t get any work. This is done for the benefit of the whole social family, though it is sometimes as hard for us as it is for children to realize society is only looking out for our future.

“That’s why we shouldn’t be smart-alecky or sarcastic about governments any more than we should be about our parents...

“Biff, one of the wonderful things about America is that there is room for all different types of people. People who want to jiggy-jig Chilean elections or go to war against Communism. Other people, who prefer to be older, stay home and support those overseas. Some people want to run large multinational corporations, others prefer to work for these. Some to make laws, some to obey them. There is room in our great country for all these types of people.

“In our country now we have some dissidents. Some are humorists, bitter and lashing out at the world like a drunk in a hall of mirrors. Others are like the bumblebee, which science tells us can’t fly. They believe the world has got itself into an argyle-bargle of mighty magnitude because they believe it can no longer fly. We don’t need them, Biff, we never did...”

TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE



By *Ben Daviss*

HOT FUSION: THE DREAM—AND THE HYPE—LIVE ON

Scientists working to create fusion reactors that would produce limitless clean energy by melting hydrogen atoms together announced what they called a “breakthrough” earlier this month: the Joint European Torus (JET) fusion reactor in the U.K. set a new record for the amount of energy produced—59 megajoules, shattering the 1997 record of 21.7.

Exactly how much is that?

A joule is roughly the amount of energy it takes to raise an apple three feet, or one meter, off the ground. A megajoule is a million joules. So the fusion reactor put out enough energy to raise 59 million apples three feet off the ground all at once.

The reactor put out that much energy for five seconds. Then it hit a wall.

Producing fusion power begins by creating a hydrogen plasma—a high-energy state of matter in which atoms are stripped of their electrons. The plasma is suspended in the center of a sealed chamber. The plasma is held in place by electromagnets that are among the world’s most powerful.

Microwaves, lasers, or other intense forms of energy then heat the plasma to at least six times hotter than the surface of the Sun. The heat, and the pressure from the magnets, exert enough force on the hydrogen atoms to fuse them, releasing vast amounts of power that can be harnessed.

The reason the JET’s record heat level lasted only five seconds was that if it had lasted longer, its magnets would have melted.

Also, even though 59 megajoules was a record high temperature to make in a fusion reactor, it still was less energy than it took to run the reaction itself.

JET engineers are developing the next generation of cooling systems to keep the magnets from melting.

Undeterred and always hopeful, the U.K.’s nuclear power agency has chosen five candidate sites in Britain for the kingdom’s first commercial fusion reactor and has held community meetings in those areas to sell the project’s benefits to locals.

TRENDPOST: *After a half-century of research and hundreds of billions in public and private money invested, hot fusion has yet to show any sign that it can become a practical source of commercial power.*

However, scientific careers have been built and reputations made doing the work.

With so much sunk cost invested, the field will not be allowed to die.

Still, the conventional approach has proven impractical.

Hot fusion's future will depend on entirely new technologies, such as HB11 Energy's boron-centered process now in development that we reported on in ["New Fusion Energy Method Revives Advocates' Hopes"](#) (2 Mar 2021).

Meanwhile, grid-scale battery storage and decentralized power mini-grid technologies continue to advance and the price of renewable energy continues to fall while efficiencies rise.

A commercial hot fusion power plant is unlikely to appear within the next ten years. By then, it might not be able to justify the billions of dollars it will cost to build.

MINING RARE EARTH ELEMENTS FROM TRASH



The world's increasingly electronic and green economy rests on 17 metals known as rare earths, which are becoming increasingly scarce, especially since political turmoil has slowed production out of Myanmar, the world's third-largest

exporter.

Since 2020, the price of the lithium carbonate used to make batteries for everything from smartphones to smart cars has shot up more than 400 percent. The cost of praseodymium, essential for the magnets in electric motors for electric vehicles and wind turbines, has almost doubled, and terbium oxide, needed for LED lights and lasers, is more than 75 percent more expensive.

Rare earths aren't actually rare; all 17 are more abundant than gold. The metals are just difficult to extract and purify: they tend to be widely scattered in small deposits and often are mixed in with radioactive materials, meaning the water

used to mine and process them has to be disposed of in special and costly ways.

China now dominates the world's rare earths market.

Chemists at Rice University have come to the rescue by finding a new source of these critical materials: trash.

A few years ago, engineers there developed a special heating process to turn coal, coke, and any kind of waste carbon into graphene, those sheets of carbon one atom thick that have been found to be not only the world's strongest material, but also excellent conductors of heat and electricity.

Now the same lab has applied its heating process to recover rare earths from coal ash, electronic waste, and residue left over from processing bauxite into aluminum.

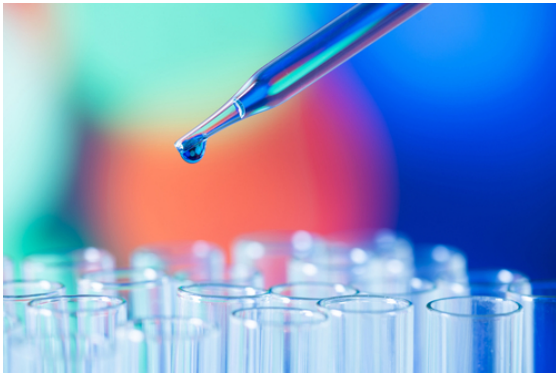
Conventional processes to reclaim valuable materials from these wastes involves a time-consuming process of soaking them in strong acids, creating a slurry of toxic waste.

In contrast, the Rice process flash-heats the wastes to 3,000° C, or more than 5,400° F, in a second, turning them into easily dissolvable compounds that need 150 times less acid to extract twice the amount of good stuff from the same amount of trash as the old way can.

TRENDPOST: *The process means that no industrialized country needs to be entirely dependent on foreign sources or environmentally damaging processes to boost their supplies of rare earths.*

This easier, faster way of reclaiming rare earths will be adopted quickly. Rice already is commercializing its heating process for making graphene; little adaptation is needed to apply it to the millions of tons of coal ash, bauxite residue, and discarded computers and smartphones the U.S. alone creates each year.

A DRUG COCKTAIL TO REGROW LOST LIMBS



Salamanders and a few odd fish are the lucky ones: they can regrow parts of damaged organs and even regenerate fins and entire limbs when the originals are cut off.

It seems reasonable to think other critters could do the same: we grew our limbs in the first place and the genetic information is probably still on board. But how do we activate those instructions?

Researchers at Harvard and Tufts University may have found the answer.

They anesthetized African clawed frogs—normally unable to regrow lost limbs—and amputated one of their hind legs.

The researchers then capped the stump with a silicone gel tip containing a silk protein gel laced with five drugs designed to mimic the *in utero* environment.

The drugs were chosen for their ability to reduce inflammation (a common occurrence at a wound), inhibit the formation of scar tissue, and stimulate the growth of blood vessels, nerve fibers, and muscle.

Leaving the wound capped with this mixture for just 24 hours was enough to spark the growth of a new, almost normal leg, complete with foot and toes, over the next 18 months.

The bone structure was not quite normal but the leg was functional enough to respond to touch and to allow the frogs to swim as well as walk or hop on land.

Next, the scientists will refine the drugs and process to see if the frogs can grow new legs that match the complete structure and functions of the original and will begin planning trials in larger creatures.

TRENDPOST: *From legs to spinal cords ([“Breakthroughs Restore Walking to Paralyzed Legs.”](#) 15 Feb 2022, and [“Protein Allows Paralyzed Mice to Walk Again.”](#) 30 Mar 2021), the science of tissue regeneration is showing brisk progress. At the present pace, human trials of various techniques to regenerate human spinal cord neurons and tissue should be under way before mid-century.*