

# TRENDSJOURNAL

HISTORY BEFORE IT HAPPENS®

## BRAINWASHED BY CRAP



13 October 2020

## TRENDS ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT

### U.S. MARKETS FRONT



Stocks rose last week as President Trump backtracked on his stance against further economic stimulus.

Markets also are rising on the expectation that Joseph Biden will be the new Presidential Reality Show® champion, thus injecting yet larger doses of monetary methadone to boost the sagging economy.

Weakening jobs numbers also are pressuring Congress to expand its economic rescue efforts.

Airlines have been a focus of stimulus talks. Despite air travel being down, American Airlines Group and United Airline Holdings' share prices each rose 4.3 percent; Delta Air Lines gained 3.5 percent.

**TRENDPOST:** *In the world of market madness, airline stocks rose despite the fact IATA reported that air passenger service globally slowed dramatically in mid-August.*

*“August’s disastrous traffic performance puts a cap on the industry’s worst-ever summer season. International demand recovery is virtually nonexistent, and domestic markets in Australia and Japan actually regressed in the face of new outbreaks and travel restrictions,” IATA director general Alexandre de Juniac said.*

*IATA reports international flights plunged 88.3 percent year over year and U.S. domestic flights fell nearly 70 percent.*

*They reported that in Europe, international travel slumped fell 79.9 percent year over year in August, and with new lockdowns and other COVID restrictions being imposed by governments on the continent, the air travel future is trending sharply downward.*

*IATA’s director general Alexandre de Juniac told Travel Weekly, “Absent additional government relief measures and a reopening of borders, hundreds of thousands of airline jobs will disappear.”*

**TREND FORECAST:** *Congress and the Trump administration will finalize a new stimulus program before the election. Politicians will keep pouring cheap money into the economy.*

*Gold fell nearly 2 percent today and the dollar rose on news there is no stimulus deal and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) prediction that the economic future is not as bleak as they previously thought.*

*We disagree with the IMF (“International Mafia Federation”) forecast of a rising economic tide. The “Greatest Depression” has begun and the socioeconomic and geopolitical implications are, and will be, disastrous... as we have noted in scores of Trends Journal articles and forecasts.*

*Again, whether now or later, there will be trillions of digital dollars backed by noting and printed on nothing injected into Wall Street and the economy. Thus, the more money dollars they dump into the system, the further its value declines and the higher gold prices will rise.*

**China Up, Oil Up**

Oil prices reached a five-week high last week as hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico raised fears of supply shortages.

Today, on news that China's exports and imports hit record highs, Brent Crude jumped 1.6 percent. As the world's #1 oil importer, with business going and demand for oil increasing, China's oil imports rose 5.5 percent from September... spiking 17.5 percent from a year earlier.

As we have forecast, the 20th century was the American century, the 21st century will be China's. The business of China has been business. The business of America since the end of World War II has been war.

China's exports rose 9.9 percent in September, and imports surged 13.2 percent... far above the 0.3 rise projected by economists polled by Reuters.

### **China Up, U.S. Down**

While China's exports sharply rose, the U.S. trade deficit climbed to \$67 billion in August, the widest gap in 14 years.

Imports rose 3.2 percent during the month, while exports grew by just 2.2 percent, according to the U.S. census bureau.

The deficit with China was \$26.4 billion, \$15.7 billion with the European Union, and \$12.5 billion with Mexico.

***TRENDPOST:*** *President Trump gained the presidency in 2016, in part, by vowing to cut the trade deficit. After taking office, he imposed a range of tariffs on imported goods from several trading partners.*

*The strategy has not worked, especially during a global economic shutdown. During the first eight months of this year, the overall trade deficit was 5.7 percent greater than in 2019.*



## ECONOMY STARVED FOR STIMULUS



After two months without federal financial aid, the economic recovery is faltering, and the U.S. economy needs an immediate infusion of \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion to be shared among workers, businesses of all sizes, and state and local governments, according to economists surveyed by the New York Times.

“The risk to waiting” longer for additional stimulus “is that we may find ourselves in a place where we’re unable to turn back,” said economist Karen Dynan, a treasury department official in the Obama administration. “We’ll hit a tipping point.”

“Failure to act will have real economic consequences,” agreed Glenn Hubbard, chair of George W. Bush’s Council of Economic Advisors. He is calling for \$1 trillion in immediate, widespread aid.

Already, about 850,000 U.S. small businesses – one in every seven – have closed permanently, according to the marketing platform Womply. As many as 36,000 franchise businesses could close this year if government relief is not forthcoming, the International Franchise Association estimates.

Allstate is cutting 3,800 jobs, about 8 percent of its payroll. Goldman Sachs is ditching 400 workers. Over the summer, Disney announced 28,000 layoffs. U.S. airlines and other major companies already have begun permanently laying off thousands of workers.

In September, federal, state and local governments dismissed 216,000 employees, the U.S. labor department reported. Analysts expect more public-sector job cuts as agencies cope with shrinking revenues.

Without another round of federal help, the economy will have four million fewer jobs by 2022, said Ernest Tedeschi, an economist at Evercore ISI.

Top officials of the U.S. Federal Reserve have called repeatedly for new stimulus measures. “Absent a new package” of stimulus spending, “growth could decelerate at a faster-than-expected pace in the fourth quarter” of this year, the group noted in the minutes of the central bank’s September meeting.

The emergency \$600 weekly federal unemployment benefit expired at the end of July, leaving millions of households to survive on a few hundred dollars a week in state aid. Although businesses have begun to recall furloughed workers, rehiring slowed last month.

Democrats in Congress have proposed a stimulus plan of \$2.2 trillion to \$2.4 trillion. Republicans have countered with a \$1-trillion offer that does not include the \$600 weekly unemployment stipend. President Trump had previously offered a \$1.8-trillion proposal but has since indicated he might not support resuming negotiations.

Discussions between House Democrats and Trump administration officials have deadlocked, with both sides unwilling to compromise ahead of the 3 November election.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *Regardless of who wins The Presidential Reality Show®, over the next few years, we forecast several trillion dollars will be injected into equities and the economy as the “Greatest Depression” worsens.*

*Again, the more money they inject, the further the dollar falls and the higher gold and silver prices rise.*

## NATIONAL DEBT EXCEEDS NATIONAL ECONOMY



The U.S. treasury collected \$3.42 trillion in revenue during the fiscal year ended 30 September, but spent \$6.55 trillion, leaving a deficit of \$3.13 trillion, or 15.2 percent of GDP, according to a 6 September estimate by the Congressional Budget Office.

The new deficit is three times greater than the previous year.

If the estimate proves correct, the total U.S. debt will exceed the size of the national economy: the country will owe 101 percent of GDP, according to the private, nonprofit Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget (CRFB), the most lopsided ratio since 1946, when the U.S. debt reached 106.1 percent of GDP, thanks to World War II.

The debt spike resulted from the \$4-trillion economic rescue plan enacted by Congress and the U.S. Federal Reserve to bail out the economy after states shut it down in response to the COVID pandemic.

As COVID resurges across the country and new shutdowns are imposed, federal officials are negotiating another stimulus round, with possible totals ranging from \$1 trillion to \$2.4 trillion in borrowed money.

No matter the final figure, spending will continue to rise, outpacing revenue and requiring a greater share of present and future federal income to be devoted to interest and principal payments on the ballooning debt.

“Debt is the size of the economy today and soon it will be larger than any time in history,” said Maya MacGuineas, CRFB president.

The larger the debt, the fewer resources the federal government will have to meet future crises, whether a pandemic, an economic depression, or a war. The rising debt also increases the risk of a new fiscal crisis or the inability to escape the current one.

“The U.S. federal budget is on an unsustainable path, has been for some time,” Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell told the National Association for Business Economics’ annual meeting on 6 October.

However, with the virus not relenting and the economy still teetering, “this is not the time to give priority to” deficit reduction, he said.

***TRENDPOST:*** Although Presstitutes keep reporting that the pandemic has caused the economic crisis, Trends Journal readers know the politicians, not the virus, ordered businesses and schools to close, ordered us to stay apart from each other, and stop living our lives until further notice.

## BOND MARKET MAY HAVE PEAKED



Since 1 October, U.S. government bond yields have risen to their highest levels since June, pushing prices down and prodding investors to see bonds’ futures more skeptically than they have since the current economic crisis began.

When the interest rate on bonds rises, the price of those bonds falls.

The rising yields may be the start of a weakening long-term bond market, some money managers think.

“Ten-year yields were close to 2 percent going into the crisis,” said Zachary Squire, CEO of Tekmerion Capital Management. “There is no reason why we can’t get back there in a matter of months.”

The economic recovery, though uneven, has shown more strength than some analysts expected, he said. The recovery could reignite inflation as well as economic growth, making government bonds less attractive.

The rising yields also point to the bond market’s growing belief that Democrats will hold more government power in the new year, raising expectations for a more generous stimulus to sustain the economy as it recovers.

Analysts have been expecting interest rates to remain near zero until 2025, said Praveen Korapaty, Goldman Sachs’ chief rates strategist. If Democrats take power and spend more as a vaccine is validated and widely distributed, the two factors could push rates up as soon as 2023, he added.

Higher bond yields could draw investors away from the growth stocks that have powered much of the equity markets’ steady rise during the economic shutdown, partly because companies’ future cash flows could shrink as inflation rises.

Ultimately, rates will depend on the U.S. Federal Reserve.

If the markets push up bond yields, the Fed may act to keep them down and ensure low rates to keep the economic recovery on track.

## **WOMEN DROPPING OUT OF THE WORKFORCE**



About 617,000 women left the U.S. labor force in September, compared to 78,000 men, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported on 2 October.

Half of the women who left were ages 35 to 44, considered prime working and earning years.

The large number of women leaving the workforce is attributed to women's dominant place in the hard-hit leisure and hospitality industry, where they work as food servers, hotel maids, and similar in-person jobs, many of which have disappeared permanently. Also, women are more likely to stay at home when children are schooling remotely.

In addition, childcare options have shrunk during the economic shutdown, noted Russell Price, Chief Economist at Ameriprise Financial. Employment in childcare services was 18 percent less in September than in January this year, he said.

"I do not like depending on the government, and I'm sure the other moms in my position feel the same way," said one woman. "There has to be something that the government can figure out to help us."

Stimulus negotiations between Congress and the Trump administration have deadlocked and the Senate is not expected to reconvene until after the 3 November election.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *As the "Greatest Depression" worsens and unemployment increases... and as more schooling trends toward online learning over the decades, more parents, mostly women, will stay home to raise their children.*

## LOCKDOWN DIVIDES RESTAURANT INDUSTRY



About 100,000 U.S. eateries will close this year, the National Restaurant Association (NRA) has predicted.

Most of the dead will be locally-owned businesses. During the pandemic, many restaurant chains are thriving.

The Chipotle chain reports more than tripling online sales during the second quarter. McDonald's same-store sales bumped up 4.6 percent in the third quarter, during which Domino's, Papa John's, and Wingstop all saw double-digit sales increases.

This summer, Chili's debuted its delivery-only "Just Wings" brand, which it expects to generate \$150 million in sales in its first 12 months. The 475-store El Pollo Loco opened three new stores this year and will emerge from the pandemic and lockdown stronger than before, said CEO Bernard Acoca.

Darden Restaurants, which owns Olive Garden, is planning to expand into urban centers, including Manhattan, where rents have, until now, been exorbitant.

In contrast, about 75 percent of the 22,000 restaurants that closed between 1 March and 10 September had fewer than five locations, according to review site Yelp.com.

In a recent survey of 450 New York City bars and restaurants, more than 390 said they were unable to pay their August rent.

The loss of independent restaurants threatens the livelihoods of suppliers and small farmers who deal more often with local diners than with chains. Every 100 restaurant jobs support 50 others among farmers and suppliers, according to the Economic Policy Institute.

When Arizona banned eating indoors in restaurants, the local McClendon Select organic farm lost 95 percent of its sales to those outlets. Since then, the farm has regained only about two-thirds of those customers, and they place orders about half as often as previously.

"Big chains don't buy from local farms," said co-owner Kate McClendon.

Chain restaurants buy from industrial-scale food suppliers. They also typically are better capitalized than independent shops, can exert more leverage in negotiating rent and supply prices, are more adept at online sales, and have corporate experience with delivery and take-out services.



“With a few clicks, I can order a whole meal, pay for it, and not have to leave my car to pick it up,” said Joyce Hill, a college professor in Akron, Ohio. She orders more often now from chain restaurants because she finds it easy and feels unsafe eating inside a restaurant.

She recently stopped by a locally owned restaurant for tacos but it was closed.

Still, not all chains are faring well. Ruby Tuesday’s and California Pizza Kitchen have filed bankruptcy; Dunkin’ Brands, Pizza Hut, and Starbucks are planning to collectively close 1,500 stores nationwide.

Bars and restaurants have shed 2.3 million jobs since the shutdown began, about 20 percent of the sector’s total workforce, the U.S. labor department has said.

The shutdown will cost the sector \$240 billion in sales this year, the NRA calculates.

**PUBLISHER’S NOTE:** *As we have long forecast and as the data proves, across the business spectrum, the rich are getting richer, the Bigs are getting bigger and the smalls businesses are being pushed out of business.*

*Indeed, some 20 years ago, in my book, “What Zizi Gave Honeyboy – A True Story About Love, Wisdom, and The Soul Of America,” I wrote how my beloved aunt Zizi reminisced, “When we supported our local shopkeepers, the money we spent ended up staying in the neighborhood,” and how I saw the Bigs getting bigger.*

*Listening to Zizi talk about the old neighborhood, I wrote in 2000, “And as we move into the 21st century, the consolidation trend will continue as multinational mega-giants devour national big boys – the killer whales will eat the barracudas.”*

## POWELL LINKS ECONOMIC RECOVERY TO VIRUS’S DEFEAT



The U.S. economic recovery “will require following medical experts’ guidance, including using masks and social-distancing measures,” Jerome Powell, chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve, told the annual meeting of the National Association for Business Economics on 6 October.

An out-of-control virus pandemic would “more significantly limit economic activity, not to mention the tragic effects on lives and well-being,” he warned.

The pace of the country’s economic rebound seems to be slowing, with 661,000 new jobs added in September, fewer than expected, compared with more than a million jobs each month from May through August. The number of temporary layoffs becoming permanent also is on the rise.

“Weakness feeds on weakness,” Powell warned, as he repeated his call for additional federal stimulus dollars to see the economy through the next several months.

## **Fed Split**

While there is general agreement to pump more cheap money into the failing systems, there is some disagreement among the Fed Banksters on how to manage interest rates, according to minutes of their 15 September meeting.

An initial plan called for three conditions to be met before raising rates: inflation must exceed 2 percent per year, there must be evidence that it will continue to exceed 2 percent, and the labor market must be meeting the Fed’s full-employment targets, which were not specified.

Robert Kaplan, president of the Dallas Fed bank, wanted looser guidelines. Minneapolis Fed president Neel Kashkarian argued for a bolder and less restrictive approach.

The disagreement could foreshadow similar clashes over details of the central bank’s plan to buy corporate loans and other assets.

The bankers foresee a quicker rebound in the jobs market and a stronger economic recovery, but only if another round of federal stimulus is unleashed.

“If future fiscal support was significantly smaller or arrived significantly later than expected, the pace of recovery could be slower than anticipated,” the meeting minutes said.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *There will be no “pace of recovery” in the near future. As interest rates move beyond 2 percent, we forecast as the “Greatest Depression” worsens, regardless of where rates are over the next two years, more cheap money will be pumped into the system.*

## **FED PUTS FOCUS ON RACE-BASED ECONOMIC INEQUALITY**



The U.S. Federal Reserve must do much more to address the crippling economic effects of racism, said three Fed bank presidents on 7 October in the first of a series of Fed events focusing on race and the economy.

“This is a time for us to not shy away,” said Raphael Bostic, president of the Atlanta Fed and the first African American to lead a regional Fed bank. “But we need to step forward and be present in this conversation and own that we have a role to play.” The Fed must show in its actions and policies that it represents all Americans, he said.

Neel Kashkari, President of the Minneapolis Fed, and Boston Fed President Eric Rosengren also spoke at the virtual event.

The Fed has been prodded to focus greater attention on structural racial inequities in the economy by criticism of its current bailout plan.

The Fed’s package of emergency loans and grants shored up financial markets and loaned money to corporations, buoying the stock market – 87 percent of which is owned by the wealthiest 10 percent of U.S. households, according to the Fed’s own data.

In contrast, less than 2 percent of stocks are owned by black and brown households.

Unemployment figures show the economic shutdown has had a disproportionately damaging impact on people of color, a large number of which work in face-to-face industries, such as food service and hospitality.

Fed policies and programs have not addressed that inequity.

“Why is it that business has a louder voice historically in the Federal Reserve than workers,” Kashkari asked. He said he and his staff are discussing ways to give data about workers and communities of color greater representation in the Fed’s “Beige Book,” the eight-times-a-year report on national economic conditions.

“We’ve got to think about how do we lean into a number of areas that we may not actually have the specific authorities or policies that drive it, but we have information, we have ways of thinking about it that are important,” Bostic said.

Although the Fed has limited powers to intervene directly, it can regulate and also wield influence.

For example, the central bank could redesign the Community Reinvestment Act, which outlawed so-called “redlining” of minority neighborhoods, to give lenders incentives to be more creative in their investments in those areas, Bostic pointed out.

“First, we have to listen,” Rosengren said.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *Talk is cheap, and so will be the money and effort by the Feds – who have pumped well over \$30 trillion to bailout Bankster Bandits and the Wall Street mob since the Panic of ‘08 – to spread income inequality... Black or White.*

## FOOD INDUSTRY HYPE: DON'T BUY IT, DON'T EAT IT



Consumers have permanently traded their pre-pandemic habit of eating out on the fly for a new emphasis on healthy foods and cooking at home, food company executives told the Wall Street Journal's Global Food Forum on 5 October.

As the economic shutdown took hold, people turned to comfort food, Mark Clouse, Campbell Soup Co. CEO, told the gathering. "What we're seeing now is a greater level of balance and a return to some of those health and wellness trends."

Campbell's marketing now emphasizes using its soups as ingredients in main or side dishes and promoting its products to younger consumers, Clouse noted.

Campbell had become "less relevant," Clouse said, as its attention was directed to niche brands in its portfolio. But as sales grew for basic items such as Chunky Soup and Goldfish crackers, the company realized "it doesn't require a new brand to meet some of these needs that people are looking for."

People are paying greater attention to ingredients labels and nutrition information, said Jean Flatin, Mars Inc.'s President of Innovation, but flavor remains equally important.

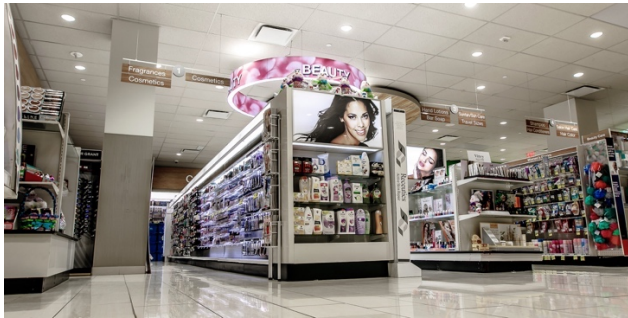
***TREND FORECAST:*** As Gerald Celente says, "Bullshit has its own sound. He notes that people who eat Campbell's Chunky Soup, Goldfish etc., would not be aware of any "health and wellness trends."

*And, health and nutrition advocates won't pick up a package of Mars bars to pay "greater attention to ingredients labels and nutrition information," of products they would not eat.*

*As we have been reporting for decades, as evidenced by America's "READY TO EXPLODE" trend, health, fitness, wellness, and nutrition represents a small percentage of America's 70 percent overweight, 42 percent obese population.*

*As the "Greatest Depression" worsens and more people have to do more with less, plus a rejuvenation of the New Age 2.0 trend, the whole health healing trend will generate more growth in organic and the "CLEAN FOOD" trend forecast by Gerald Celente and provide rewarding opportunities for OnTrendpreneurs®*

## SALES SLUMP AT PHARMACY CHAINS



Sales of non-essential, non-prescription items such as beauty care products etc., at drug stores have fallen as foot traffic during the shutdown disappeared.

Sales of such items at CVS stores was down 4.5 percent in the second quarter, year-on-year. Walgreen's reported sales at its non-U.S. locations slumped by 48 percent in the quarter ended 31 May.

New prescriptions, which can account for 25 percent of all prescriptions sold at a pharmacy store, also fell as people without jobs or in fear of losing theirs put off health care spending.

CVS Health's share price has dropped more than 20 percent this year. Walgreen's Boots Alliance, which owns the company's British stores, has seen its stock lose 39 percent of its value since January.

The chains are hoping that offering flu shots as cold weather sets in, and offering COVID vaccinations when a vaccine is available, will revive customer traffic.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *We note this since it reflects the deep economic damage inflicted on consumers, manufactures, marketers, and the integrated supply chains since the launch of the COVID War.*

*The longer sales and profits decline, debt-heavy big chains will go bust and the consolidation of businesses will grow.*



## MOODY'S LOWERS NEW YORK'S CREDIT RATING



Moody's Investor Service has lowered its credit rating for New York City and New York state because of the economic shutdown's impact on their current and future revenue.

Both were downgraded one step to a rating of Aa2, which is the third-highest rating possible.

"The downgrade reflects the substantial financial challenges New York City faces, caused by the economic response to the coronavirus pandemic and our expectation that New York City is on a longer recovery path than most other major cities," said Nicholas Samuels, a Moody's senior analyst.

NYC accounts for about 60 percent of the state's economy.

The shutdown's economic damage to the city "will likely be amongst the most severe in the nation and require significant fiscal adjustments," Moody's said.

It was Moody's first downgrade for the state or the city in three decades.

The downgrade means the city may face rising interest rates on its \$38.7 billion of general obligation bonds and the state, with its \$65 billion debt. Moody's rates its outlook on the city as "negative," meaning another downgrade may be coming.

"The outlook also reflects our opinion that the city cannot shift to a 'back to normal' economy until a vaccine is widely available," Moody's statement said.

The City already has cut \$7.1 billion from its budget, reducing the total to \$88.2 billion, and will chop as many as 22,000 workers from the city's payroll, City officials have said.



Mayor Bill de Blasio has asked the state for permission to borrow \$5 billion on the open market, but governor Andrew Cuomo opposes the idea.

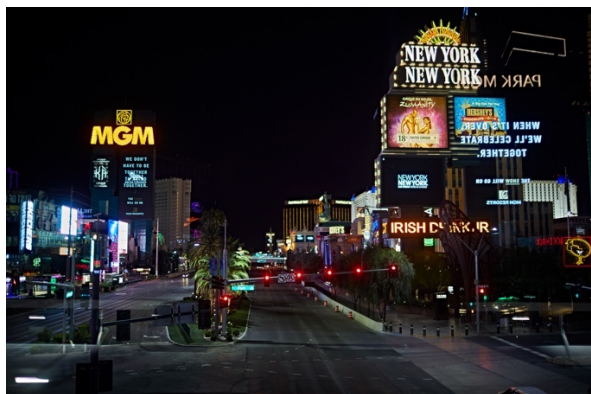
The state, facing its own deficit of as much as \$14 billion, will cut aid to cities and schools by \$8 billion, Cuomo has said.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *As more people flee New York City and New York State, tax revenues will continue to decline and budget deficits will continue to grow.*

*Beyond cutting jobs and services, governments will increase fares and taxes despite unemployment rising and wages stagnating or declining... especially as inflation begins to climb.*

*Again, as we noted, anti-tax will be a major platform of newly forming political parties.*

## LEAVING LAS VEGAS



Nevada conventions and other gatherings can now include as many as 1,000 people, up from 50, as long as the group is separated into sections of 250 individuals, including servers, according to recently revised orders from governor Steve Sisolak.

That was not good enough for the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, which took its ten-day National Rodeo Finals from Las Vegas to Arlington, Texas, last month, where restrictions are looser.

It was the first time since 1985 that the rodeo, which drew 170,000 fans last year, was not held in Las Vegas.

It also was the last large event that had been scheduled for Las Vegas during the pandemic and now it, too, has left town.

Caesar's Entertainment Inc., which owns the Bally's, Caesar's Palace, Paris, and Planet Hollywood hotels and casinos in the city, reports having 2,500 meetings and conventions canceled since February.

Group bookings made up about a third of reservations at Caesar's Palace alone last year.

Conventions and other group events accounted for 30 percent of reservations at Caesar's Palace hotel and casino last year, the company said.

Bookings for 2021's first quarter are about half of what they were a year earlier, according to Michael Massari, the company's sales director told the Wall Street Journal.

The company, however, has signed more contracts for events further in the future than during any other six-month period in its history, Massari noted, indicating that the city has kept its allure.

Of Las Vegas's 42.5 million visitors in 2019, 6.6 were there to attend conventions, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority reported.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *We had long forecast the destruction of the trade show and convention business when politicians launched the COVID War. It is now just making the news.*

*From the hospitality sector to restaurants, from the workforces to the chain of product and service providers, the impact and implications on these sectors will not rebound until people again feel safe to travel, governments lift capacity restriction, and the old normal replaces the New Abnormal.*

## TRENDS IN REAL ESTATE



### **REAL ESTATE INVESTORS CHOOSING SINGLE-FAMILY RENTAL HOMES.**

Invitation Homes, the largest owner of U.S. rental houses, has formed a joint venture with Rockpoint Group, a Boston-based property investor, to spend about \$1 billion to buy another 3,500 rental properties.

Invitation owns about 80,000 houses and has been spending an average of \$200 million a quarter during the economic shutdown to add more. It issued \$448 million worth of stock in June to fuel its buying spree.

Invitation is putting \$75 million into the new joint venture, which will borrow \$600 million to go house-hunting with.

Investment company Nuveen recently announced a \$400-million bet on a venture that will buy rental houses in Arizona, Florida, and Texas. Brookfield Asset Management, a Canadian firm, bought a company owning 10,000 rental houses from Alabama to Ohio and raised \$300 million to buy more.

Invitation and American Homes 4 Rent, a similar operation, are reporting rising rents and record high occupancy rates. The companies' share prices, and those of competitor Tricon Residential, have outperformed those of funds investing in shopping malls, office towers, and more traditional real estate investment vehicles.

Private-equity real estate investment companies hold an estimated \$150 billion in cash needing something to do, analysts say.

Adults under 40 with high incomes but burdened by student and credit-card debt will choose suburban homes as they start families, the rental companies expect.

However, they often will not be able to save a down payment or qualify for a mortgage as home prices remain high.

“There is an acute shortage of homes available for sale, a dynamic which should support home prices and keep many families who would prefer to purchase a home in the rental market,” said Barclays analyst Ryan Preclaw told the Wall Street Journal.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *We reported the strong growth of the Bigs buying up the house rental market during the Panic of '08. As with other economic sectors, with the majority of financial assets in the hands of the few, their buying power will continue to grow as the “Greatest Depression” worsens and the middle class continues to shrink.*

**BAY AREA OFFICE RENTS FALL AS TECH COMPANIES KEEP WORKERS HOME.** San Francisco-area office rental rates slumped 4 percent from 1 April through 30 September, a drop more than double that of any other major city, according to Costar Group, a research firm.

Bay area businesses leased 700,000 square feet of office space during the third quarter, 81 percent less than the 3.6 million signed a year earlier.

“The deal activity has totally dried up,” said broker Chris Roeder.

About 15 percent of area office space was occupied in September, and less in the city center, compared with about 25 percent across the country, according to various real estate service companies.

The lack of office traffic has crippled thousands of businesses in the city and threatens the survival of as many as 1,900 restaurants, the Golden Gate Restaurant Association has warned.

San Francisco rental rates skyrocketed over the past 20 years, as tech start-ups believed that an address in the city would lend credibility to their ventures and draw investors' attention.

**FORECLOSURES POISED TO RISE IN COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE.** A growing number of lenders are quietly negotiating to take possession of properties from their borrowers, said Jay Neveloff, a partner in Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel, a New York City business consulting firm.

Across the U.S., 278 commercial properties backing securitized mortgages were in foreclosure during the week of 29 September, at least 80 of which suffered reversals because of the economic shutdown, according to Trepp, a real estate data firm.

Recent high-profile foreclosures include Chicago's iconic Palmer House hotel and several luxury apartment blocks in New York City.

"It's coming," said Jay Olshonsky, CEO of the NAI Global real estate services firm. "It's just a question of how bad it's going to be."

The result will be worse than during the Great Recession, Olshonsky predicts, when tens of billions of dollars' worth of commercial properties were foreclosed.

In addition to hotels, restaurants, and shopping malls, the growing foreclosure portfolio will include more and more office and apartment buildings, he noted.

"We've never had a situation where people weren't paying their rent on their apartments like we have now," Olshonsky said.

**EMPTY MANHATTAN APARTMENTS TRIPLE IN SEPTEMBER.** In September, 15,963 Manhattan apartments were standing empty, compared to 5,299 a year previous, according to data from real estate firms Douglas Elliman and Miller Samuel.

The vacancy rate is now almost 6 percent, compared to less than 3 percent before the pandemic.

The vacancies have forced rental rates down by 11 percent, with the typical two-bedroom apartment now renting for \$4,817 a month and a one-bedroom for \$3,306. Rents for studio apartments have fallen 14 percent.

To lure tenants, landlords are now offering an average of two months' free rent.

As the City's financial woes mount and residents face service cuts, landlords and real estate brokers see a bleak future.

"I think we have a little ways to go," said Steven James, Douglas Elliman's New York City CEO. "The consumer knows the landlords are on the ropes and they know they've got them."

The loss of rents likely will squeeze smaller landlords who are less well-capitalized to withstand the downturn, analysts predict, ultimately jeopardizing mortgage lenders, banks, and the city itself, which relies for a third of its budget on property taxes.

***TREND FORECAST:*** All of the above real estate trends have been forecast by us since the lockdowns in March when COVID rules and regulations were imposed by politicians.

*Our forecast remains: Most big city residential and commercial property values will continue to go down as more people work from home, tourist traffic slows, crime rises, and people flee to “safer” upscale, exurban areas.*

## GLOBAL ECONOMIC TRENDS



### **BILLIONAIRES GAINED WEALTH DURING THE ECONOMIC SHUTDOWN,**

During the pandemic, the wealth of the world’s billionaires grew by 13 percent to reach \$10.2 trillion, topping \$10 trillion for the first time, according to a study by UBS and accounting firm PwC.

The previous record was \$8.9 trillion at the end of 2019.

Between 7 April and 31 July this year, billionaires grounded in health care, manufacturing, and technology led the gains, seeing their riches grow by 36 to 44 percent. Billionaires in all economic sectors saw their wealth swell by double digits during the period.

From 2018 through July 2020, tech billionaires gained 42.5 percent, to \$1.8 trillion; health care billionaires got 50.3 percent richer, amassing \$658.6 billion.

In 1995, the combined wealth of the world's billionaires was about \$1 trillion, the report noted.

The study surveyed more than 2,000 billionaires representing about 98 percent of the world's billionaire class.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *This is a new millennium trend that continues to accelerate across the globe. And as it does, so too will the "Off With Their Heads," 2.0 trend.*

*As we have forecast, workers of the world will again take to the streets, reigniting the protests against poverty, government corruption, inequality, crime, and violence that were raging across the globe before governments launched the COVID War and prohibited demonstrations.*

**CENTRAL BANKS SELLING GOLD RESERVES.** For the first time in 18 months, central banks are selling gold, 12.3 tons in August alone.

Gold prices peaked at \$2,070 in August and since have fallen as much as 8 percent.

The price drop has persuaded central banks that gold prices have peaked, at least for now, making this a moment to turn gold into badly-needed cash to cover costs related to the COVID economic shutdown.

Uzbekistan has led the sell-off, unloading \$5.8 billion worth of gold from January through August.

Central banks bought a record 651.5 tons of gold in 2018 as Russia, Turkey, and other countries shifted away from the dollar as a reserve of value. In 2019, central banks bought another 650 tons.

The banks have bought only 200 to 300 tons in 2020, when demand for gold was driven chiefly by gold-backed exchange-traded funds, which have collected more than \$60 billion from investors this year.

High gold prices have quelled demand from India and China, traditionally reliable buyers. Also, the stronger dollar has made gold more expensive in other currencies.

"Now is not the time to hoard gold," said Nataxis commodities analyst Bernard Dahdah. "Hospitals need the money," he told the *Financial Times*.



***TREND FORECAST:*** While we do not provide financial advice, despite gold's down drift, we maintain our forecasts that gold and silver will spike to new highs as more governments inject more digital cash backed by nothing and printed on nothing into their failing economic systems.

*Moreover, in an attempt to keep their economies from sinking lower and going deeper in debt, the reason nations are selling gold is that they need the money. Thus, they are selling the safe-haven precious metal not because they want to, but because they need to.*

**EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK ADVANCES PLAN FOR DIGITAL EURO.** The European Central Bank (ECB) has published a 50-page study of the concept of a digital euro, including scenarios that would require the bank to create electronic money, as the ECB begins a six-month public comment period on the idea.

The bank said the digital euro would be available from the ECB to “all parties.”

“Europeans are increasingly turning to digital in the ways they spend, save, and invest,” said ECB president Christine Lagarde. “Our role is to secure trust in money. This means making sure the euro is fit for the digital age. We should be prepared to issue a digital euro should the need arise.”

The needs that might call for a digital euro include greater demand for electronic payments that “increases the need for a risk-free form of digital payment” rather than a digital currency operated by a private party, such as Facebook’s proposed Libra.

Also, a cyberattack or other disaster could disrupt existing payment systems, in which case the ECB’s digital euro could be a back-up.

The ECB offered two possible ways to manage a digital euro.

The first would record all transactions in the ECB’s ledger. The second would settle and record the digital transactions through appointed intermediaries acting under ECB rules.

Central banks around the world are at various stages of researching or creating a digital currency. The work was spurred by Facebook’s initiative, raising the specter of money controlled by a private company.

China may be ready to release a digital renminbi in as little as two years, the ECB believes, now that the country has carried out wide-scale experiments.

Creating a digital currency “poses challenges but by following appropriate strategies” in its design, “the Eurosystem can address these,” the bank said.

***TREND FORECAST:*** Again, this is old news to ***Trends Journal*** subscribers.

*For what the digital future looks like and what to expect, see our article, “[FROM DIRTY CASH TO DIGITAL TRASH.](#)”*

***TREND FORECAST:*** As central banks and governments flood systems with digital money backed by nothing and printed on nothing to pump up overvalued equity markets and sinking economies, the value of their currencies will continue to decline while gold, silver, and even digital cryptocurrency prices will rise.

**GERMAN AUTO INDUSTRY SHEDDING MORE WORKERS.** As it seeks to pare costs by more than 20 percent by 2025, Daimler AG’s Mercedes division will cancel as many as 30,000 of its jobs worldwide, about one in ten workers.

The company hopes the cost-cutting measures will bring profits up to the “mid- to high single digits,” said Daimler CEO Ola Källenius.

Last month, Volkswagen slashed 9,500 jobs in its MAN truck subsidiary in Germany and Austria. More than 4,000 other MAN jobs will disappear as the company shifts and outsources some production to Poland and other lower-wage countries, it said.

The truck company needed “restructuring with plant closures and staff reductions of around 9,500 in order to restore competitiveness,” said Herbert Diess, VW’s board chair.

BMW had announced in June its plans to cut 16,000 jobs and negotiate lower prices from suppliers.

Earlier this month, vehicle parts maker Continental announced plant closures in Germany and elsewhere, displacing 13,000 German workers and another 17,000 worldwide.

In late September, parts supplier Mahle announced that two of its German plants would close, turning out 375 employees. The move follows a mid-September announcement that an additional 7,600 workers will be terminated.

**CHINA TAKES GREATER SHARE OF WORLD'S GDP.** China's GDP will grow 1.6 percent in 2020, the only major economy to expand this year as the global economic output will shrink 5.2 percent, the World Bank has predicted.

China's economy will produce about \$14.6 trillion by the end of 2020, about 17.5 percent of global GDP, the bank estimates. That growth will expand China's share of global GDP by about 1.1 percentage points this year, according to World Bank data, more than triple its advance in 2019.

Europe and the U.S. are expected to lose a fraction of their share of the world's GDP this year.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *China's institution of dual circulation economy – relying less on export as the global economy slides deeper into the “Greatest Depression” and more building a self-sustaining domestic economy – will accelerate its GDP higher than other major nations.*

**RENMINBI SURGES MOST IN 15 YEARS.** On 9 October, the renminbi, China's internal currency, jumped 1.45 percent against the dollar to 6.693, its biggest one-day rise since 2005.

The currency's value was strengthened by a wave of foreign demand for Chinese assets, relatively high bond yields, and investors' growing certainty that Joseph Biden will win the U.S. presidency and ease trade tensions between the two nations.

The view in the market is that the way a Biden administration approaches U.S.-China relations “is probably going to be less confrontational and certainly using trade less as a tool or weapon against China,” said ANZ foreign exchange strategist Daniel Been.

The prospect of a Biden victory “opens up more room for more renminbi appreciation,” said Lu Sun, a strategist at Citi. “A Biden victory would be positive for the currency and a Trump win or contested result negative.”

Demand for Chinese assets also is fueled by the country's quick economic rebound from the pandemic-inspired economic shutdown.

China is the only major economy that will grow instead of contract this year, according to forecasts by the International Monetary Fund. Also, the U.S.

economic stimulus program has flooded the world with cheap dollars, sending investors in search of venues that promise higher returns.

More than \$13.4 billion has flowed into China's equities markets this year.

***TRENDPOST:*** *Over the weekend, the Chinese government took measure to stop the yuan's rise by making it cheaper to bet against the currency by cutting the forex risk reserve ratio for forward contracts from 20 percent to zero.*

*"Overall, what this tells us is that... they're definitely trying to give a signal that maybe they're unhappy with the current pace of appreciation," said Rohit Garg, a Director at Bank of America Merrill Lynch.*

**CHINESE ARE TRAVELING AND SPENDING, BUT CAUTIOUSLY.** During the first few days of the eight-day Golden Week holiday that began 1 October, Chinese travelers made 425 million trips around the country, spending about \$46 billion.

In contrast, only 115 million trips took place during May's five-day Labor Day vacation.

With no locally transmitted COVID cases reported since August, the government has lifted most pandemic-related restrictions. With international visitors still banned from the country, China's travel-oriented businesses have offered discounts and premiums to get their countrymen moving again.

In recovering from its economic shutdown, China's government funneled support to manufacturing, especially companies that export, and sparking business investment.

The strategy left retailers and consumer spending behind, but now those sectors are reviving as well, government figures show.

During this month's holiday, overall spending was 31 percent less than last year's and spending per trip was off 12 percent, indicating Chinese tourists are being cautious in their purchases.

The positive trends are encouraging but tight-fisted travelers show that "getting all the way back to normal will be a longer journey – even in China," noted the Wall Street Journal.

**AUSTRALIA UNVEILS RESCUE PACKAGE.** The Australian government has announced an economic rescue package intended to drive unemployment down from the 8 percent expected at the end of 2020 to below 6 percent within three years, officials said.

The plan involves running a deficit of 11 percent in 2021, 5.6 percent in 2022, and 4.2 percent in 2023. Deficits will continue into the out-years, officials said, but will be outpaced by economic growth.

Tax cuts are a centerpiece of the program. Also, businesses will be allowed to deduct the full price of capital investments immediately instead of having to depreciate them over the life of the purchase.

Australia's economy will contract a modest 4.5 percent this year, the International Monetary Fund predicts, compared to 8 percent in Germany and 10.2 percent in the U.K.

**DEVELOPING NATIONS URGED TO SINK DEEPER INTO DEBT.** Emerging nations should take on more debt to survive the damage done by the global economic shutdown, even though that would set the countries on a course of dire debt crises and major restructurings, said Carmen Reinhart, the World Bank's new chief economist.

"What else are you going to do?" she argued. "First you worry about fighting the war, then you figure out how to pay for it."

Calling the crisis in the developing world worse than that of the 1930s, she urged nations and international financial organizations to write off some or all of the debt of developing nations.

Even before the pandemic, emerging nations faced a wave of rising debt. However, most of that debt was taken on by corporations, not government, a study by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) discovered.

The number of emerging nations seeing both corporate and government debt downgraded by ratings agencies has reached record levels, Reinhart acknowledged.

The G20 nations are expected soon to announce that they will continue a moratorium on debt repayments by the poorest countries.

Pressure from borrowers, economists, and global organizations such as the IMF and World Bank is growing for wealthier countries to do more to prevent financial collapse among poor nations.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *The emerging market financial crisis will not be avoided. As already weak economies sink deeper into the “Greatest Depression,” social unrest will escalate to civil wars. Governments will be overthrown and millions will flee their economically and socially depressed nations for safe haven nations. This will in turn increase support of populist/nationalist/anti-establishment political parties.*

**REPORT: VATICAN INVESTED DONATIONS IN CREDIT DEFAULT SWAPS.** In 2015, the Vatican used part of a €528-billion investment portfolio derived from parishioners’ donations to buy credit default swaps as part of a gamble that car rental giant Hertz would not default on its debts by April 2020, the *Financial Times* reported.

Hertz declared bankruptcy in May 2020, days after the Vatican’s bet paid off.

The investment was made on behalf of the Vatican’s Secretariat of State, which administers donations made to the Catholic Church.

The secretariat also invested in luxury homes in London, securities involving the Italian state’s debts to Vatican-controlled hospitals, and helped fund the film “Rocketman,” a biography of Elton John.

The investments were made by Cardinal Giovanni Becciu, second in command at the secretariat from 2011 through 2018.

In September, Pope Francis stripped Becciu of his rights as a cardinal, charging him with “misappropriation.” Becciu insists he did nothing wrong.

Credit default swaps “encouraged the growth of a finance of chance and gambling on the failure of others, which is unacceptable from an ethical point of view,” Francis said in 2018, calling the swaps “a ticking time bomb.”

There is no evidence the pope knew of the unusual investments.

**DANISH BANK CUTS COSTS, JOBS IN FALLOUT FROM SCANDAL.** Dansk Bank, Denmark’s biggest lender, will eliminate about 1,500 jobs – roughly 7 percent of its workforce – as it cuts costs to deal with the consequences of a €200-billion money-laundering scandal and eight years of negative interest rates.

Employees will be offered voluntary buyouts through the end of this month, then firings will begin.

The bank's cost-to-income ratio reached 65.7 percent during the first half of this year. The bank will work to bring the ratio into the low 50s by 2023 and raise the return on equity from its current 0.9 percent to 9 or 10 percent during the same time, the bank said.

**CLOSING SCHOOLS COULD COST SOUTH ASIA \$622 BILLION.** The eight countries of South Asia could lose at least \$622 billion in future GDP due to the closure of its schools since March during the pandemic, the World Bank projects.

The regional loss could rise to \$880 billion if the closures are prolonged beyond current expectations.

India alone could lose \$400 billion or more.

The shutdowns have kept 391 million primary and secondary students out of school for a half-year, the bank's analysis notes, "further complicating efforts to resolve" the traditional low levels of education throughout the region," the bank's report said.

"Being out of school for that long means that children not only stop learning new things, they also forget some of what they have learned," it noted.

The bank derived the dollar value of school closures by using an algorithm to combine the length of time in school and the rate of successful grade-level education into a single measure.

Applying that figure to the half-year of schooling lost to the shutdown, the average South Asian child missing that time in school will earn about 5 percent less over a lifetime, or the equivalent of about \$4,400.

Across the region's population, that amount swells to \$622 billion lost under current conditions and as much as \$880 billion if schools remain closed indefinitely.

"South Asian governments spend only USD \$400 billion per year in total on primary and secondary education," the bank's report pointed out. "The total loss in economic output from the current closures is hence substantially higher than what countries currently spend on education," the World Bank said.



The World Bank's South Asia region includes the countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

**SOUTH ASIA'S ECONOMY TO SHRINK 7.7 PERCENT THIS YEAR.** After growing more than 6 percent annually during each of the last five years, South Asia's regional economy will contract by 7.7 percent in 2020, the Word Bank predicted on 8 October.

The damage is driven by India's 9.6-percent loss to GDP this year, casting the country into an unprecedented economic crisis, the bank said.

India faces "a very dire outlook," said Hans Timmer, the bank's chief economist for South Asia.

On March 25, Narendra Modi, India's prime minister, mandated one of the world's most stringent lockdowns. It abruptly shut most factories and businesses, grounded flights, stopped trains, and halted as much as 70 percent of the country's economic activity. When the lockdown was lifted in June, the virus raged across the country anyway.

India's economy had been slowing before the pandemic arrived, growing 8.3 percent in fiscal 2017, 7 percent in 2018, 6.1 percent in 2019, and 4.2 percent in 2020.

The region's per-capita income will languish at 6 percent below 2019, the bank said, which means that, due in part to population growth, the 4- or 5-percent economic rebound expected for the area in 2021 will not balance the shutdown's damage.

India and the other seven countries in the region lack social safety protections, especially for the millions of people working in the informal economy. As a result, the number of people living in poverty in the region has increased by 33 percent this year, the bank said.

The World Bank's South Asia region includes the countries of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

**TURKEY RAISES INTEREST RATES.** On 9 October, Turkey's central bank raised the cost of changing dollars into lira, the country's currency, after the lira's value sank toward eight to the dollar.

The bank added 1.5 percentage points to the cost of foreign currency swap transactions, allowing the lira to hold at 7.9350.

With inflation running above 11 percent, the bank also raised its benchmark interest rate by two percentage points in late September, even though the move runs counter to the wishes of Recep Erdoğan, the country's authoritarian president.

The move is unlikely to slow the lira's decline, which feeds inflation, analysts say. The currency's troubles reflect investors' larger concerns about Turkey's involvement in an ethnic conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and the NATO member's purchase of an air defense system from Russia.

The collapse of Turkey's tourism industry during the economic shutdown also has robbed it of revenue and foreign currency.

The lira's steady slide is "merely an acceleration of an already-existing trend driven by an unsustainable economic policy," said SEB strategist Per Hammarlund. "The key unknown is where the pain threshold is for the Turkish central bank."

**INDONESIAN CENTRAL BANK INDEPENDENCE THREATENED.** Politicians seek to bring Bank Indonesia, the nation's central bank, under greater political control as the nation struggles to right its economy after the global shutdown.

The bank was separated from political influence by a 1999 law supported by the International Monetary Fund. The law also created the rupiah, the nation's present currency.

Instead of autonomy, a group of legislators are calling for the bank to have "coordinated independence," which would give the government a voice in setting monetary policy.

The bank "should have a role in economic growth and job creation," said Achmad Baidowi, the legislator who drafted the bill to exert greater control over the bank.

The reforms would include allowing legislators to vote in the bank's decisions about interest rates and establishing a committee of cabinet ministers to "oversee" the bank.

The bank also would be allowed to buy government bonds, raising the risk of creating digital money to finance deficit spending.

The proposal called up memories of former president Suharto, who took control of the bank in the 1970s. The government controlled the bank until the nation's economy collapsed in 1998.

Indonesia has been particularly hard-hit by the shutdown, entering a recession after the economy contracted 5.3 percent year-on-year during the second quarter, the worst performance since 1999.

***TRENDPOST:*** *As we wrote in the article in this issue, “**PROTESTS BREAK OUT IN INDONESIA OVER WORK LAW**,” massive protests broke out last Thursday across Indonesia after the passage of a statute that critics say hang workers and the environment out to dry while enriching the country's elite. Thus, the deeper the economy sinks, the greater the protests will grow.*

## GOING DOWN, GOING BUST, GOING OUT



**OIL INDUSTRY CUTS 107,000 WORKERS.** The jobs, which disappeared from March through August, are unlikely to return, even if oil prices remain at \$45 a barrel through 2021, according to an analysis by accounting firm Deloitte.

The jobs were lost when the overleveraged U.S. shale oil industry crashed, shot down by a combination of plunging oil demand and a global oil glut during the economic shutdown that sent oil prices into a nosedive.

A \$1 change in U.S. oil prices can add or erase 3,000 jobs, the Deloitte study found.

More job cuts are under way.

BP will turf out 10,000 workers as it cuts oil production by 40 percent. ExxonMobil will cut 1,600 jobs in Europe and may cut 10 percent of U.S. office jobs. Shell will dump 9,000 workers worldwide. Schlumberger, the world's largest oilfield services firm, is firing 21,000 people.

If oil prices rise to \$55 a barrel through 2021, 76 percent of the industry's lost jobs could return; at \$35 a barrel through next year, only 3 percent will come back, Deloitte said.

**40 PERCENT OF CANADA'S ATLANTIC COAST EATERIES MAY FAIL.** With cold weather closing in, 40 percent of restaurants in Canada's Atlantic provinces could be out of business by next March, warned Restaurants Canada, a trade group.

Only 20 percent are breaking even, the association said, noting that 10 percent already have failed and 68 percent are operating at a loss due to social distance mandates that force restaurants to operate at only partial capacity.

The Canadian government has offered rent assistance, paying half of eateries' rent if the tenant pays 25 percent and the landlord forgives the other 25 percent. However, to participate, landlords must first reduce rents by 75 percent. Few have chosen to take part.

Restaurants Canada continues its call for federal aid and has suggested loosening social distancing restrictions on Atlantic coast restaurants because the region has seen relatively few COVID cases.

**PUBLISHER'S NOTE:** *It will take far more than politicians pouring money on it to end the "Greatest Depression," which is now under way.*

**RUBY TUESDAY'S GOES BUST.** The chain, with more than 500 outlets nationwide and about 28,000 workers, has reached an agreement with secured lenders, including Goldman Sachs, over a plan to restructure its debt, which includes a \$230-million unsecured bond held by NRD Capital that will mature in 2037.

Most of the company's other unsecured creditors are landlords seeking payment for overdue rent.

The chain will close 185 of its company-owned restaurants that shuttered during the economic shutdown, laying off more than 7,300 workers.

The remaining 236 company-owned restaurants will continue to operate during the restructuring, the company said.

**WELLS FARGO CUTS 700 COMMERCIAL BANKING JOBS.** The U.S. banking industry's largest employer made the cuts in the division serving businesses with more than \$5 million in annual revenue. The firings are part of the troubled bank's plan to cut jobs that could number into the tens of thousands.

"We are at the beginning of a multi-year effort to build a stronger, more efficient company," the bank said in a statement. "We will have impacts, including job reductions, in nearly all of our functions and business lines."

Wells Fargo cut its dividend amid operating losses and CEO Charles Scharf has promised at least \$10 billion in cuts to annual costs. The company's shares have lost more than 50 percent of their value this year.

Other banks, including Citigroup, Goldman Sachs, and JPMorgan Chase also have cut staff this year. Bank of America has kept a pledge to not lay off any workers this year.

**EDINBURGH WOOLEN MILLS FIGHTING TO STAVE OFF COLLAPSE.** The maker of iconic Harris Tweed suits and cashmere sweaters will appoint administrators to restructure the company, which faces imminent collapse.

The company has warned of "inevitable significant cuts" to its 24,000-person workforce. It also may sell its Peacocks and Jaeger clothing brands.

Most of the company's stores are in the north of England, where the population is older and lockdown orders have been more stringent than in most other parts of the country.

Edinburgh Woolen Mills joins Arcadia, Harrods, Marks & Spencer, Selfridge's, TM Lewin, and the Walgreen's-owned pharmacy chain Boots, which previously have announced more than 13,000 layoffs among them as the lockdown redirected shoppers online.

**CARNIVAL CANCELS CRUISES.** Carnival Corp., the world's largest cruise line, has canceled its cruises planned for November and all remaining 2020 sailings except those leaving from Port Miami and Port Canaveral in Florida.

The company made the decision after the CDC moved to extend its ban on passenger cruises through January. The mandate was vetoed by vice-president Mike Pence.

"Carnival continues to work on protocols and procedures that would allow for the resumption of cruise operations, with a gradual, phased-in approach," the company said in a statement.

**H&M WILL CLOSE 250 STORES.** The fashion chain will close about 5 percent of its 5,000 outlets next year as online sales continue to grow, stealing business from brick-and-mortar sites.

After temporarily closing 80 percent of its stores in September, sales dropped only 5 percent. Online shoppers made up most of the difference.

## **TRENDS IN THE MARKETS *by Gregory Mannarino***

### **MARKET BUBBLES & ECONOMIC TROUBLES**



As I've mentioned in my previous articles, right off the top, let's make something clear: The stock market is *not* the economy. *The middle class is the economy, and the middle class is losing.*

The stock market is an illusion with no bearing on reality whatsoever. It is an epic, distorted, twisted bubble of debt (see my 7 July article, "[THE MARKET IS FLOATING ON OCEANS OF DEBT](#)").

Moreover, the stock market is being used as a distraction by corrupt politicians who are saying to the American people, "Look at the Stock Market! Our economy is booming – it will be a super-V shaped recovery."

The fact of the matter is the S&P 500 is just 3 percent off its all-time record high; corporations are stronger than ever; and Wall Street is expecting, and will get, record high bonuses in 2020. Meanwhile, on Main Street, the U.S. economy is in free fall, with some 800,000 new unemployment claims each week.

In no way whatsoever is the American economy in a recovery. Make no mistake, this is no accident. Neither are the lies, propaganda, and misinformation spewing from the mouths of crooked politicians. The deliberate shutdown of the U.S. economy, and the world, is now fostering the largest wealth transfer in history, *something I said would occur a decade ago...* and, with this, the utter wipeout of the middle class is on the verge of completion.

The current merger between corporate entities and this new American government, by definition, is fascism. It is manifesting itself into a new feudal system, a two-tier society of extreme haves and have-nots, which I have warned about as well for over ten years.

This phenomenon can be witnessed in real time by paying attention to and understanding what you are seeing. Today, corporations are stronger than ever, the rich are richer than ever, the stock market is being artificially propped up on mass debt expansion, tens of millions of the middle class are out of work, and over 60 percent of U.S. small businesses are gone forever.

The last shoe to drop will be a stock market crash of epic proportions followed by pandemonium in the streets. By design, in order to gain control, the powers that be need to foster an environment of complete chaos, and then out of that disorder will come oppressive control.

Expect it... it's just a matter of when.

For the time being, the stock market will continue to inflate, along with the Federal Reserve's balance sheet. Inevitably, when the market corrects to fair value – less



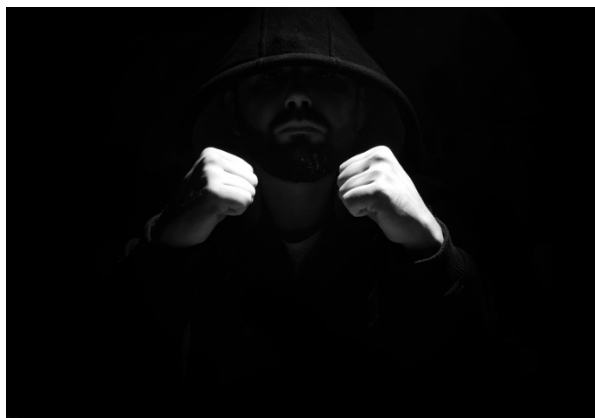
than two-thirds of what it is today – it will be by the Federal Reserve’s own hand that this occurs.

As a market trader, I do not waste a moment of my time wondering when a market correction to fair value, or a crash, will occur. I am only concerned with one thing: staying on the right side of it. Being that I have been given the privilege of writing articles for the **Trends Journal**, I will keep *you* on the right side of it as well.

*by Gregory Mannarino, TradersChoice.net*

## **TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM *by Bradley J. Steiner***

### **FINISH IT FAST!**



One of the many differences between a situation of real world self-defense and any competitive sport or any type of “match” fighting is the former offers no round two, no referee to declare that a particular tussle must be broken up, and absolutely no breather or time to think or to plan over the course of a protracted match the particular strategy and tactical method one will employ against one’s opponent. There’s no “corner man” to provide helpful tips. There is no time to “evaluate the adversary’s strategy or technical style,” nor is there any opportunity to request a “rematch” should you lose.

Yes, for those with common sense, I am overstating the obvious. However, it would likely amaze many TRENDS subscribers if they knew how lacking in any sense – common or otherwise – many who participate in “martial arts” actually are.

Here is one of the most critical tactical imperatives for effective self-defense, when physically engaging an attacker is unavoidable: Attack your attacker as quickly, aggressively, as mercilessly, as decisively as possible – always using the element of surprise when you can – AND FINISH THE ENCOUNTER FAST.

With very few exceptions (none I am personally aware of, actually), people who have had experience in judo, boxing, wrestling, karate, ju-jitsu, kick boxing, MMA, etc., have become accustomed to “squaring off” with their opponent before closing in the competitive fight. This is fair and sporting – and necessary for a contest to be matched equally – but anathema to the demands of reacting when confronted or jumped in an actual situation.

Often, the time a defender might waste in getting into a so-called fighting stance is sufficient to land at least one, and often two very effective strikes that – once landed – will all but guarantee the defender’s successful handling of his crisis, IF he blasts into his attacker and follows up ferociously.

Remember please that I am speaking of self-defense, not sport. I frankly advocate deceit, deception, foul methods, “dirty” tactics, and the deliberate and enthusiastic violation of any conceivable rule that might exist, save one: “Win!”

The faster you overwhelm and injure (seriously injure) a violent offender, the better. A combative engagement, as I wrote more than 40 years ago in a martial arts magazine, should last no more than 30 seconds; and five seconds is better!

“Now how can a determined attacker possibly be overcome in 30 seconds or less?” one might ask.

“Rather easily,” I will say, “if the proper tactical approach is employed in defeating him.” The proper tactical approach consists of these elements:

- **Instant retaliatory or preemptive**
- **Action, taken the very second physical force is initiated against you – or you realize you are about to be attacked**
- **Attacking your attacker by going after his eyes, throat, or stomp-kicking his knee. (If he’s facing head-on, then a kick to the testicles might be worthwhile.)**

- **Relentlessly continuing your own onslaught against the attacker and not stopping until he is helpless and you are safe.**

This protocol is usually resisted at first by some decent people who know little about violence and who, properly, have been raised not to harm others and to “be a good sport.”

Unfortunately, being a good sport is suicide when dealing with a violent predator. You must learn, if you have not yet realized, that only the dirtiest, foulest, most viciously destructive and damaging methods make any sense when you must protect yourself or a loved one from unprovoked, unanticipated violent intervention. Read the news reports, study violent crime a little. Speak to cops. You’ll come around. Violent criminals deserve the same mercy a physician gives a patient’s infection. The criminal, like the infection, must be destroyed!

By this I do not mean that every attacker will need to be maimed or killed. Nonsense. However, any attacker must be dealt with by an initial reaction that assumes he might intend to kill you. If he turns and runs, fine. Let him go. You won. If he is clearly rolling around on the sidewalk unable and unwilling to threaten you further, fine. Leave him there, and get the hell away. If you realize after whacking him a few times in vulnerable target areas that you can now get away, do so.

But if the attacker will not run away, and if he is not rendered harmless immediately, then you follow up and attack with unsurpassed fury. Literally hurry up and overwhelm the aggressor with an endless barrage of damaging and repeated blows of your hands and feet. Use anything at hand as a weapon to assist yourself. Nothing is barred in self-defense.

It is crucial you ATTACK any violent offender as soon as possible, and you do so in a manner that injures him. Then, it is equally important that you take advantage of the opportunity you have created and you keep on attacking!

Believe me when I tell you: There is way more “martial” than there is “art” when it comes to the realism and brutality of close combat. You are at war when you are attacked, and you should aim to defeat your attacker in a fierce, all-out, immediate “drive-to-the-wall blitzkrieg” type explosion of aggression that disables the adversary immediately – before he realizes what the hell just happened.

So, if criminal violence ever comes to you, finish it, and finish the scumbag who brought it to you; and do it as quickly as possible – within 30 seconds or less.

# 2020 COVID-19 TREND REPORT

## U.S. COVID CASES UP, GOVERNORS WANT TO LOCK DOWN



Since Johns Hopkins University reported last Tuesday that the U.S. recorded 43,563 new infections, which continued the recent uptrend, governors are inventing new COVID War strategies to slow transmissions.

Among them, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers issued an emergency order after ruling the entire state has become a hot spot for infections.

It should be noted that since March, 1,472 people in a state of 5,822,434 or 0.025 percent of the population have died of the virus.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported last Thursday the fatality rate in the U.S. is 2.8 percent of confirmed cases and the 11th-highest rate in the world with 64.5 deaths per 100,000 citizens.

That is in great contrast, however, with the report from the CDC stating the odds of catching the virus and dying from it in the U.S. are minimal.

### CDC Survival Rates: Age Group Probability of Survival

Age	Percent Survival Rate
0-19:	99.997
20-49:	99.98
50-69:	99.5
70+:	94.6

Moreover, as per CDC reports, 94 percent of the virus victims had an average of 2.6 comorbidities.

The paper reported that state governors have been bracing themselves for what health officials have warned could be a challenging autumn and winter. Dr. Deborah Birx, a member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, pointed to the northeastern region of the country and said health officials “see some of those early signs that we saw across the south after Memorial Day, a sense that there’s early, asymptomatic silent spread occurring in communities.”

She said the spread does not seem to be originating in public venues with safety guidelines in place but rather at homes and small gatherings. The doctor warned about the holidays and how many Americans will likely flout safety measures.

***TRENDPOST:*** *If the virus spread is happening more when people are at home, why are nations now closing down public venues and telling people to stay at home?*

*Because, for the most part, many of those in high office are mental cases on power-hungry highs who don’t know what they are doing and inflate their egos by telling people what to do.*

*Ignored in the coverage is that instead of taking responsibility for their failed policies, politicians and their health henchmen and henchwomen blame “We the People” for not obeying their “safety guidelines” outside – when they filled up swimming pools and the beaches.*

## PLEXIGLASS TAKES CENTER STAGE AT VP DEBATE



The coronavirus outbreak took center stage during last Tuesday’s vice presidential debate between VP Mike Pence and Senator Kamala Harris, with Pence defending the Trump administration’s response through much of the night.

Hitting a crescendo of false extremes, the high-school grade blather was highlighted with Harris saying Trump's response to the virus was "the greatest failure of any presidential administration in the history of our country," and Pence claiming Trump's fighting the COVID War was "the greatest national mobilization since World War II."

Polls taken after the debate rated the blabber showdown a draw.

## **Dumb and Dumber**

The audience at the University of Utah, the venue of the debate, was limited to 90 people. They were told to wear masks throughout the night, and those who entered the building had to test negative for the virus.

Karen Pence, the second lady, made headlines after she greeted her husband onstage after the debate without a mask, which early reports indicated was a blatant disregard of the rules. Her office issued a statement later that said both campaigns agreed spouses could remove masks onstage at the end of the evening.

Further exemplifying the stupidity and self-imposed authority taken by morons on a power trip, the two vice presidential candidates were separated by plexiglass.

*The New York Times* quoted scientists who said their placement was pointless and would do nothing to protect Harris and Pence from infection.

"It's absurd," said Linsey Marr, an expert on airborne viruses at Virginia Tech University, while laughing. She told the paper that when she heard about the plexiglass barriers, she imagined something that enveloped them, except for maybe an opening in the back. She called the ones that were put in place "smaller and less adequate than I imagined."

Dr. Joseph Allen, a ventilation expert at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, told the paper his biggest concern about the plexiglass used at the debate is that those who watched will walk away thinking this is the way to approach the virus. He said he contacted both campaigns and suggested four box fans and a \$300 air filter and duct tape, which would have been a safer option.

***TRENDPOST:*** Again, as we have repeated since February, measures taken by the political generals and their "experts" to fight the COVID War – from shelter-in-

*place lockdowns, mask wearing, social distancing... to plexiglass separations – are proven failures.*

*Rather than blame themselves for the restrictive failures they have imposed with the lockdowns and other severe shelter-in-place dictates, the “Losers in Charge” blame “We the People” for their failures. Indeed, as virus cases go up, it’s the people’s fault for socializing, dancing, singing, drinking, partying, having weddings, and having fun.*

## **NYC PARENTS: SEND MY KIDS TO SCHOOL!**



Around the world and across the nation, depending on what “safety experts” make up and what those in charge want to do, from pre-school to post-graduate... when, where, and how to go back to school, or not go back, has become the new ABnormal.

Governor Andrew Cuomo faced backlash from a group of New York City parents who say his plan to keep their children’s schools closed due to an increase in virus cases is arbitrary and adds an increased burden on their lives.

Parents whose children are “lucky enough” to have the option of in-person learning face a host of logistic hurdles such as navigating staggered arrival and dismissal times. A parent with two kids (each required to be dropped off and picked up at different times) can spend hours a day just getting their kids to and from school. The process has become so disruptive, it could start impacting some parent’s ability to work.

The City’s Department of Education announced last Thursday that about 300 public and private schools in Brooklyn and Queens were ordered to close and



carry out courses online. The mandate included Catholic schools, which prompted the Archdiocese of New York and Brooklyn to appeal to parents to contact Cuomo to voice their concerns.

These schools say they have followed safety measures to the letter and outbreaks in the surrounding neighborhood should not affect the reality inside their schools' doors.

Cuomo's orders involve a two-week closure, but some parents complained that the maps released by his office were unclear on what schools were affected. The paper pointed out there are many homes where siblings travel to schools, which means one child may be forced to stay home while the other continues to go to in-person classes.

The Governor ("Dictator") of New York also warned religious institutions about coronavirus restrictions and said he is willing to act if they refuse to adhere to the guidelines. Governor Cuomo said large religious gatherings "cannot happen again," and if these places of worship do not comply, "then we'll close the institutions down. I am prepared to do that."

Emily Oster, a Brown University economics professor, said statistics involving 200,000 kids show children are not "super-spreaders." Researchers studied a two-week span in September and found a 0.13 percent infection rate among students and 0.24 percent infection rate for staffers, the *New York Post* reported.

"I think it was thought the minute we get people together in schools, there would be these huge outbreaks – and that hasn't come to pass," Oster told the paper.

## **Mumbo, Jumbo**

Using a different danger zone plan, NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio announced new school closures and mandates in so-called red zones in Brooklyn and Queens. The communities surrounding these areas are considered "orange zones" and are forced to employ remote-only classes and outdoor dining only.

The City has also heard from students who fear risk of infection during their commute to schools, the *WSJ* reported. Once inside a school building, measures can be taken to assure social distancing is practiced, but the bus ride to the school could risk exposure.

**TRENDPOST:** What is happening in NYC is happening around the world. Essentially, rules and regulations are being made up by “experts” and school administrators with no hard data or scientific proof to support their decisions.

In all of their reporting, the Presstitutes fail to note that Sweden, when the virus hit hardest in the winter months, did not close down elementary schools. And, as reported by Reuters, “Separate studies by Sweden’s Karolinska Institutet (KI), an independent medical research institute, and the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children and Unicef, showed that Swedish children fared better than children in other countries during the pandemic, both in terms of education and mental health.”

Again, as for the U.S., we have clearly illustrated the stupidity of “those in charge” in fighting the COVID War, as they did with air-raid drills that sent children under their desks in their fight to win the Cold War.



## COVID LOCKDOWNS SPIKE EXTREME POVERTY



The COVID War launched by politicians across the globe has not only devastated millions of businesses and put billions out of work, the World Bank said last Thursday the lockdowns have added another 114 million people to their extreme poverty list.

It is reported that an estimated 730 million people around the world live in extreme poverty. The World Bank considers someone with an annual income of \$700 (or \$1.90 a day) to fit in that category. The virus lockdowns have been blamed for increasing the number of people in that category by 114 million.

Carolina Sánchez-Páramo, Global Head of the World Bank's Poverty and Equity Global Practice, told the *WSJ* that COVID is the worst setback to the fight against extreme poverty in a generation. The paper reported that before the outbreak, about 615 million people were considered to be experiencing extreme poverty.

The World Bank's Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report sees a trend of extreme poverty in urban areas, which is affecting citizens with higher education levels. These individuals are less likely to work in agriculture than those living in extreme poverty before the outbreak, the report said.

There is also concern that help might not be on the way for some time. Johns Hopkins University, which has been tracking coronavirus cases, reported eight out of ten of the world's most affected countries have seen an increase in cases, prompting fears of the beginning of a second wave.

The paper reported the world has been making gains in recent years in the fight against extreme poverty that largely affects sub-Saharan Africa. The region, which already has about 440 million in extreme poverty, is preparing for a 42 percent rise this year.

“The pandemic and global recession may cause over 1.4 percent of the world’s population to fall into extreme poverty,” said World Bank Group President David Malpass.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *Considering the World Bank estimates some 730 million people around the world live in extreme poverty (which they say is someone with an annualized income of \$1.90 a day), in the real world, \$1.90 a day is worth nothing, thus we estimate true poverty rates are well over a billion.*

*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.*

*Also, the poorer and more desperate people become, the more they will do to flee their homeland, thus increasing the refugee and migrant crisis, which, in turn, will accelerate populist movements in nations not wanting foreigners to enter their country.*

## **UNIV. OF NEW HAVEN QUARANTINES DORMS AFTER “UNAUTHORIZED” GATHERING**



Administrators at the University of New Haven, located in West Haven, CT, ordered a residence hall for students on its campus must quarantine after an “unauthorized” gathering included a person who tested positive for COVID, according to a report.

The *CT Post* reported last Tuesday the school issued a statement that said the measures are “mandatory, and any violations of these guidelines will be subject to

strict and swift discipline, up to and including suspension, expulsion from University housing, or dismissal from the University.”

The paper said the quarantine measure affects students living in Winchester Hall, which involves 347 students. *WFSB* reported 277 remain on campus and 70 are living off-campus. The gathering in question reportedly took place last weekend at a venue outside of the campus.

Reports did not indicate how the school will enforce the measures, but the local news station said these students are being provided with food and laundry service. The quarantine will last for 14 days.

The letter to students read:

“Now is not the time to let our guard down. We must all remain vigilant. As we have seen at many other schools in our state and region, an increase in cases could threaten on-campus operations. To be clear, the actions of a few could put the remainder of the semester at risk.”

***TRENDPOST:*** *Across America and from the U.K. to Switzerland, colleges are locking down students, forcing them to quarantine as fellow students test positive for the virus.*

*Totally absent in all the reporting is the hard, scientific fact that, according to the CDC, the recovery rate for those aged 20-49 is 99.98 percent (ages 0-19 has a 99.997 percent recovery rate).*

*Unable to grow up and play like young people do, the harsh penalties and restrictions imposed on them by college administrators, plus all the other social distancing, mask wearing, no congregating/dancing/parting/singing, etc. will not only instill emotions of constant fear, but restrict their natural human development.*

***TREND FORECAST:*** *Just as there were Vietnam War protests among college students who didn't want to fight and die, so, too, will there be COVID War protests among young people who want to live life and be free. We forecast there will be a growing, new anti-COVID War/counter culture movement echoing the sentiments of the 1960s rebellion but with new sounds, styles, and political movements.*

## JEWISH LEADERS FIGHT CUOMO'S RESTRICTIONS



Jewish leaders in ultra-Orthodox communities in Brooklyn, NY, took to the streets last week to protest what they see as being unfairly targeted by Governor Andrew Cuomo after he announced new limits to religious gatherings in specific communities in the City.

Some local officials issued a statement criticizing Cuomo over his actions.

“He has chosen to pursue a scientifically and constitutionally questionable shutdown of our communities, and his administration’s utter lack of coordination and communication with local officials has been an ongoing issue since the start of the pandemic and particularly recently as we faced this uptick,” the statement read, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Cuomo’s new restrictions went into effect on Friday and prompted the Roman Catholic diocese and an Orthodox Jewish group to sue. His new restrictions limit religious services to ten people. Cuomo’s decision to enforce the new guidelines seemed to anger the Jewish community because several religious holidays, like Sukkot, will be affected. A federal judge upheld Cuomo’s order last Friday.

Judge Kiyo Matsumoto of the Federal District Court in Brooklyn said she sympathized with the community but disagreed that Cuomo unfairly targeted the religious group.

“How can we ignore the compelling state interest in protecting the health and life of all New Yorkers?” she said, according to *The New York Times*.

The *NYT* reported that some members of the ultra-Orthodox community in Borough Park, Brooklyn, vented their frustrations and gathered in the streets and



lit a small fire. There were reports the crowd assaulted photographers filming the event.

Cuomo insisted he was forced to make the decision due to an increase of infections in the area and some residents' refusal to follow his guidelines. Mass gatherings could result in a \$15,000 fine and non-mask wearers will be fined \$1,000, according the Mayor's office.

***TREND FORECAST:*** Across the nation and around the world, religious groups and once-socially diverse factions will unite in fighting against COVID War mandates that threaten fundamental freedoms. Disparate factions against enforced vaccinations, rising taxes, and increasing government control will come together to form new political parties.

## MAN DIES IN FACE MASK CONFRONTATION



A New York State man was charged with negligent homicide last Tuesday after police say he shoved an 80-year-old man who confronted him in a bar about not wearing a face mask amid the coronavirus outbreak.

Donald Lewinski, 65, was confronted by Rocco Sapienza inside a bar near Buffalo, *The New York Times* reported. Lewinski allegedly shoved Sapienza with two hands to the ground, and five days later Sapienza died from blunt force trauma to the head, according to a preliminary autopsy report.

"It's beyond sad these kinds of situations have continued to escalate, and this should cause everyone to pause and think twice about how we as a society want to conduct ourselves during this pandemic," John J. Flynn, the Erie County district attorney said, according to the paper.



Flynn told reporters he believes this was the first death tied to a physical confrontation over wearing a mask, *CBS News* reported. New York State demands that patrons inside bars wear masks when they leave their tables.

The *NYT* reported Lewinski was seen leaving his seat several times on video, and police said he made “lewd comments” during his time at the bar, which might have contributed to the confrontation.

Sapienza, a former Marine, and Lewinski were reportedly at Pamp’s Red Zone Bar & Grill for a few hours before the confrontation and were considered to be regulars. Sapienza’s son told *CBS News* his father was well-liked but “wasn’t afraid to call somebody out for being stupid.”

### **More to Come**

Across the U.S., as evidenced by the numerous videos on social media, there have been countless disputes between individuals who refuse to wear masks that have resulted in fistfights and passengers being booted off flights.

Last week, a man was thrown off an Allegiant flight from Arizona to Utah for refusing to wear a mask and engaging in a verbal confrontation with another passenger.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *We estimate some 38 percent of Americans are against the COVID War and will resist those who demand they join the battle.*

*We estimate that another 28 percent, while not resistors, signed up to fight the COVID War because they lack the courage to disobey orders from their leaders and do not Think for Themselves. Therefore, if the side they joined is losing the battle, they will surrender to the stronger force.*

## CA GOVERNOR URGES DINERS TO WEAR MASKS IN BETWEEN BITES



Governor Gavin Newsom's office was mocked over a tweet earlier this month telling California diners to make sure they wear their mask in between bites when eating out.

The message was tweeted on 3 October and was panned on social media. One commenter pointed out the risk for virus transmission increases each time someone touches their face.

"Any calculations done on how many 'bites' each individual takes in a meal and therefore how many hand-to-face contacts that will mean? Presume that has been risk-assessed?" the tweet read.

*SFGate* reported the state has approved indoor dining provided restaurants operate at 25 percent capacity. As of late last week, the state recorded 16,000 deaths tied to the virus and 800,000 infections.

Shockingly, Newsom's insane lust for control is not unusual in today's political realm. Across the globe, we see countless examples of want-to-be dictators testing the limits of their authority. Francisco Domagoso, the mayor of Manilla, (the largest city in the Philippines with a metro population of some 14 million) recently banned karaoke machines during the daytime because it was distracting students from online classes.

***TRENDPOST:*** Once again, as we have reported since politicians launched the COVID War, they are employing similar "safety protocols" as they did during the Cold War when they forced students to hide under their desks in air raid drills to save them in case an atom bomb was dropped nearby.

*That is no joke! Everybody did it, and, if you disobeyed, you were disciplined.*

*That the Governor is telling people to put on a mask in between bites and sips, as though the virus will halt transmission between eating and drinking, is preposterous.*

*Yet, this arrogant imbecile is in full charge of the largest economy in America and the fifth largest in the world.*

*We also note that California was the first state to lock down. With a population of 40 million, since March, 16,593 people died of the virus or 0.0415 percent.*

## **CORONAVIRUS & MENTAL ILLNESS**



The coronavirus and its effect on mental health has been an ongoing concern by medical professionals, but a new global initiative hopes to learn more about the virus and its impact on those with mental illness.

The *Financial Times* reported last Saturday that the Healthy Brains Global Initiative hopes to raise \$10 billion from a variety of sources – including wealthy individuals – and approach mental illness with the same kind of sophistication that other diseases receive.

Ed Whiting, appointed to the initiative's Board of Directors, told the paper COVID has added to the stress level of many people and has increased reports of depression. He pointed out that the depression rate among the young has seen a noticeable increase.

The Kaiser Family Foundation reported last week that 53 percent of U.S. adults have said the virus has had a “negative impact on their mental health.” The report said that back in May, only 39 percent have felt that kind of impact.

***TRENDPOST:*** *As we noted when the COVID War was launched in February, none of the politicians or the mass media addressed the grave implications it would impose on the human spirit.*

*The mental health toll will continue to increase as the “Greatest Depression” worsens, particularly among young people who face the despair of futureless futures.*

## FACE MASK MANDATES SPARK PROTESTS



Protesters gathered in Rome this past weekend to voice anger over new measures calling for a nationwide face mask mandate for anyone out in public or face a fine of up to \$1,200.

“From now on, masks and protective gear have to be brought with us when we leave our house and worn. We have to wear them all the time unless we are in a situation of continuous isolation,” Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said.

Businesses that do not enforce the face mask rule could also face the same fine and risk a 30-day mandatory closure.

The *Associated Press* reported the country of 60.36 million saw 5,724 cases in 24 hours and 29 deaths, which is significantly lower than the number of daily fatalities back in March.

Protests broke out in other areas in the country, such as Milan, which called the country to task over its economic policies during the outbreak.

Conte said the mask mandate will help ward off another country-wide lockdown.

Protests over mask mandates also emerged in Dublin, organized by the country's far-right National Party, according to *Irish Central*. They clashed with about 100 counter-protesters who called them "Nazi scum."

The report said the two groups "violently charged at one another" and fought. Photographs emerged showing dozens of demonstrators knocking down police barricades. The *Irish Times* reported that fireworks, bolts, and nuts were used as projectiles during the clash.

The paper described the counter-protesters being partly organized by Anti-Fascist Action Ireland.

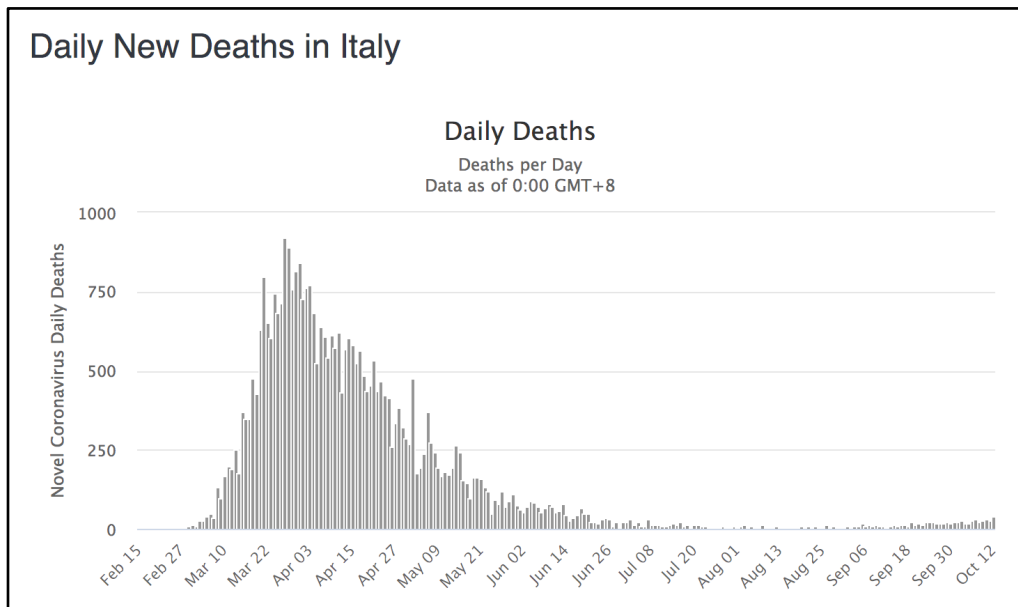
France also saw a spat of social unrest as dozens attacked a police station outside of Paris on Sunday with fireworks and metal rods. While no one was injured, last week, two police officers were pulled from their vehicle and shot with their own weapons; one officer is still in serious condition.

Hospitals across Paris have reportedly seen a dramatic increase in patients exhibiting coronavirus infection. The country recorded 26,896 new infections last Saturday and 54 new deaths. France, which has a population of some 66 million, has had a total of 718,873 cases. The *BBC* reported that cities across the country, like Lyon and Saint-Etienne, will also become zones of maximum alert.

Olivier Veran, the country's health minister, said, "The situation has deteriorated in several metropolises in recent days. "Every day, more and more people are infected."

***TRENDPOST:*** Yes, more and more people are getting "infected" because more and more people are getting tested.

*But, for example, as the Worldometer chart below exemplifies, which the media and governments never show, less and less people are dying from the virus.*



## WHO: GET READY TO DIE. 10% OF WORLD INFECTED



When the COVID War was launched in February, what politicians and the media advertised as a temporary inconvenience swiftly shifted to the permanent societal mutilation called the “New Normal.”

The public tolerance for “flattening the curve” and, to a lesser extent, the implementation of the “New ABnormal,” was predicated on the catastrophic death tolls forecast by the “experts.” After months of collecting data, however, the global death statistics prove these “experts” were drastically wrong. Indeed, last spring, Dr. Neil Ferguson’s team at Imperial College London predicted the death toll in the U.S. would be 2.2 million while Great Britain would suffer over half a million deaths.

Despite evidence to the contrary, the mainstream media continues to peddle fear and disinformation. Because the death statistics contradict the narrative of a deadly pandemic, one of the primary tactics of fear-inducing deception is the incessant reporting of “rising case numbers.”

Notice whenever the media mentions rising case numbers, the data is never accompanied by the statistically relevant information regarding change in deaths and in the number of overall tests.

### **Liars Lie, Numbers Don't**

Last week, further escalating the fear agenda, mainstream media promoted the theory proposed by Dr. Michael Ryan, Head of Emergencies for the WHO, which said up to 10 percent of the world's population has been infected with the coronavirus.

Officially, the total global number of cases is recognized as about 35 million. According to Dr. Ryan, the “best estimate” of ten percent of the entire world being infected would place the number of total cases to 780 million!

In an 8 October article for Off-guardian.org, Kit Knightly said,

“The global population is roughly 7.8 billion people, if 10% have been infected that is 780 million cases. The global death toll currently attributed to Sars-Cov2 is 1,061,539.

That's an infection fatality rate of roughly 0.14%. Right in line with the seasonal flu and the predictions of many experts from around the world. 0.14 is over 24 times lower than the WHO's provisional figure of 3.4% back in March.”

Coupling the WHO's originally projected death rate of 3.4 percent with Dr. Ryan's recent “best estimate” of about 780 million cases worldwide, the total death toll should be about 26 million... not the 1,087,000 currently reported.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *It should be noted that many people suffering from pre-existing chronic conditions who tested positive for COVID were categorized as “COVID deaths.” Thus, a person may have died “with COVID” and not “from COVID.”*



*Therefore, it is likely the actual death rate is even lower than 0.14 percent; which would make the “pandemic” less deadly than the average seasonal flu.*

*Despite this data, the mainstream media and power-hungry politicians will continue promoting fear, while the indoctrinated masses remain paralyzed, tacitly participating in the destruction of their freedom and their future.*

## **W.H.O. NOW SAYS “WE DO NOT ADVOCATE LOCKDOWNS”**



On 22 April, the head of the WHO, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, made the strong recommendation that countries with increasing cases of the coronavirus continue lockdowns to contain the spread.

As the *BBC* reported at that time, Dr. Ghebreyesus said, “Lifting lockdowns could cause infections to reignite.” He added, “There is no question that stay-at-home orders and other physical distancing measures have successfully suppressed transmission in many countries.”

The WHO’s recommendations were part of the “expert” advise used by political leaders to defend the curbing of personal freedoms and what has become the devastating consequences of the unprecedented shutdown of the global economy.

Yet, recently, two leading WHO officials made it clear that it’s time to end the harsh lockdowns, which are doing more harm than good.

On 8 October, Dr. David Nabarro, the WHO’s Special Envoy on COVID-19, said in an interview that political leaders have been too extreme in using lockdowns to try to slow the spread:

“We really do have to learn how to coexist with this virus in a way that doesn’t require constant closing down of economies but at the same time in a way that is not associated with high levels of suffering and death it’s what we’re calling the middle path and the middle path is about being able to hold the virus at bay whilst keeping economic and social life going and we think it’s doable.”

Responding to a question about how governments around the world have been responding to the coronavirus, Dr. Nabarro said, “The reality is it’s been a remarkably uncoordinated and disjointed response.”

As for politicians using lockdowns as the primary way of dealing with the virus, Dr. Nabarro made these points:

- “We in the World Health Organization do not advocate lockdowns as a primary means of control of this virus. The only time we believe a lockdown is justified is to buy you time to reorganize regroup rebalance your resources protect your health workers who are exhausted, but by and large, we’d rather not do it.”
- Just look what’s happened to the tourism industry for example in the Caribbean or in the Pacific because people aren’t taking the holidays. Look what’s happened to smallholder farmers all over the world because their markets have got dented. Look what’s happening to poverty levels. It seems that we may well have a doubling of world poverty by next year. We may well have at least a doubling of child malnutrition because children are not getting meals at school and their parents, in poor families, are not able to afford it.”
- “This is a terrible, ghastly global catastrophe actually... and so we really do appeal to all world leaders. Stop using lockdown as your primary control method, develop better systems for doing it work together and learn from each other, but remember – lockdowns just have one consequence that you must never ever belittle, and that is making poor people an awful lot poorer.”

### **WHO Doubles Down Against Lockdown**

Last Friday, Dr. Mike Ryan, Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergency Program, appearing at a briefing in Geneva regarding the organization’s report of a record one-day increase in coronavirus cases worldwide, told attendees, “What

we want to try and avoid is these massive lockdowns that are so punishing to communities, to society and to everything else.”

Dr. Ryan added, “We don’t want to flip from no cases, everything’s open; a few cases, everything shuts down again because that’s exactly the sort of scenario we want to try and avoid. What we really need to focus on is ensuring that as cases come back – and they will and do come back... we need to make sure that we’re also focusing not just on restrictive measures.”

He concluded by stating, “We shouldn’t accept that in every country the return of cases should be seen as an immediate return of the need for lock-down restrictions at a national level. There are many things that can be done between those two points and we should make every effort to do so in order to keep our social and economic lives open and particularly schools and other vital services.”

***TREND FORECAST:*** *As we noted at the onset of the COVID War, the lockdown strategies and numerous rule books of regulations being imposed on the public had been done without the support of hard scientific data.*

*And, just as with all the other wars of destruction politicians launch that cost trillions and kill millions, we warned there was no discussion of the implications of their launching the COVID War and that they had no exit strategy.*

*The results are now becoming evident to even those blindsided by their actions: millions will be killed and trillions will be lost fighting a war that should have never been started.*

## **THE GREAT BARRINGTON DECLARATION: NO COVID FEAR**



Since the onset of the “pandemic,” anyone challenging the official narrative was marginalized, demonetized, or outright silenced. What developed was a cult of conformity where speaking out (regardless of one’s level of expertise or wealth of

statistical evidence) became dangerous to maintaining one's professional and social life.

As the weeks of “curve flattening” have morphed into months of prolonged lockdowns, more and more people are regaining the courage to Think for Themselves. The handful of brave doctors (and journalists) who initially questioned the preposterously high projected death rates and devastating social, psychological, and economic effects of “lockdowns,” have been joined by thousands of likeminded medical professionals who now recognize “the cure is more deadly than the disease.”

Jayanta Bhattacharya, Professor of Medicine at Stanford, stated, “In March I felt alone. [Now] I think there are a very large number of public-health experts, epidemiologists and doctors who oppose further lockdowns.”

Bhattacharya is one of the co-authors of the “The Great Barrington Declaration,” which urges government to protect the most vulnerable members of society while allowing the young and healthy to resume normal life and develop herd immunity. The Declaration has inspired a diverse group of over 6,000 doctors and scientists from around the world who have signed onto the petition.

Most likely, considering the global nature of the scientists, they are fully aware of how Sweden handled the virus without locking down and achieved lower death rates several other European countries which imposed strict lockdowns and masks.

Doctors and scientists who signed the Declaration are united in their belief that lockdown measures will end up killing more people than the coronavirus itself. Gerd Muller, Germany's minister of Economic Cooperation and Development, believes the response to the pandemic will result in “one of the biggest” hunger and poverty crises in human history.

Peter Nilsson, a Swedish professor of internal medicine and epidemiology at Lund University, echoed Muller's economic concerns, “It's so important to understand that the deaths of COVID-19 will be far less than the deaths caused by societal lockdown when the economy is ruined.”

Some concerned doctors warned of excess deaths resulting from untreated cancers and other foregone medical treatments, while others focused on the long-term social consequences of lockdowns. Despite the specific concerns of the

individual doctors, the common bond all these professionals share is the thought that the lockdowns are more harmful than the disease.

***TRENDPOST:*** *Opposition to official dictates will continue to increase as governments continue to impose authoritarian edicts despite statistical evidence countering the concept of a deadly pandemic. The main reason being their economies are rapidly declining and national protests against their lockdown actions are escalating.*

*Indeed, with mounting pressures against them, many may be more concerned about their own death rate rather than those killed by the virus.*

## TRENDS IN TOONS *by Stephen Green*



[www.MuseumofAwesomeArt.com](http://www.MuseumofAwesomeArt.com)

## TRENDS-EYE VIEW

### SLAVELANDIA: RICH GET RICHER, POOR GET POORER



As we have been reporting for years, the rich are getting richer and the “Bigs” are getting bigger, as the plantation workers of Slavelandia get poorer.

*Bloomberg's* “Billionaires Index” released data last week that showed the richest 59 billionaires in the U.S. watched their net worth skyrocket during the coronavirus outbreak and now own more wealth than the poorest 50 percent of Americans.

*Bloomberg* reported the top 1 percent of Americans combine for a net worth of \$34.2 trillion while the poorest 50 percent of the country, which amounts to some 165 million people, have \$2.08 trillion. The report said the 50 richest alone are worth \$2 trillion.

In addition, the stock market's performance played a major role in the widening wealth gap. As reported in the **Trends Journal**, wealthy Americans have a significant amount of their fortune tied up in equities, while the poorest tend to have little to no money in the stock market.

About \$5.7 trillion of added wealth came from stock market gains, of which 10 percent of the population owns 87 percent and 1 percent owns 52 percent.

Last week in the U.S., first-time unemployment claims were higher than expected, totaling 840,000 new applications. Overall, 25.5 million out-of-workers are receiving some form of unemployment payments.



Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said last Tuesday, “The pandemic is further widening divides in wealth and economic mobility.”

Powell warned that more government aid is needed to keep the economy from weakening and “a long period of unnecessarily slow progress could continue to exacerbate existing disparities in our economy,” according to *Bloomberg*.

The Federal Reserve has already injected trillions into financial markets to prevent a deeper crisis. Aside from a \$3 trillion injection, which increased its balance sheet from \$4.2 trillion in February to \$7 trillion in July, the Fed promised in March to “purchase Treasury securities and agency mortgage-backed securities in the amounts needed to support smooth market functioning and effective transmission of monetary policy to broader financial conditions and the economy.”

## **Workers of the World**

The massive gains for the richest are not isolated in the U.S. The *BBC* reported the world’s richest saw their net worth surge 27.5 percent during a time when many countries enforced strict lockdown measures and closed “non-essential” businesses to combat the virus’ spread.

UBS Global Wealth Management and PwC Switzerland said the total wealth by the billionaire class reached \$10.2 trillion in July, and there are more billionaires today – 2,189 – than ever before in history.

The historic increase in wealth comes at the same time the World Bank blamed the coronavirus for the first rise in extreme poverty in two decades. (See our article in this issue, “[COVID LOCKDOWNS SPIKE EXTREME POVERTY](#).”)

***TREND FORECAST:*** *As we have forecast, there will be uprisings across the globe as the “Greatest Depression” worsens and “Off With Their Heads 2.0” battles rage between the haves and the have-nots.*

*There will also be strong anti-monopoly movements and calls for undoing of public services that have been privatized. These will also be platforms of new political movements.*

## HOTTEST SEPTEMBER ON RECORD HAS SCIENTISTS ON EDGE



The planet has just experienced its hottest September on record, beating out last year's temperature by 0.09 degrees Fahrenheit, the Copernicus Climate Change Service said in a statement released last week.

The *BBC* reported researchers point to the record temperature and blame emissions that result from humans. Scientists have also raised alarms that Arctic sea ice is at its second-lowest level on record.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said there is a 99.9 percent chance this year will register among the hottest on record, but La Niña will play a role in the final reading.

*The New York Times* reported that La Niña could result in warmer conditions across the mainland U.S. and colder temperatures in places like southeastern Alaska.

Reports indicated the high temperature resulted in wildfires in the U.S. west and an active hurricane season.

Ahira Sánchez-Lugo, a physical scientist for NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information, told the *Times* his agency is set to release its assessment on temperature this week. He said, "Even though the details of the report are different, they all come to the same conclusion that the global temperatures are increasing."

Ed Hawkins, a climate scientist from Reading University, told the *BBC* that a one-degree increase to the world's temperature is "dangerous to some people." He said the greenhouse gas emission trend indicates a possible three-degree increase in temperature.

“We really don’t want to find out what that’ll be like,” he said.

***TRENDPOST:*** *“Climate Change”? Forget about it! Since late January, the COVID War has been the 24/7 headline news story.*

*Remember Greta Thunberg, the climate change media heroine? No longer center stage... and she would not stand out in a crowd with a mask on.*

*With the “Greatest Depression” worsening across the globe, and with hundreds of millions of lives and livelihoods and tens of millions of businesses destroyed by the COVID War, there is little concern among the general public of any issue that does not affect their immediate personal needs.*

## **CLEANER AIR IN CHINA = FEWER HOSPITAL VISITS?**



Scientists say the drop in some air pollutants in China during the past few months may have resulted in a significant decrease in hospitalizations from other ailments while the country worked to get a grip on the coronavirus outbreak.

The *South China Morning Post* reported that cleaner air in some of the country’s large cities resulted in a decrease of PM2.5, considered to be a dangerous particle that could lead to lung ailments such as asthma attacks and other respiratory diseases. These conditions could result in hospitalizations.

The report pointed out that China enforced strict lockdown orders during the early days of the outbreak, which resulted in a 36 percent reduction in nitrous oxide emissions at the time. The clean air in the country may be short-lived, however, as the report stated coal, oil, and gas consumption are back to pre-coronavirus levels.

But researchers from several countries, including the U.S. and China, believe hospitals in the country saw up to 60,000 fewer cases of other respiratory issues and 5,000 fewer admissions.

The paper reported that the peer-reviewed study was published in the scientific journal *Geophysical Research Letters* and suggests cleaner air could play a significant role in mortality.

It is estimated that air pollution killed 1.24 million Chinese in 2017, according to an analysis for the University of Washington in Seattle's "Global Burden of Disease" study published this year.

Globally, according to the WHO, air pollution kills an estimated seven million people annually, increasing mortality for heart disease, stroke, lung cancer, diabetes, and pneumonia.

***TRENDPOST:*** *To date, 4,634 people have died of the virus in China and one million have died from it globally. As we know, air pollution has been a mass murderer for centuries, yet there are no lockdowns or strict government orders imposed to curb this deadly enemy.*

## **PRESIDENTIAL REALITY SHOW®**

### **PUTIN ACKNOWLEDGES BIDEN'S ANTI-RUSSIAN RHETORIC**



Russian President Vladimir Putin said in a televised interview last week he has noticed Joe Biden's "sharp, anti-Russian rhetoric" during his presidential campaign, while giving credit to President Trump for improving the two countries' relationship.

Putin has largely stayed quiet on the U.S. election. Democrats have been critical of what they see as a cozy relationship between President Trump and Putin and have blamed Russian collusion for contributing to Trump's victory in 2016.

During Putin's interview on Russian state television, he did not refer to Biden by name, instead referring to him as "the candidate from the Democratic Party." He said Russia is "unfortunately" used to the rhetoric.

Biden, who has called Trump "Putin's puppy," recently recalled the time, when he was vice president back in 2011, that he met with Putin.

"I said, 'Mr. Prime Minister, I'm looking into your eyes, and I don't think you have a soul'... And he looked back at me, and he smiled, and he said, 'We understand one another.'"

U.S. intelligence officials believe Russia is playing an active role in trying to hurt Biden's chances to win in 2020, even though Putin denies the charge.

The *Associated Press* said Putin seemed intent on hedging his bets in the event of a Biden victory in November. He said he was encouraged by Biden's intention to extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), which is set to expire shortly after the New Year.

"This is a very serious element of our potential collaboration in the future," Putin said.

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

*As we have been reporting since the end of the Cold War – from America's Gulf War, Kosovo War, Afghan War, Iraq War... to its military interventions in Somalia, Libya, etc., plus its 800 military bases in 70 countries – Russia is a minor war-mongering nation compared to the U.S. track record of killing millions and stealing trillions from its taxpayers to wage these wars.*

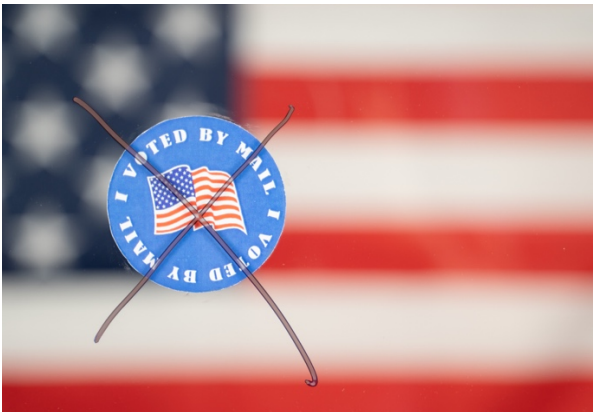
*And, as we have reported in detail since the so-called "Russiagate" was launched by the Democratic Party and its media Presstitutes immediately following Trump's win of the 2016 election, there has not been one shred of hard evidence proving Russia interfered with the election.*

*Yet, the drama continues, and most people buy it, just as most have swallowed other lies sold to them by their governments over the centuries. “Remember the Main”?*

*As the founder of [Occupy Peace & Freedom](#), as I see it, to keep peddling hatred between the two nations, rather than creating movements toward peace, is morally, spiritually, and economically destructive. Indeed, America was an ally of Russia in World War II and would not have achieved victory when it did without them.*

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

## **TEXAS SUPREME COURT STOPS HARRIS COUNTY MAIL-IN BALLOTS**



The Texas Supreme Court reversed a lower-court decision last Wednesday that would have allowed Harris Country, which includes Houston, to ship out about two million unsolicited mail-in ballots. This decision is seen as a setback for Democrats.

“Mass-mailing unsolicited ballot applications to voters ineligible to vote by mail cannot be said to be necessary or indispensable to the conduct of early voting,” the all-Republican court said in its opinion.

News website Axiom reported Texas citizens can vote by mail if they are either 65+ years old, disabled, or absent on Election Day. (The report said the Texas court



ruled in May that a lack of immunity for COVID-19 does not qualify as being disabled in the state.)

Chris Hollins, the Harris County clerk, had intentions of sending out the documents and was accused by other state leaders for overreaching on this authority, the *Wall Street Journal* reported. The court said the clerk's effort to send out a mail-in ballot could have resulted in "irreparable injury to the State." Hollins said he was disappointed the court "has sided with political forces seeking to limit voter access this November."

Democrats have flirted with the prospect of winning the traditionally red state. The *Texas Tribune* reported President Trump leads Joe Biden by five points in the state.

***TRENDPOST:*** *Some ten million Americans already have voted by mail. In the 29 September presidential debate, President Trump disparaged mail ballots as being "manipulated" and said there "is going to be a fraud like you've never seen."*

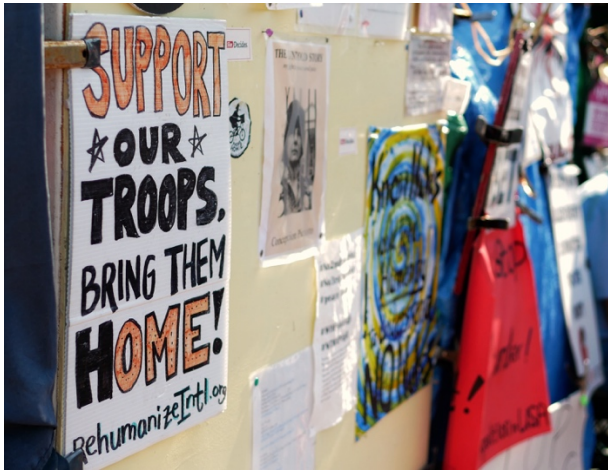
*Our 6 October article, "[BOTCHED BALLOTS HIT NYC](#)" noted that over 100,000 ballots mailed to NYC voters had errors in them.*

*The Times has also reported allegations of ballot harvesting in Minnesota and voter fraud cases in North Carolina.*

*Thus, as we have noted, minus a wild card event, it is highly probable it will be long after Election Day before it is determined which candidate is the winner of The Presidential Reality Show.*



## TRUMP'S “BRING HOME THE TROOPS” NOT BIG NEWS



President Trump seemed to catch some U.S. military leaders off guard last Wednesday when he took to Twitter to announce “we should have” all troops in Afghanistan home by Christmas, according to *The New York Times*.

The paper, citing a senior U.S. military official, reported there was some speculation surrounding the timing of Trump’s announcement. His tweet came hours before the vice presidential debate in Utah and hours after Robert O’Brien, his national security adviser, told an audience at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas that he expected a troop reduction to about 2,500 by early 2021.

“We should have the small remaining number of our BRAVE Men and Women serving in Afghanistan home by Christmas!” Trump tweeted.

***TRENDPOST:*** *President Trump’s winding down the Afghan war before Election Day in hopes of gaining votes was long forecast by Gerald Celente.*

*However, the Afghan war, the longest in American history (going on for nearly 20 years) and despite costing trillions, killing thousands, and ruining the lives of millions, is not an issue in The Presidential Reality Show.*

*The war is barely mentioned in the mainstream media and is of no concern among the general public. Thus, Trump’s playing the peace card, once a favorite among so-called liberals and Democrats, will not bring their votes.*

# TRENDS IN GEOPOLITICS

## ARMENIA VS. AZERBAIJAN: SPREADING WAR



The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan continued to destabilize the region last week, with Armenian President Armen Sarkissian warning the area could continue to descend into the abyss and become a “new Syria.”

Sarkissian said Turkey has emerged as a “bully in the region” and has pushed aside Russia from its role as a mediator between the two sides over the Armenian-controlled Nagorno-Karabakh, which has seen its worst violence in over 25 years that started on 27 September.

The Armenian leader called on the U.S. and Russia to apply more pressure on Turkey and stop the “full war” from raging. He said Ankara’s presence has destroyed the balance there.

“What is a NATO state [Turkey] doing in Azerbaijan helping to fight Nagorno-Karabakh? Explain to me,” he said.

The region has been a source of tension since 1988, when the two former Soviet republics began a war that raged until 1994. The *Times* reported under Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Ankara provides weapons and training to Azerbaijan, and there is evidence Turkey has engaged in some of the fighting, a claim the country has denied.

According to media reports, there have been hundreds of fatalities and tens of thousands displaced.

Artak Beglaryan, Nagorno-Karabakh's rights ombudsman, told the *AFP* that "preliminary estimates, some 50 percent of Karabakh's population and 90 percent of women and children – some 70,000 to 75,000 people – have been displaced," according to Antiwar.com.

Sarkissian called on the international community to "step up the effort to stop the clashes. And the focus of the effort should be on Turkey. The moment Turkey is taken out of the equation we will be closer to a ceasefire and return to the negotiation table."

The *Associated Press* reported last Saturday that Armenia and Azerbaijan have agreed to what seemed like a short-lived cease-fire, which some said never went into effect. The Armenians accused Azerbaijan of a bombing that reportedly killed a civilian. Azerbaijan's top military official called the accusation by Armenia a "provocation."

The cease-fire talks were prompted by an invitation from Russian President Vladimir Putin to visit Moscow, RT.com reported. Russia, much like Turkey, plays an important role in the conflict because without Russia, Armenia would be overwhelmed.

Sarkissian likened Turkey's effort in the Caucasus to "ethnic cleansing" and recalled the Armenian genocide in 1915 at the hands of the rulers of the Ottoman Empire. About 1.5 million Armenians were killed. Adding to the antagonism, Ankara still refuses to admit its role in the genocide of nearly 1.5 million Armenians following the end of World War I.

On Sunday, Azerbaijan ratcheted up the tension by accusing Armenia of attacking its cities and villages in violation of the tentative ceasefire. Azerbaijani president Ilham Aliyev claimed missiles fired into the region's second largest city, Ganja, resulted in nine deaths and over 30 injuries. Aliyev went as far as calling the attack a "War crime."

Conversely Nagorno-Karabakh's Armenian officials asserted the Azerbaijani claims to be false while counter-proposing that over the weekend, Azerbaijani forces had shelled Stepanakert, a regional capital.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *As we have reported, Turkey's currency has fallen to all-time lows against the dollar as its economy slumps into the "Greatest Depression." Moreover, the nation is in conflict with Libya, Syria, and Greece.*

*Confirming what we had forecast, this Sunday, the New York Post reported,*

*“Erdoğan’s backing of Azerbaijan is a useful distraction from his sagging domestic economy, but it turns a long-standing local conflict into a bigger geopolitical competition. Armenia can resist only with the backing of Russia, which has been fueling that side of the arms race – which means it’s just a step or two to direct conflict between Moscow and Ankara. ‘We are one step away from a large scale war,’ says Olesya Vartanyan of the International Crisis Group.”*

## **PROTESTS BREAK OUT IN INDONESIA OVER WORK LAW**



Massive protests broke out last Thursday across Indonesia after the passage of a statute that critics say hang workers and the environment out to dry while enriching the country’s elite.

*The New York Times* reported the government in Jakarta, which is known as the “omnibus law,” allows companies to cut pay, eliminate days off, and allow employers to hire freelance contractors to take the jobs of permanent employees.

The protests across the country have been contentious, and 400 people were arrested on Thursday alone, *CNN* reported. Protesters clashed with police, set fires, and broke into buildings, according to the report. Police resorted to using water cannons and tear gas to break up the protests.

“We remind you that we are still in a pandemic condition, there is a public health emergency,” Wiku Adisasmito, a member of the country’s COVID-19 task force, said, according to the *Associated Press*.

The *Times* spoke to a 37-year-old who lead a factory strike and said the government is “killing us” with the law.

“The president is paying back the financiers who helped him win the election, not ordinary people who voted for him,” the worker said.

The legislation, called the “Job Creation Law,” was passed last Monday. In one fell swoop, the bill amended 79 laws that were in place. President Joko Widodo’s administration believes the legislation will make the country more attractive to investment, the *AP* reported.

***TREND FORECAST:*** *To date, of a population of 274.33 million people, 12,027 people have died of the virus or 0.0043 percent.*

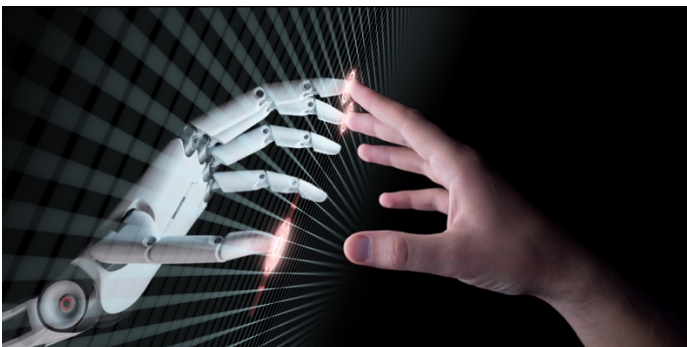
*We note what is going on in Indonesia because it is more of what is yet to come: violent civil wars. Name the country and look at the facts. The rich are getting much richer as the majority of populations get much poorer.*

*Again, the “OFF WITH THEIR HEADS 2.0” movement is accelerating across the globe as people take to the streets to demonstrate against government corruption and incompetence, lack of basic living standards, and rising crime.*

*Most importantly, although Indonesia is an unlikely flash point, civil wars will spread to regional wars and regional wars will lead to world war if the trends are not reversed.*

## **TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE *by Bennett Davis***

### **SURVEY: AI WILL TAKE CONTROL OF JOBS, CORPORATIONS BY 2035**



Digital automation, and artificial intelligence (AI) in particular, will reshape and dominate work within 15 years, according to “Work 2035,” a survey just released by Citrix, a Florida-based software company.

The survey of 1,500 executives and other employees of large and mid-size companies found that 72 percent believe AI will be their companies’ main revenue generator by 2030. Ninety percent of executives think AI will be their companies’ engine of growth by 2035.

A majority also believe companies will have a central AI department that collates, integrates, and oversees all areas of corporate operations, including the CEO’s office.

Bosses and workers, however, had differing views of AI’s coming dominance.

About 77 percent of bosses believe under-the-skin chips and sensors implanted in workers will take over minor routine tasks and speed processes.

Only 43 percent of workers share that view; but 57 percent would be willing to accept chip implants if it made them more secure in their jobs, the survey found.

In contrast, only 31 percent of executives said they would be willing to be chipped.

In Sweden, an estimated 6,000 workers already have had microchips implanted in their hands to replace keycards.

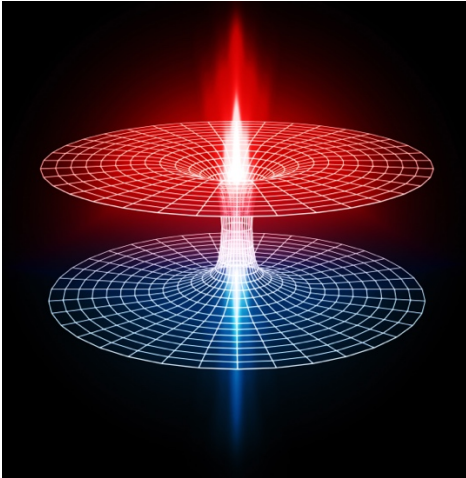
According to 51 percent of survey respondents, AI-powered personal assistants and other emerging technologies such as augmented reality glasses will at least double workers’ productivity.

That would make half of all workers unnecessary, perhaps even in the C-suite: 57 percent of professionals responding to the survey believe that, by 2035, AI will have abolished traditional leadership and decision-making structures and will be handling those functions on its own.

***TRENDPOST:*** *Humans are entirely unprepared for the breadth and depth of earth-shaking changes that artificial intelligence will bring. As much research into AI’s effects on jobs, income, humans’ sense of self and worth, and similar areas needs to be progressing apace with the expansion of the technology itself.*



## EUROPE BUILDS DIGITAL PARALLEL WORLD



The European Union is about to begin building what it calls a “digital twin” of planet Earth that will simulate “with unrivaled precision” our physical planet’s land, seas, atmosphere, and ice caps.

The “Destination Earth” project is capable of modeling the planet in squares one kilometer across, about a sixth of a mile, a far finer scale of detail than previously possible. The best climate model currently is scaled in units of nine kilometers.

The level of detail finally enables researchers to model convection, the vertical rise of heat that helps determine the shape and size of winds and storms. The project also will newly model ocean eddies that transport heat and carbon.

The model will be able to incorporate data about air pollution, crop growth, forest fires, volcanic eruptions, and other factors that affect weather; and can assimilate data from human activities, such as energy use, traffic, and mass migration.

The aim is not only to forecast coming natural disasters earlier than now possible but also to test the impacts of different energy technologies, climate policies, and rates of adoption.

The project is early fruit from the European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking, an €8-billion initiative intended to develop machines able to make a billion calculations per second.

A key challenge remains: how to extract useful information from so much raw data. An earlier Japanese experiment found it took months to derive actionable information from just two days’ worth of facts.



***TRENDPOST:*** *The ability to model policy outcomes at this level of detail could make politics less a matter of ideological dogma or guesswork and more about testing and managing policy alternatives that can demonstrate the likelihood of being most effective.*

## A NEW PATH TO CLEAN NUCLEAR ENERGY



Those hoping to revive nuclear power production have been concentrating on redesigning nuclear reactors.

But a new coalition is showing a more promising way: redesigning nuclear fuel.

The U.S. Department of Energy, the Idaho National Laboratory, Texas A&M University's Nuclear Engineering and Science Center, and private research company Clean Core Thorium Energy have partnered to create nuclear fuel that blends uranium and thorium, a mix dubbed "Advanced Nuclear Energy for Enriched Life" (ANEEL).

Thorium was explored in the 1950s as the original nuclear fuel source, and for good reasons: thorium burns more completely than uranium, delivering more energy from the same volume of fuel, and leaves relatively little waste behind. Most of the waste that does remain decays to harmless radiation levels within a few years, not a few millennia. Also, thorium's higher melting point and lower operating temperature mean that a thorium-powered plant can't melt down in an accident.

Thorium is found in sand and among deposits of rare earth elements. The world has an estimated 16 million tons of thorium, about three times as much as uranium. The largest deposits are in Australia, Brazil, India, and the U.S.

Thorium was abandoned as a potential energy source as the nuclear arms race spiraled up: it didn't leave nuclear waste that could be reprocessed into a payload for nuclear weapons. Uranium did. Thorium was forgotten about for decades.

Also, thorium is "fertile," not "fissile." That means thorium can be a source of nuclear energy, but it can't "combust" on its own. It needs a little bit of uranium to ignite its energy-producing reaction.

Under the new partnership, Texas A&M's nuclear science center will produce the nuclear fuel pellets Clean Core has developed, then ship them to the Idaho lab for testing under the supervision and review of the energy department.

The group expects the new fuel to be ready for market in 2024.

***TRENDPOST:*** *World energy demand is skyrocketing; it's unlikely that renewables alone can keep pace with demand. Nuclear power could be a key part of the energy mix, especially as concerns about global warming pressure companies and governments to shun fossil fuels.*

*Emerging designs for small, portable, safer nuclear reactors powered by thorium instead of pure uranium could revive the nuclear power industry, especially among economies poised for rapid growth, such as India's.*